



# **International Case Studies for Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management Students and Trainees**

**Edited by:  
Elizabeth Ineson  
Matthew Hong Tai Yap  
Valentin Niță**



# **International Case Studies for Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management Students and Trainees**

**Volume 13  
2022**

**edited by**

**Elizabeth Ineson, Matthew Hong Tai Yap  
and Valentin Niță**

 editura  
**Tehnopress**  
IAȘI – 2022

© Blanka Bejdáková; Isabel Carrillo-Hidalgo; Nicholas Catahan; Crispin Dale; José Luis Durán-Román; Kateryna Fedosova; Elizabeth M. Ineson; Liběna Jarolímková; Dmytro Kharenko; Michael Kruesi; Zuzana Kvítková; Eriks Lingeberzins; Yaiza López-Sánchez; Klára Karakasné Morvay; Valentin Niță; Sheree Anne O'Neill; Zdenka Petru; Chris Phelan; Gabriela Potoczek-Kantor; Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández; Detlev Remy; Neil Robinson; Lauren Sinton; Graham Stone; Maria Tătărușanu; Jiří Vaníček; Shin Wong; Matthew H.T. Yap.

Published in Romania by

Editura TEHNOPRESS  
Str. Lascăr Catargi nr. 38  
700107 Iași  
Tel./Fax: 0232 260092  
Email: [tehnopress@yahoo.com](mailto:tehnopress@yahoo.com)  
<http://www.tehnopress.ro>  
Editurăacreditată CNCSIS

ISBN 978-606-687-491-5

First published 2022

Cover from an original water colour painting, 'Woods in Autumn' by John Ineson.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

If there are any errors or omissions, please contact the publisher who will make suitable acknowledgement in the reprint.

## This volume is dedicated to

three exceptional gentlemen to whom the Fondation is indebted for their personal contribution in support of its mission in Central and Eastern Europe

### Anton Alexiev

(1957-2021)

*From the outset of the Fondation's CEE programme, Tony's contribution was invaluable. Over several years, he drove thousands of kilometres round Eastern Europe in the 1990s and early 2000s transporting Iordanka, Gianfranco Nobis, and others latterly, to and from seminars and conferences. In fact, prior to most of the countries being EU members, Tony developed a particular expertise in negotiating border controls, with patience and his inimitable smile. He not only had a special rapport with Gianfranco but also he was extremely popular with the FH partner representatives; he was an incredibly jolly individual who will always be remembered for his cheerful disposition and willingness to help. As an outstanding researcher, a teacher, a consultant, a manager and a reporter Tony believed in the power of knowledge and friendship; he was extremely generous in sharing his skills and experience in hospitality and tourism.*

Margaret Georgiou, Fondation Secretary

### László Csizmadia

(1937-2020)

*Professor László Csizmadia was the founder of tourism higher education in Hungary which he developed to modern European standards. Beginning in the early 1990s, he organised international hospitality and tourism conferences aiming to share experiences, encourage innovative thinking and set objectives for the future of vocational higher education. In the mid-1990s, László was successful in obtaining European funding to develop his projects; also, he linked with the Fondation which continues to make a significant contribution to his vision including a training kitchen, library donations, seminars, publication opportunities and conference participation. László will always be remembered as being at the forefront of networking and supporting international connections for the development and quality assurance of hospitality education in CEE.*

Csilla Szalók, Budapest Business School

### Slavolub Vicic

(1957-2021)

*Slavo was a quiet yet most effective force within our Fondation family. His broad smile and welcoming manner endeared him easily to us all. He exemplified the Fondation's credo perfectly as did his accomplishments in Serbia. Slavo left us far too soon and we will miss him enormously. On behalf of the Fondation affectionate adieu to Slavolub.*

Victor Emery, Founding Trustee

## **Disclaimer**

The editors and the contributors disclaim any and all liability to any third-party anywhere in the world for any injury, damage or direct or indirect loss resulting from reliance on information compiled, or recommendations made, in this text.

## Preface

Volume 13 comprises another series of international case studies, focusing on problems and key issues related to hospitality and tourism management and education. They originate from, or are set, not only in Central and Eastern Europe, including Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania and Ukraine, but also in Greece, New Zealand, Singapore, Spain and the United Kingdom. The contributors, who represent 10 countries, have developed the cases based on their specialist knowledge and real-life experiences. The cases offer students, management trainees and managers opportunities to consider and to respond to realistic scenarios of varying and increasing complexity.

The introduction provides a brief overview of the case study and its possible role in teaching, and training, particularly in cross-disciplinary fields. To provide a suitable format, the cases have been divided into two sections: Part 1, non-revealed and Part 2, revealed. The cases in Part 2 require the students/trainees either to read prior to, or after, the class/training; they may also necessitate some individual written work and there may be a requirement for further follow up activities or discussions. The main topics covered are: accessibility for physically challenged persons; benchmarking; contactless service; crisis management; data analytics; domestic tourism; health tourism; hotel operations; impacts and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism; legal issues; niche tourism; online reputation management; QR-codes; service sector marketing; smart destinations; sustainable intelligence; technology-based solutions; tourist taxation and travel and tour operations.

The non-revealed case studies may be distributed as part of a teaching or training session, and responses may be prepared by the individuals, debated by groups of students, trainees or managers, or enacted using role play, to develop a joint solution; the cases focus on at least one curriculum area or department including restaurants; tour operations; tourist destinations; and transportation. Each of the non-revealed cases poses a series of questions for consideration by students, trainees or managers; the cases may require some preparatory work, in addition to follow-up reading, that the facilitator considers to be advantageous in advance of the discussion sessions.

The revealed case studies are more complex. They are inter/cross-disciplinary, encouraging consideration of issues and problems that focus on broader managerial, international and cultural perspectives. Some of the revealed cases are accompanied by reading or research suggestions

which are recommended in order to respond to the questions and/or inform the participants so that they can conduct the follow-up activities which include: application of theories to practice and justifying recommended course of action; debates; deduction; desk research; watching videos; local research; location and interpretation of numerical, graphical and verbal information; critiquing and evaluating information in the light of practical and written evidence; ethical considerations; marketing and promotion; planning and designing; problem resolution; making sensible practical recommendations based on evidence; online searching and research projects; groupwork; preparation of guidelines and presentations; development of typology; developing action plans; and suggesting strategies for the future.

The case questions and activities are designed to encourage and promote experiential learning, embracing a practical problem-solving approach to achieve the learning outcomes. They are of varying types, levels of difficulty from very simple to extremely complex, posed to promote activities such as brain-storming followed by practical and theoretical problem-solving. Part 3 includes a series of points to promote initial discussion, or further consideration, of the issues pertaining to each case.



## Contributors

**Blanka Bejdáková PhD**, Department of Tourism, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic.

**Isabel Carrillo-Hidalgo PhD**, Assistant Professor of Finance Economics and Researcher of the Laboratory of Analysis and Innovation in Tourism (LAIInnTUR), University of Jaén, Spain.

**Nicholas Catahan**, Senior Lecturer in Business and Management, Edge Hill University, UK.

**Crispin Dale PhD**, Senior Lecturer in Tourism, University of Wolverhampton, UK.

**José Luis Durán-Román PhD**, Assistant Professor of Business Organization and Researcher of the Laboratory of Analysis and Innovation in Tourism (LAIInnTUR), University of Jaén, Spain.

**Kateryna Fedosova PhD**, Associate Professor, Hotel and Restaurant Business Department, Odessa National Academy of Food Technologies, Odessa, Ukraine.

**Elizabeth M. Ineson BEd(Hons) MSc PhD Cert Ed. (Dist.) FIH FInstTT**, Visiting Research Fellow, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK and Coordinator, La fondation pour la formation hôtelière, Switzerland.

**Liběna Jarolímková PhD**, Head of the Department of Tourism, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic.

**Dmytro Kharenko PhD**, Associate Professor, Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Business Department, International Humanitarian University, Odessa, Ukraine.

**Michael Kruesi PhD**, Assistant Professor, Singapore Institute of Technology, Singapore.

**Zuzana Kvítková PhD**, Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism, Faculty of International Relations, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic.

**Eriks Lingeberzins PhD(Econ)**, Dean of The Faculty of International Tourism, Turība University, Latvia.

**Yaiza López-Sánchez PhD**, Assistant Professor of Applied Economics and Researcher of the Laboratory of Analysis and Innovation in Tourism (LAIInnTUR), University of Jaén, Spain.

**Klára Karakasné Morvay BA MA PhD**, College Associate Professor/Principal Lecturer, Budapest Business School, University of Applied Sciences Hungary.

**Valentin Niță PhD**, Professor, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași, Romania.

**Sheree Anne O'Neill PhD MCom BBus ATCL (pianoforte) AdvDipMgt**, Senior Lecturer, Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.

**Contributors cont.**

**Zdenka Petrů**, Assistant Professor, Department of Tourism, Faculty of International Relations, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic.

**Chris Phelan PhD**, Senior Lecturer in Business and Management, Edge Hill University, UK.

**Gabriela Potoczek-Kantor MA**, Teacher, The Complex of Hospitality and Catering Schools in Wisła, Poland.

**Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández PhD**, Full Professor of Applied Economics (Tourism Economics) and Director of the Laboratory of Analysis and Innovation in Tourism (LAIInnTUR), University of Jaén, Spain.

**Detlev Remy DBA**, Associate Professor, Singapore Institute of Technology, Singapore.

**Neil Robinson PhD**, Senior Lecturer in Marketing, Edge Hill University, UK.

**Lauren Sinton PhD**, Lecturer in Marketing & Advertising at Edge Hill University, UK

**Graham Stone BA Econ MSc**, Formerly Principal Lecturer, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, UK.

**Maria Tătărușanu PhD**, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași, Romania.

**Jiří Vaníček PhD**, Associate Professor, Department of Tourism, Prague University of Economics and Business, Czech Republic.

**Shin Wong CPA**, Financial Advisor, Financial Due Diligence, Singapore.

**Matthew H. T. Yap BA MSc PhD**, Consultant; Formerly Assistant Professor of Hospitality and Gaming Management, University of Macau, Faculty of Business Administration, Macau, China.

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction</b> by Graham Stone and Elizabeth M. Ineson .....	xiii
<b>Part 1 Non-revealed Case Studies</b> .....	1
<b>Workplace Culture</b> .....	3
by Sheree Anne O'Neill	
<b>Online Reputation of a Restaurant and Interaction with Bloggers</b> .....	5
by Kateryna Fedosova and Dmytro Kharenko	
<b>Tourist Taxes as a Tool to Solve Problems Derived from Tourist Activity</b> .....	7
by José Luis Durán-Román and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández	
<b>The Early Bird Catches the Worm (or Not?)</b> .....	13
by Gabriela Potoczek-Kantor	
<b>The Region of the Knights of Blaník - the Use of Legend for Development of Sustainable Rural Tourism</b> .....	15
by Jiří Vaníček and Liběna Jarolímková	
<b>Part 2 Revealed Case Studies</b> .....	23
<b>What Barriers do People with Hearing Impairments Overcome in Catering and Accommodation Facilities?</b> .....	25
by Blanka Bejdáková	
<b>The Integration of QR codes into Hotel Operations</b> .....	31
by Klára Karakasné Morvay	
<b>Tour Operators' Online Reputation Management</b> .....	35
by Zdenka Petrů and Zuzana Kvítková	
<b>Cliffly Travel Company</b> .....	40
by Maria Tătăruşanu	
<b>Service Sector Hospitality Marketing post Coronavirus (COVID-19): Opportunities and Challenges in Innovating the 6Ps Rural Tourism</b> .....	44
by Crispin Dale, Chris Phelan, Neil Robinson and Lauren Sinton	
<b>Strawberry Fields Forever: Opportunities for Green Engagement and Happiness</b> 51	
by Nicholas Catahan, Crispin Dale and Neil Robinson	

<b>Contents cont.</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>Tourists' Sustainable Intelligence and its Role within the Smart Destination Scenario</b> .....	57
by Yaiza López-Sánchez and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández	
<b>Tourism in Latvia during the Coronavirus (COVID 19) Pandemic</b> .....	63
by Eriks Lingeberzins	
<b>Technology-Based Solutions to Effective Sustainability Benchmarking in the Hotel Industry</b> .....	68
by Michael Kruesi and Detlev Remy	
<b>COVID-19 and the Stock Price of the Tourism Sector: A Case Study of Spain</b> .....	77
by Isabel Carrillo-Hidalgo and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández	
<b>Integrating Data Analytics in Crisis Management</b> .....	83
by Detlev Remy, Michael Kruesi and Shin Wong	
 <b>Part 3 Points for Discussion</b> .....	 91

## Acknowledgements

The editors would like to take this opportunity to thank:

- **La fondation pour la formation hôtelière**, in particular: **John Thurso; Jenifer Emery; Victor Emery; Alistair Emery; Andrea Kracht; and Willi Leimer**, for their continued generous support for, and interest in, Central and Eastern European seminars, activities and projects;
- **Margaret Georgiou**, Executive Administrator to the Board, for her continued dedicated, extremely competent and very professional assistance;
- **Allison Cridland** for proof-reading the text, and
- **The contributors** who, with no prompting, provided a series of cases that present some very topical and interesting international issues for consideration and debate.



# Introduction

by **Graham Stone and Elizabeth M. Ineson**

Cases provide a learning strategy through which students and trainees are required to consider, debate and offer possible solutions to the questions posed. They can apply their knowledge of a range of academic theories, and/or their work experiences, to identify, analyse and evaluate the problems involved. Such experiential learning is of value in developing in students and trainees informed and considered managerial decision-making within learning and training environments, where the importance of problem identification and problem-solving skills is emphasised. In turn, a variety of geographical, cultural and different legal contexts provide a framework within which a broad spectrum of learning outcomes can be achieved.

## **The Role of Case Studies**

Case studies are summaries of real-life or simulated business situations, based on personal or “second-hand” experiences, observations, interviews, word-of-mouth information and/or desk/practical research. The cases might incorporate information from within an organisation, for example, past events, stories, critical incidents, etc. as well as external factors and influences. The cases included in this book are all based on, or developed from, real events. They enable management students and trainees to appreciate, comprehend, consider and resolve realistic departmental, inter-departmental and unit/Company problems and situations that may be encountered by guests, operatives, supervisors, managers and/or senior managers in hospitality, tourism and event management. Some of the cases also offer further opportunities to conduct research and to make management decisions and plans, as indicated by the additional activities.

It is emphasised that case studies are designed to make students and trainees aware that, in solving problems, there may not be a clear or single solution; they enable the application of theories in a real-life context, and they provide insight into issues that can assist students/trainees to develop and refine their knowledge and understanding in addition to their analytical and problem-solving abilities. The cases selected for study, at any point in the academic course or training programme, should be appropriate to the abilities and experience of the students and/or trainees and, ideally assist in meeting the learning outcomes/training objectives.

From an academic perspective, case study research is more comprehensive than conducting research on one specific topic. In addressing the more advanced cases, students/trainees are encouraged to collect relevant and appropriate data from a variety of both academic and commercial sources, including the media, as appropriate. They are encouraged, not only to consider this information but also to employ divergent thinking, to brainstorm the case, followed by convergent decision-making to devise and justify the solution(s). Questions such as: 'How?' and 'Why?' need to be addressed in the context of the scenario, paying attention to the human element in terms of customer care and the fair and correct treatment of employees and peers. Such studies allow students and trainees to gain valuable work related, problem-solving and planning, managerial experience without losing money, upsetting customers and staff, or putting themselves or others into positions that might evoke embarrassment, pressure, anger or stress. From a practical perspective, students and trainees need to employ their work and life experiences to offer possible feasible, practical and, when appropriate, cost effective solutions.

### **Assessment**

Case studies allow the assessment not only of knowledge and application but also of higher order skills comprising analysis, synthesis and evaluation. The forms of assessment employed depend on the learning outcomes to be measured, and are at the discretion of the teacher, trainer or facilitator. These may include: individual or group assessment; contribution to debates; written responses in the form of answers to questions; report writing; the development of strategic plans; workplace guidelines; production of training manuals etc.; and/or individual or group presentations. No time limits are set or even recommended for responding to/solving the cases, as these depend on the nature and type of the requested feedback, the specific nature of the assessment employed and the depth to which the issues are examined.

### **Further Reading**

Aktaş, G., & Kozak, M. (Eds.) (2022). *International Case Studies in Tourism Marketing*. (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

Andrews, S. (2021). *The Case Study Companion: Teaching, Learning and Writing Business Case Studies*. (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

Butuner, H. (2016). *Case Studies in Strategic Planning*. (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

Ellet, W. (2018). *Case study handbook: How to read, discuss, and write persuasively about cases*. (1<sup>st</sup> ebook ed.). Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.



**Further Reading cont.**

Harrison, J. S., & Enz, C. A. (2009). *Hospitality strategic management concepts and cases*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Hyde, K. F., Ryan, C., & Woodside, A. (Eds.) (2012). *Field guide to case study research in tourism, hospitality and leisure*. Bingley, UK: Emerald.

Stanley, T. (2019). *Case Studies and Case-Based Learning: Inquiry and Authentic Learning That Encourages 21st-Century Skills*. (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

Thomas, G. (2011). *How to do your case study*. London: Sage.

Vavrus, F., & Bartlett, L. (2023). *Doing Comparative Case Studies: New Designs and Directions*. (1<sup>st</sup> ed.). New York: Routledge.

Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). London: Sage.



# **Part 1**

## **Non-revealed Case Studies**



## **Workplace Culture**

**by Sheree Anne O’Neill**

### **Part I**

Previously, Company A provided a successful backpacker transportation service in New Zealand. The company had been in existence for only eight years, initially set up as a limited liability company by a group of young friends who had graduated from University. From the outset, their objective was to provide a flexible transport network for independent travellers, offering various travel options that showcased New Zealand’s scenic and adventure attractions. Company A was a very energetic, flexible, team-oriented organisation whose owners were ‘hands on’ in the business. The organisation was not weighed down with structure; strategic and operational decisions were made collaboratively with all staff being involved.

Company B provides vehicles for rent and has offices throughout the north and south islands of New Zealand. Company B is highly structured and regulated, with a Board of Directors whose responsibility is to make strategic and operational decisions. Company B is listed on the New Zealand Stock Exchange and, recently, it has gained full ownership of Company A.

When Company B acquired Company A, there was a notable clash of cultures and philosophies. To successfully integrate Company A into Company B, a new General Manager was appointed by Company B to head Company A. One of the first decisions of the new General Manager was to appoint a Head Driver to liaise between management and all of the drivers. The role of the Head Driver was to focus on the drivers’ employment issues and concerns, as well as on training and development of the drivers, who were also the tour guides. Previously, there had been no direct representation for the drivers in either company; any issues that arose were dealt with on an individual basis.

### ***Questions***

1. Define ‘group dynamics’ and determine how they might affect an organisation as a whole.

#### 4 *Non-revealed Case Studies*

2. How do you think the appointment of a Head Driver will affect the group dynamics amongst the drivers?
3. What leadership style would you recommend for the Head Driver in order to keep the combined teams of drivers on board? Explain and justify your response.

#### **Part II**

After the merger the new General Manager decided to put the drivers on an incentive scheme. It was his belief that this incentive scheme would motivate the drivers/guides to sell attractions and activities, thereby increasing revenue for both the company and the employees.

#### **Questions**

1. Do you think an incentive scheme such as the above could be successful? Why? Why not? Justify your answer.
2. How might such an incentive based scheme impact on driver/guide motivation? Relate your response to two motivational theories.

#### **Recommended Reading**

Evans, N. (2019). *Strategic management for tourism, hospitality and events*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Abingdon, England: Routledge.

Moutinho, L., & Vargas-Sanchez, A. (Eds.) (2018). *Strategic management in tourism*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Oxfordshire, England: CABI.

## **Online Reputation of a Restaurant and Interaction with Bloggers**

by **Kateryna Fedosova and Dmytro Kharenko**

Tbilisi is a restaurant chain of Georgian cuisine cafes in Odessa, Ukraine. Their main product is a Georgian dish called “khachapuri” with different fillings. Khachapuri is a traditional dish of Georgian cuisine, an analogue of Italian pizza. Usually khachapuri is prepared with different types of cheese, but it is prepared in Tbilisi with seafood, meat, and even with nuts and Nutella. The Tbilisi cafes are very popular among young people. Tbilisi has an attractive website, as well as Facebook and Instagram pages. The company's marketers regularly create and post interesting content for social media, such as stories, videos and photos.

Recently Tbilisi received a negative comment from one of its customers. It turned out to be a well-known Odessa blogger who writes regular reviews on various restaurants. The blogger ordered a delivery of several identical khachapuris and, observing that one of them looked smaller than the others, she weighed them on her scales. The weight of the smaller menu item turned out to be significantly less than was stated on the website menu; it was only 312 gms instead of the promised 400 gms so the girl took a video and posted it on her Instagram account. Within just a few hours, the video has been viewed more than 10,000 times and it received about 300 comments.

The chef of the restaurant was furious. He categorically refused to admit that the issue was his fault and claimed that the video had been edited to incite consumer allegiance to Tbilisi's competitors. Nevertheless, the marketers contacted the blogger to find out details of the order. An internal investigation determined that the chef was at fault. Most likely he had been confused and used the filling for mini-khachapuri, which weighed 50% less than for the standard dish. The conflict with the blogger was resolved quickly through further communication. Fortunately, this incident did not have any negative consequences for the restaurant chain because of their quick response to the blogger on social media due to important decisions on the part of the restaurant manager and Tbilisi's marketing department.

## 6 Non-revealed Case Studies

### Questions

1. Who do you think is to blame for this situation? What action should be taken against the perpetrator(s)?
2. If you were the restaurant manager, what would you have done in this situation?
3. What are the options for resolving a conflict with a blogger?
4. How might this conflict be turned into a successful case to ensure future collaboration with the affected blogger?
5. What recommendations would you make to prevent similar incidents in the future?

### Recommended Reading

Ferreira, F., Ferreira, F., & Fernandes, P. (2021). Price and quality competition in the restaurant industry: Effects of restaurants' reputation. *Revista Turismo & Desenvolvimento*, 37, 21-29. <https://doi.org/10.34624/rtd.v37i0.26323>

David, J. (2016). *How to protect (or destroy) your reputation online: The essential guide to avoid digital damage, lock down your brand, and defend your business*. London: Red Wheel Weiser.



## **Tourist Taxes as a Tool to Solve Problems Derived from Tourist Activity**

**by José Luis Durán-Román and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández**

Although the pandemic derived from Covid-19 has had dramatic effects on the tourism industry, the flow of international tourists grew by 4% in 2021 to reach 415 million (UNWTO, 2022). Additionally, according to the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2021), the economic impact of travel and tourism in 2020 stood at 5.5% of global GDP (USD 4,671 BN), generating, in turn, 272 million jobs (1 out of every 11 global jobs was in the tourism industry). However, the importance of tourist activity is manifested in other areas beyond the generation of wealth and employment since it contributes to improving the living conditions of the resident population and the reduction of poverty; furthermore, it favours the development and preservation of cultural, artistic and environmental heritage, etc. (Durán-Román, Cárdenas-García & Pulido Fernández, 2020). In addition, the generation of wealth in a certain destination is limited not only to the companies with which tourists establish direct contact during their visits, but also its impact extends to the entire value chain.

The economic relevance of tourist activity, added to the difficulty of finding a tourist destination that delivers a truly *unique* product, even in the case of specific products (Caber, Albayrak & Matzler, 2012), and the fact that the choice of one destination by tourists leads to the exclusion of others, means that competitiveness is the fundamental objective pursued by tourist destinations (Bazargani & Kiliç, 2021) to continue obtaining benefits from the tourist activity.

The public sector plays a key dynamic role in this quest to increase competitiveness and improve the sustainability of the tourist destination (Durán-Román, 2020); ideally, this scenario requires the promotion of new growth strategies that are sustainable and based on a gradual differential competitive repositioning. The aim is to provide different infrastructures and to ensure different services (for example land planning, provision of infrastructures, tourism promotion and the maintenance of tourist and cultural resources, etc.) both for the benefit of tourists, so that they can enjoy their experience, and for the destination per se, so that it can be more competitive in international tourist markets (Page, 2009).

## 8 *Non-revealed Case Studies*

The latter depends largely on the availability of resources and the degree to which they are managed, and improved in a sustainable way, to meet the expectations of both the tourists and any other participating agents, including the public sector, local businesses and the resident population (Uysal, Woo & Singal, 2012); in consequence, it is often necessary to channel public funds into the tourist destination (Jovanovic, Janković-Milić & Ilić, 2015).

The problem of financing tourist destinations and the search for new revenues has been raised globally since 1980, sparking major debate about the unchecked rise in public spending on tourism. This situation has led to recurring budget deficits, which have limited both the implementation of new infrastructures and the renewal of existing ones (Young, Kyle, Petrick & Absher, 2011), leading to reductions in the quality of public service provision and loss of well-being for the resident population and the tourist. The Governments need to explore new sources of supplementary funding to maintain all actions (infrastructures, services, promotion, maintenance of tourist and cultural resources, etc.).

The problem of financing tourist destinations requires a joint vision shared by the various actors involved and the combination of public-private efforts, based on consensus and participation (Klijn & Skelcher, 2007), since each of the agents can obtain their own benefits from tourist activity, whether through improved service quality, higher business revenues, or greater and better employment alternatives. Therefore, it is necessary to propose new cooperation formulas that allow reversing, at least in part, the benefits generated by the tourism industry (Velasco, 2009).

In the case of tourist activity, the problem of funding these public goods was recognised. According to Martínez-García (2010),

public goods raise the question of how to finance their provision, since voluntary private financing is non-existent or reduced for optimal levels of provision, given the possibility of consuming simultaneously when another individual consumes, and without the need to pay for it. The alternative offered by taxes is clear, as they force participation in funding, thus allowing resources to finance goods for which there is demand, and which therefore have a positive social value (p.7).

Although the matter of tourist taxes might appear to be a fairly recent issue, the first taxes levied on tourist activity date back to the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, more surprisingly, they were

established on extra-fiscal grounds<sup>1</sup>. Specifically, the French *Taxe de Séjour*, implemented through the Law of April 13, 1910, on the creation of hydromineral and climatic stations and establishment of special taxes to promote the development of the hydromineral industry, (Jarrassé, 1994). In Italy, the law of December 11 (Legge 11 Dicembre), 1910 (n. 863), then authorised municipalities to introduce a tax imposed on stays lasting more than five days, destined to benefit spa establishments, hydrotherapy, etc (Candela, Castellani & Mussoni, 2013). In this sense, the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 1998, p.16) defined tourist taxes as “taxes levied specifically on the tourist industry or, alternatively, if not specifically on the tourist sector, those that are levied for other purposes related to that industry”. Subsequently, the OECD (2014, p.73) considered tourist taxes to be a key contribution “to the raising of general tax revenues, finance environmental protection and public investment and infrastructure development to improve the way in which the impact of tourism in sensitive areas is managed”.

Tourist taxes, however, have been viewed as an instrument to tackle problems arising from tourism development (Martínez-García, 2010). In addition, they can be used for other purposes, such as job creation, economic development, environmental protection, destination promotion, etc. (cf. OECD, 2014), as long as the proceeds are reinvested in the activity with a view to improving the product (Cetin, Alrawadieh, Dincer, Istanbul-Dincer & Ioannides, 2017) and, therefore, the tourist experience. Some tourist activities are taxed since their inception to increase revenues, offset costs arising from the provision of public goods and services and to correct market failures or negative externalities caused by the tourists and/or the activities (Adedoyin, Seetaram, Disegna & Filis, 2021).

In this context, tourist taxes act as a corrective and substitute mechanism for a price of public goods and services consumed by both tourists (Pastor, 2016) and companies (OECD, 2014), which aim to restore economic efficiency (Figuierinha, 2011) and institutional sustainability. However, most experiences show that the establishment of taxes and/or public prices levied on tourist activity has been designed as a simple instrument with which to generate income (Gooroochurn & Sinclair, 2005) and offset negative costs and externalities (Schubert, 2010), rather than a tool to finance policies to increase the competitiveness and sustainability of a destination (Jovanovic et al., 2015). In general terms, an adequate assessment of the economic effects and impact has not been carried out, and this has led to a negative impact on the

---

<sup>1</sup> The essential purpose of taxation is to finance public spending, but it has been used on many occasions as a means to achieve other ends. This is the case with extra-fiscal taxes, designed to achieve other objectives such as job creation, environmental conservation, economic development, etc.

## 10 Non-revealed Case Studies

competitiveness of the tourist destination itself (Adedoyin et al., 2021). This is because the price variable is viewed as one of the main factors when choosing a destination – given that there are generally alternative destinations capable of satisfying the same tourist motivations (Gago, Labandeira, Picos & Rodríguez, 2009).

### References

Adedoyin, F. F., Seetaram, N., Disegna, M., & Filis, G. (2021). The effect of tourism taxation on international arrivals to a small tourism-dependent economy. *Journal of Travel Research*, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.117700472875211053658>

Bazargani, R. H. Z., & Kiliç, H. (2021). Tourism competitiveness and tourism sector performance: Empirical insights from new data. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 46, 73-82.

Caber, M., Albayrak, T., & Matzler, K. (2012). Classification of the destination attributes in the content of competitiveness. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(1), 43-56.

Candela, G., Castellani, M., & Mussoni, M. (2013). Imposta di soggiorno: Spesa pubblica e tassazione nelle destinazioni turistiche. *Politica Economica*, 29(3), 293-318.

Cetin, G., Alrawadieh, Z., Dincer, M. Z., Istanbulu-Dincer, F., & Ioannides, D. (2017). Willingness to pay for tourist tax in destinations: Empirical evidence from Istanbul. *Economies*, 5(2), 5-21. <https://doi.org/10.3390/economies5020021>

Durán-Román, J. L. (2020). *Oportunidades para la aplicación de una nueva fiscalidad turística a nivel regional. El caso de Andalucía* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Jaén).

Durán-Román, J. L., Cárdenas-García, P. J., & Pulido-Fernández, J. I. (2020). Taxation of tourism activities: A review of the top 50 tourism destinations. *Revista de Economía Mundial*, 55, 49-78.

Figuerinha, M. L. (2011, June 29-July 1). *Taxation of tourism activities: Evidence from Portugal*. [Conference presentation]. EcoMod2011 Conference, Ponta Delgada, Portugal. <https://ecomod.net/conferences/ecomod2011>

Gago, A., Labandeira, X., Picos, F., & Rodríguez, M. (2009). Specific and general taxation of tourism activities. Evidence from Spain. *Tourism Management*, 30(3), 381-392.

Gooroochurn, N., & Sinclair, M. T. (2005). Economics of tourism taxation: Evidence from Mauritius. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(2), 478-798.

Jarrassé, D (1994). *2000 Ans de Thermalisme. Economie, patrimoine, rites et pratiques*. Paris: Faculté des Lettres et Sciences Humaines de L'Université Blaise-Pascal.

Jovanovic, S., Janković-Milić, V., & Ilić, I. (2015). Health and hygiene importance for the improvement of tourism sector competitiveness in Serbia and the south-eastern Europe Countries. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 19, 373-382.

Klijn, E. H., & Skelcher, C. (2007). Democracy and governance networks: Compatible or not? *Public Administration*, 85(3), 587-608.

- Martínez-García, E. (2010). *La Financiación pública en los destinos turísticos: un análisis de la imposición en turismo: Turismo, políticas e Desarrollo humano*. Brazil: Asterisco.
- OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) (2014). *Tourism trends and policies 2014*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Page, S. (2009). *Tourism management: Managing for change*. Oxford: Elsevier.
- Pastor, L. (2016). La fiscalidad del turismo desde una perspectiva internacional. *Barataria. Revista Castellano-Manchega de Ciencias Sociales*, 20, 147-160.
- Schubert, S. (2010). Coping with externalities in tourism: a dynamic optimal taxation approach. *Tourism Economics*, 16(2), 321-343.
- UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) (1998). *Tourism taxation. Striking a fair deal*. Madrid: World Tourism Organisation.
- UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) (2022). *World Tourism Barometer*. Madrid: World Tourism Organisation .<https://www.unwto.org/es/taxonomy/term/347>
- Uysal, M., Woo, E., & Singal, M. (2012). The tourist area life cycle (TALC) and its effect on the quality-of-life (QOL) of destination community. In M. Uysal, R. Perdue & M. Sirgy (Eds.), *Handbook of tourism and quality-of-life research* (pp. 423-443). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.
- Velasco, M. (2009). Gestión turística del patrimonio cultural: enfoques para un desarrollo sostenible del turismo cultural. *Cuadernos de Turismo*, 23, 237-253.
- WTTC (World Travel & Tourism Council; Jus, N. & Misrahi, T. (Eds.) (2021). *Travel & tourism economic impact 2021: Global Economic Impact & Trends 2021*. London: WTTC. <https://wtcc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2021/Global%20Economic%20Impact%20and%20Trends%202021.pdf>
- Young, J., Kyle, G., Petrick, J., & Absher, J. (2011). Fairness of prices, user fee policy and willingness to pay among visitors to a national forest. *Tourism Management*, 32, 1038-1046.

### Questions

1. Which problems derived from tourist activity do tourist taxes seek to address?
2. Do you think there is a conflict of interest between the price increase resulting from the establishment of tourist taxes and the number of tourists visiting a given destination? Justify your answer.
3. Which circumstances have caused tourist taxes to be ineffective at times after their introduction? Which changes would you propose to increase their effectiveness?
4. To a greater or lesser extent, tourists buy products and services during their holiday, which entails the payment of taxes at the destination visited – Value added tax, Tax on goods and services, etc. Do you think that these taxes already provide revenue for the public sector and are, therefore, the law of the 11 December (Legge 11 Dicembre) ways

## 12 *Non-revealed Case Studies*

in which tourists can help to mitigate the problems arising from tourism and that, consequently, tourists should not be obliged to pay any other specific taxes? Justify your answer.

## The Early Bird Catches the Worm (or Not?)

by Gabriela Potoczek-Kantor

On a warm summer day in July 2020, a couple booked a one night stay in a deluxe suite in a 3-star hotel. The total cost of the booking was paid in advance. Having been requested by the receptionist to book a parking space during their stay, the guests rejected the offer. They claimed that they lived close to the hotel and did not intend to travel by car; consequently, they did not need to use the car park.

On the day of the couple's arrival at the hotel, they appeared much earlier than the check-in time indicated but since the deluxe suite had not been occupied, it was ready to accommodate the guests; they were checked in without any problem or extra charge. On that day, a member of the hotel staff saw the man leaving the hotel only once in the evening. He returned to his room within 40 minutes of his departure carrying three pizza boxes. The couple did not use any of the hotel's facilities that evening, including the restaurant.

The following morning the man arrived at the reception desk and asked to speak to a manager. Since a manager could not come immediately, he complained to one of the receptionists that he had seen some white larvae (maggots) on the bathroom floor. The receptionist called the manager again and urged her to come rapidly. The manager informed the owner of the hotel of the problem. According to the hotel's documented course of action, the owner asked the manager to accompany the guest to the suite and to take photographs of the maggots. Moreover, the manager apologised sincerely to the guests and offered them a complimentary bottle of wine, bearing in mind that 'the guest is always right'. The guests were still not at all happy. They accepted the wine but insisted that the manager should give them a full refund for their stay.

Immediately following the incident, the manager sent the photographs to the owner and elucidated the guests' demands. As the owner was a biology graduate of the best university in Poland, he recognised the larvae straight away. They came from a bluebottle fly (*lat. Calliphora vomitaria*). The fly is a carrion feeder and can be easily found on rotten meat. The owner knew that chance of finding them in a clean hotel bathroom, especially in times of COVID-19 when the hotel had increased sanitation standards, was next to none. Such larvae are easily available as fishing bait; it was obvious that they were not found in the bathroom naturally. He suspected

## 14 *Non-revealed Case Studies*

that they had been brought by the guests who had planned to claim a full refund or even higher compensation.

The guests were clearly dissatisfied with the manager's reaction and threatened to report their case to both the local television and newspaper. The man wrote an abusive comment on his social media, attached the pictures and tagged the hotel. The next day, the man called the reception from his private mobile phone and impersonated a journalist who wanted to write an article about the complaint. His phone number was registered and compared with the number from his check-in form; obviously, the two numbers were identical. The man also informed the local chief of public health about the whole situation. Two public inspectors were sent to check the room as well as other randomly chosen rooms on different floors; no health and safety problems were revealed. What's more, they did not find any insects in any of the rooms; they confirmed that the maggots must have been brought to the hotel.

The hotel owner decided he had enough evidence to sue the couple. During the investigation it turned out that they had arrived at the hotel by car and parked it overnight on the establishment's car park without paying for it. They had also removed drinks from the minibar without admitting it when checking-out. During the trial it also turned out that the man was a keen angler. Under his abusive post on Facebook, his friends had commented that the maggots would attract a great bite on their next fishing spree. Although the man tried to delete the comments immediately, some screen shots were offered as corroborative evidence.

The potential cost of the court case, including hiring a lawyer, the cost of the time involved, the risk of image loss, etc., could have been substantially higher than just refunding the one night stay or even paying higher compensation; however, the hotel management knew that the guests were frauds and they wanted to expose them for the future benefit of the hospitality sector.

### ***Questions and Activities***

1. Were the guests right to insist on a full refund when they had accepted the gift?
2. What is your opinion of the hotel owner taking the issue to court even though it was more expensive than refunding the money?
3. Should there be (more) cameras in hotels to provide evidence of guests' activities?
4. Research and debate other tricks that guests might use in order not to pay for their stay.
5. To what extent do you agree that 'the guest is always right'?



# **The Region of the Knights of Blaník - the Use of Legend for Development of Sustainable Rural Tourism**

**by Jiří Vaníček and Liběna Jarolímková**

## **Introduction**

Travel and Tourism has been one of the fastest growing socio-economic sectors. For a decade, prior to 2019, its GDP growth outpaced the overall economy GDP growth; as a leading employer, it generates millions of jobs directly and indirectly (cf. UNWTO, 2020a). However, in many global locations the benefits of tourism, perhaps including enhanced employment and gender opportunities, tend to be concentrated in urban and coastal areas and so may contribute to an unequal territorial distribution of wealth and economic opportunities (cf. OECD, 2020; Zeng & Wang, 2021). Furthermore, “pressure on the most visited locations comes with risks such as overcrowding, unsustainable demand for natural and cultural resources and possible disruptions to social fabric and community life” (Greek Business File, 2021, p.1). Nevertheless, the UNWTO (2020b) acknowledges that, if the regional benefits are spread more widely, the risks associated with overcrowding are mitigated, especially if tourism is promoted in specific rural areas. Furthermore, rural communities can benefit socially and economically as well as preserving the local heritage, both tangible and intangible such as traditions and legends, so adding value to and complementing rural life. (UNWTO 2020b).

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of tourism in rural development is more relevant than ever. Tourism in rural areas offers important opportunities for recovery as tourists look for less populated destinations and open-air experiences and activities. (UNWTO, 2020c). The UNWTO “designated 2020 as the Year of Tourism and Rural Development”; it was supposed to be “an opportunity to promote the potential of tourism to create jobs and opportunities. It also advanced inclusion and highlighted the unique role of tourism in preserving and promoting natural and cultural heritage and curbing urban migration” (UNWTO, 2020d, p.1). The theme was shared with the World Tourism Day, commemorated each year on 27<sup>th</sup> September. It is the “global observance day fostering awareness of tourism’s social, cultural, political, and economic value and the contribution the sector can make in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals 2020 marked the 40th anniversary of the first World Tourism Day” (UNWTO 2020d, p.1).

## 16 *Non-revealed Case Studies*

It is clear that travel restrictions have been responsible for job losses and small business closures as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in rural communities that depended on it for survival. To compound the situation, such areas may suffer from depopulation as the locals move to urban areas to seek paid work. In 2022, tourism and rural development is perceived to be increasingly relevant due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, “supporting rural communities facing the economic and social impacts of the pandemic is critical” and “tourism in rural areas is considered to offer important opportunities for their recovery” (UNWTO, 2020d, p.1). Furthermore, the UNWTO (2020d) suggests that driving rural development through tourism will enhance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p.42). In turn, according to the United Nations (2015), the goals of tourism sustainability included protection of the environment, preservation of biodiversity, respecting the lifestyle of local people and ensuring a viable economy. The extent to which this goal impacts product development and an enhanced travel experience is summarised by UNWTO (2020b).

### **Product Development for a Sustainable and Enhanced Travel Experience**

As COVID-19 has popularised a preference for personal space and outdoor activities, the UNWTO (2020b) perceive opportunities to expand the visitor base. They recommend all public and private sector communities to focus on targeted promotion to the visitors by encouraging them to make contact with nature and experience unique local culture in open spaces, while clarifying the socio-economic benefits to and for the local residents. The UNWTO (2020b) advocate priority should be given to cultural learning and environmental interpretation through product development followed by marketing, and promotion to inculcate a sense of place and pride in the locals. In line with this approach, visitors’ awareness of their contributions to the welfare of the locals, in addition to the national economy, should be made apparent alongside respect for the destination and its inhabitants. In particular, the domestic market should be encouraged via educational programmes that teach children about their country’s traditions and cultural heritage associated with the rural communities and their relationship with nature (UNWTO, 2020b).

### **Tourist Legends as a Marketing Tool**

Afanasiev and Afanaseva (2015) classify tourist legends as follows: “case-with a plot (or style of presentation), chronological, territorial, ethnic, cultural, and social, [or by] the object of legend creation - degree of reliability and autochthonous” (p. 52). They claim that, although tourist legends can create a positive image of a location, are useful for branding and can attract tourists to a location, at the time of writing, the use of such legends in this context was under-researched. Harini (2018) concludes that legends impact tourism both economically and by keeping the legendary inheritance: “as well representing the projection system of society, [they] can be used as a medium of education and entertainment (p.447).

### **General Information about the Region of the Knights of Blaník**

The region of the Knights of Blaník is situated in the southeast part of the Central Bohemia Region. The region is less than 50 kilometres from the capital city of Prague. The title of the region has its roots in the legend of the Blaník Hill which is 638 metres above sea level and is situated in the heart of the protected landscape area of Blaník (See <https://www.dumprirody.cz/res/archive/077/008947.pdf?seek=1550825029>). According to the old legend, the army of knights sleeps in a cave in the mountain of the Great Blaník; it is waiting inside until the Czech nation is in deep distress. At a crucial moment, the cave will open and the knights in full armour will emerge from the mountain. St. Wenceslas, the patron saint of the Czech Republic will be riding a white horse and he will lead the army to save the Czechs (cf. Nailon, 2017). The legend of the knights sleeping in Mount Blaník is known to all Czechs today (cf. Skierka, 2016). The territory of the region also includes a part of the national geopark Region of the Knights of Blaník. This area is geologically very interesting and varied, suitable for geotourism as it is an example of the geological basis of the territory of Europe (See <http://www.geopark-kbr.cz/cs/995-narodni-geopark>).

### **Tourist Attractions and Tourism Products in the Blaník Region**

Tourist attractions in the area include:

- Castles and castle parks (Vlašim, Zruč and Sázavou, Vrchotovy Janovice).
- Museums and galleries (the Museum of Podblanicko in Vlašim, the Museum of tradition in Soutice town, the Rural Museum in Kamberk town etc.).
- Tourist centres (the House of Blaník nature, the paraZOO in Vlašim town, the House of Water and the Bee World in Hulice town etc.).

## 18 *Non-revealed Case Studies*

- Lookout towers (the Great Blaník lookout tower, the Václavka lookout tower in Votice town, the Babka lookout tower in Zruč and Sázavou town, the Castle lookout tower in Vlašim town, the Špulka lookout tower on the hill Březák near the village Lbosín etc.).
- Religious monuments (the Rotunda of Saint Jan Křtitel in Pravonín town, the Rotunda of Saint Václav in Lobouň town, the Mary Magdalene Chapel ruins at the top of Small Blaník etc.) (See [www.blanik.net](http://www.blanik.net) and ARZ, 2021).

The House of Blaník Nature is one of a number of specialist visitor and information centres in the Czech Republic which have been set up in protected landscape areas (See <https://www.dumprirody.cz/en/about-the-houses-of-nature/>). The Knights of Blaník Destination Management Organisation (DMO) was established in 2018; it rationalises the cooperation among public (self-government of the cities in the region), private (regional businesses partners) and non-profit-sector participants in tourism. All of these entities cooperate in planning and implementing marketing activities for the purpose of raising the satisfaction and interest of tourists both from within and outside the region in addition to encouraging tourists to stay longer in the region, with the aim of prolonging the tourist season (<https://www.blanik.net/destinacni-spolecnost-zakladni-informace/>).

The main marketing product is based on the historical background of the Blaník Hill and its associated legends of the Blaník Knights. An educational path called “To Great Blaník with the Knight” with 17 ‘playful’ stops which is about four kilometres long leads to the top of the Great Blaník. A geologic exposition of Podblanicko stones is situated at the beginning of the path, right next to the “House of Blaník nature” (See [www.blanik.net](http://www.blanik.net)). At the top of Great Blaník there is a lookout tower nearly 30 metres high, built in the shape of a Hussite guard tower (See [www.blanik.net](http://www.blanik.net)). A further recent tourism product, marketed by the DMO of the Region of the Knights of Blaník with the Czech Tourist Club (<https://kct.cz/english>), is the “Pilgrimage path Blaník-Říp”, which interconnects the two most famous hills: Blaník and Říp, according to the historic legends. The path consists of seven parts and measures approximately 190 kilometres in total. Each part is focused on different themes, such as “family”, “life priorities” and other topics of the meaning of life (For details, see <https://www.blanik.net/poznej-ceskou-zemi-a-sam-sebe-vydej-se-z-blaniku-na-rip/>).

During each year, various tourist events are organised with the theme of the Knights of Blaník, for example, historical festivals, celebration of the opening of the tourist season etc. Forty three

traditional products made in the region have been awarded the certificate Region of the Knights of Blaník regional product (cf. ARZ, 2021), including a unique tea, which is blended according to tradition from local herbs that draw on the strength of the Blaník mountains (See <https://www.systems.bio/en/produkt/herba-roja-good-mood-magic-organic-herbal-tea-blend-4-x-2-5-g/>).

In autumn 2019, the region of the Blaník knights was awarded two certificates of recognition as a DMO then as an official regional destination by the National Tourism Agency, CzechTourism via the Czech Service Quality System (See <https://www.blanik.net/destinacni-spolecnost-zakladni-informace/>; [https://www.czechtourism.cz/cms/getmedia/b9da89f8-2680-46c9-8289-23e8a4016e5/Seznam-certifikovanych-DMO-k-27-1-2022\\_2.pdf](https://www.czechtourism.cz/cms/getmedia/b9da89f8-2680-46c9-8289-23e8a4016e5/Seznam-certifikovanych-DMO-k-27-1-2022_2.pdf)). Such certificates are valued highly in the Czech Republic as they indicate a commitment to regional service quality (See <https://www.mesto-votice.cz/kraj-blanickych-ryturu-se-predstavil-jako-certifikovana-turisticka-destinace/d-9250/p1=25961>) and could attract international tourists.

## Conclusion

The use of an old but well-known legend in destination marketing is considered to be unique in the Czech Republic in the field of rural tourism. This approach to marketing can differentiate the destination radically from competing areas and gives it a very strong effective market position, especially in domestic tourism with respect to families with children and school education programmes.

## References

- Afanasyev, O., & Afanaseva, A. (2015). Dark tourism, storytelling and legendary practices on tourism. *Universities for Tourism and Service Association Bulletin*, 9(1), 52-59.
- ARZ (Association of Regional Brands)(2021). *Asociace regionálních značek. Kraj blanických rytířů*. <https://www.regionalni-znacky.cz/kraj-blanickych-ryturu/cs/certifikovane-produkty/?paginator-page=3>; English translation: [https://www-regionalni--znacky-cz.translate.google/?\\_x\\_tr\\_sl=cs&\\_x\\_tr\\_tl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_hl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_pto=sc](https://www-regionalni--znacky-cz.translate.google/?_x_tr_sl=cs&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=sc)
- Greek Business File (2021, November 30). Interview by [with] Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary – General of UNWTO to Symela Touchtidou, *Economia*. <https://www.economia.gr/en/world-tourism-organization-sustainability-is-not-a-luxury/>
- Harini, Y. N. A. (2018). The use of legend in tourism: Case study of Si Pitung from Indonesia. *Proceedings of the 5<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Community Development (AMCA 2018)*, London, 231, pp. 445-447. <https://doi.org/10.2991/amca-18.2018.123>

## 20 Non-revealed Case Studies

Nailon, E. (2017, September 5). 2 mythical, legendary places in the Czech Republic you should visit. *Prague Life*.  
<https://cz.citymedia.network/prague/features/2-mythical-legendary-places-czech-republic-visit/>

OECD (2020). *OECD Tourism trends and policies 2020*. Paris, OECD Publishing.  
<https://www.oecd.org/cfe/tourism/oecd-tourism-trends-and-policies-20767773.htm>

Skierka, J.A. (2016). *Mythological signification in Smetana's Tabor and Blaník and its implications on personal compositional output* (Publication No. 10063) [Exegesis and compositional portfolio, Victoria University of Wellington]. University Archive.  
[https://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10063/6942/thesis\\_access.pdf?sequence=1](https://researcharchive.vuw.ac.nz/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10063/6942/thesis_access.pdf?sequence=1)

United Nations (2015). *Sustainable development goals*. New York: Author.  
<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

UNWTO (2020a). *Travel & tourism: Global economics impact & trends 2020*, June. Madrid: World Tourism Organisation.  
<https://wttc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2020/Global%20Economic%20Impact%20Trends%202020.pdf?ver=2021-02-25-183118-360>

UNWTO (2020b). *UNWTO recommendations on tourism and rural development: A guide to making tourism an effective tool for rural development*. Madrid: World Tourism Organisation.  
<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284422173>

UNWTO (2020c). *Policy brief: COVID-19 and transforming tourism*. Madrid: World Tourism Organisation.  
<https://unsdg.un.org/resources/policy-brief-covid-19-and-transforming-tourism>

UNWTO (2020d). *World tourism day 2020: Tourism and rural development*. Madrid: World Tourism Organisation.  
<https://www.unwto.org/world-tourism-day-2020/tourism-and-rural-development-technical-note>

World Commission on Environment and Development (1987). Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our common future.  
<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>

Zeng, Z., & Wang, X. (2021). Effects of domestic tourism on urban-rural income inequality: Evidence from China. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 9009. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13169009>

### Websites

<https://www.blanik.net>; English translation: [https://www-blanik-net.translate.google/?\\_x\\_tr\\_sl=cs&\\_x\\_tr\\_tl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_hl=en&\\_x\\_tr\\_pto=sc](https://www-blanik-net.translate.google/?_x_tr_sl=cs&_x_tr_tl=en&_x_tr_hl=en&_x_tr_pto=sc)  
<https://www.blanik.net/destinacni-spolecnost-zakladni-informace/>  
<https://www.blanik.net/poznej-ceskou-zemi-a-sam-sebe-vydej-se-z-blaniku-na-rip/>  
[https://www.czechtourism.cz/cms/getmedia/b9da89f8-2680-46c9-8289-23e8a4016e5/Seznam-certifikovanych-DMO-k-27-1-2022\\_2.pdf](https://www.czechtourism.cz/cms/getmedia/b9da89f8-2680-46c9-8289-23e8a4016e5/Seznam-certifikovanych-DMO-k-27-1-2022_2.pdf)  
<https://www.dumprirody.cz/en/about-the-houses-of-nature/>  
<https://www.dumprirody.cz/res/archive/077/008947.pdf?seek=1550825029>  
<http://www.geopark-kbr.cz/cs/995-narodni-geopark>

<https://kct.cz/english>

<https://www.mesto-vojtice.cz/kraj-blanickych-rytiru-se-predstavil-jako-certifikovana-turisticka-destinace/d-49250/p1=25961>

<https://www.systems.bio/en/produkt/herba-roja-good-mood-magic-organic-herbal-tea-blend-4-x-2-5-g>

***Questions and Activities***

1. How would you define sustainable development?
2. What is the main mission of the Destination Management (DMO) in managing tourism in a region?
3. What is the significance of overtourism with respect to rural tourism?
4. Do you think that the people living in Blaník, or a similar area with which you are familiar, should have an innate sense of pride in their natural and cultural heritage? Justify your response. If they are not proud of their local heritage, how might their awareness in the value of this heritage be enhanced?
5. Do you know any legend from your country that has been used in the marketing support of tourism? Share your knowledge with the group.
6. In what other ways could you use the legend for the Region of the Knights of Blaník to attract more tourists?





## **Part 2**

### **Revealed Case Studies**



# **What Barriers do People with Hearing Impairments Overcome in Catering and Accommodation Facilities?**

by **Blanka Bejdáková**

## **Introduction**

In 2016, UNWTO (n.d.) supported “Tourism for All” which embraced accessibility, sustainability and equitable participation for everyone, not only to promote quality but also to increase the competitiveness of tourist destinations.

Accessibility for all to tourism facilities, products, and services should be a central part of any responsible and sustainable tourism policy. Accessibility is not only about human rights. It is a business opportunity for destinations and companies to embrace all visitors and enhance their revenues (p. 1).

Darcy & Dickson (2009), amongst many others, reported that certain disadvantaged consumer segments had limited access to tourism services, including not only people with disabilities (physical or sensory) but also families with young children and seniors. With respect to the former, the Director General of the World Health Organisation (WHO) mentioned in January 2022 about 12.6% of the world’s population (1 billion people) were living with some form of disability (Ghebreyesus 2022). He maintained that those people who are responsible for services should be aware of any barriers to accessibility and cooperate to help those people with disabilities to access those services. The UNWTO (2020) has collected and published, among other things, the following facts about people with disabilities:

- By 2050, one in four people living in Europe and North America could be aged 65 or over (one in six people worldwide).
- More than 46% of older persons (over 60) already have disabilities.
- Travellers with limitations tend to travel accompanied by 2 to 3 persons.
- The potential market of people with disabilities in the European Union (EU) is more than 80 million people (plus 50 million including senior citizens and accompanying persons).

## 26 Revealed Case Studies

- 70% of people with disabilities in the EU have the financial and physical capacity to travel.
- Average holiday expenditure (per person) of tourists with disabilities is more than €800, compared to €600 for tourists without any disability in Spain (adapted and summarised from p. 6).

As can be seen, people with disabilities represent a significant segment of the tourism industry. Within this segment there is a fair proportion of people with hearing disability, who experience “impairments, limitations and restrictions (physical, social or attitudinal)” (WHO, 2021a, p.39) whose difficulties can be exacerbated by environmental factors. A major problem facing people with a hearing disability is that it “has often been referred to as an ‘invisible disability’, not just because of the lack of visible symptoms, but because it has long been stigmatised in communities and ignored by policy-makers” (WHO, 2021a, p.v). According to the WHO (2021a; 2021b) more than 5% of the world's population suffered from some form of hearing impairment; it was estimated that by 2050, up to 2.5 billion people will suffer from some degree of hearing loss, of which 700 million are likely to have disabling hearing loss.

Hearing impairments are very diverse. Among the mildest are tinnitus and various forms of mild hearing loss, perhaps in only one ear, while the most severe form is absolute deafness which may be congenital or acquired (cf. WHO, 2021a). Felman (2018) explained the

symptoms may be mild, moderate, severe, or profound. A patient with a mild hearing impairment may have problems understanding speech, especially if there is a lot of noise around, while those with moderate deafness may need a hearing aid. Some people are severely deaf and rely on lip-reading to communicate with others. People who are profoundly deaf can hear nothing at all and can find themselves totally reliant on lip-reading or sign language (p.1).

Therefore, the type and severity of the hearing impairment determines problems not only with communication but also in other areas of everyday life.

As hearing impaired people are often cut off from normal communication, they may face problems with social development, hence integration into society or find it harder to get education and employment, which, in turn, could lead to psychological problems. In addition, as

it may not be obvious initially that a person is hearing impaired, s/he might be exposed to unpleasant situations, unfair treatment or even discrimination (cf. Felman, 2018; WHO, 2021a). For this reason, hearing impairment may be considered as one of the most severe disabilities in the world as it can have a negative impact not only on the lives of those who experience it, but also on society as a whole (cf. WHO, 2021a; WHO, 2021b).

With reference to Hudáková, Motejzlková & Petráňová (2005), people with hearing impairments can communicate in different ways:

- Spoken language – often used by people who are hard of hearing or who lost their hearing later in life and have developed speech.
- Reading and writing - although people with a hearing impairment can read and write without difficulty, they often have great difficulty understanding a written text; the meaning of many words is completely ‘foreign’ to them.
- Lipreading - a challenging discipline that is far from being mastered by every person with a hearing impairment. It is not possible to recognise the melody or tone of the other person's speech.
- Sign language - the main method of communication, especially between and amongst people who were born without hearing; sign languages vary from country to country.
- Finger alphabet - part of sign language and used to spell out technical and foreign terms or names; a person with a hearing impairment must know the written form of the language to use this form of communication (pp. 11-13).

Kašpar, (2008) added that hearing impaired people may use a variety of compensatory aids:

- Hearing aids and cochlear implants - both suitable for people with hearing loss.
- Signalling aids - give the person with a hearing impairment light and/or vibration signals, for example, when the phone rings, alarm clock or doorbell sounds or there is a knock at the door, in addition to specially trained signalling dogs.
- Other aids – for example, sound amplifying telephones, induction loops, headphones for TV or radio etc. (p. 82).

In the Czech Republic, accessibility to tourism products and services for people with hearing impairments continues to be relatively poor; furthermore, awareness of their specific needs is

## 28 Revealed Case Studies

also low. It appears that most of this society still think that deaf people could read information, but as mentioned above, this is not always true (cf. Slowik, 2010). Table 1 indicates the problems that might be faced by hearing impaired visitors or workers in catering and accommodation facilities and some solutions are proposed.

**Table 1**

*Possible Problems Faced by People with Hearing Impairment in Accommodation and Catering Facilities and Proposed Solutions*

Area	Hearing Impaired Guests' Problems	Examples of proposed solutions
Personal communication with staff	Unable to understand spoken language Staff do not know how to communicate with them	Staff training with a focus on communication with the disabled Manual for communication with the disabled Application for transcription of spoken speech into written form Contact details for a sign language interpreter New technologies (self-check in/out; QR codes; loan of mobile phone etc.)
Information	Difficulty understanding the content of websites, social networks, menus; other written texts etc.	Simple text, images, photos Translation into sign language
Adaptation of accommodation facilities	Cannot hear the fire alarm, telephone; alarm clock; knocks on the door; doorbell etc. Cannot communicate when stuck in an elevator Cannot listen to TV or radio.	Light or vibrating fire alarm Door knock/bell with light signal Telephone - communication via SMS or hotel app Light and visual signalling in the lift; Vibrating alarm TV - headphones, closed captioning Signal at the room door (ideally a light and not a notice), informing staff of hearing impaired guest
Information on the availability of facilities for the hearing impaired	Information about the availability of specialist facilities not usually readily available	Pictogram for the deaf on the entrance door, on the facility's website and social media, on booking portals, etc.

*Source:* Author's deductions from the literature and first hand observations

## Conclusions

It is important to pay attention to people with hearing impairments not only from an ethical point of view as a sign of friendliness and consideration, but also for economic reasons. In the Czech Republic alone, it is estimated that there are at least 500,000 people with hearing impairment (Prokopiusová, 2020). Improving the situation of accessibility to accommodation and catering services for people with hearing impairments would benefit these businesses in terms of increased sales, improved reputation and, ultimately, benefit the whole society.

## References

- Darcy, S., & Dickson, T. (2009). A whole-of-life approach to tourism: The case for accessible tourism experiences. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 16(1), 32-44.
- Felman, A. (2018, June 27). What's to know about deafness and hearing loss? *Medical News Today*. <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/249285>
- Ghebreyesus, T. A. (2022, January 12). WHO Director-General's opening remarks at the Thematic Pre-Summit on Disability Inclusion in the Health Sector. *Governments of Norway and of Ghana, the International Disability Alliance, and WHO*. <https://www.who.int/director-general/speeches/detail/who-director-general-s-opening-remarks-at-global-disability-summit---12-january-2022>
- Hudáková, A., Motejízková, J., & Petráňová, R. (2005). *Ve světě sluchového postižení: informační a vzdělávací publikace (nejen) pro zdravotnický personál o životě a potřebách neslyšících, nedoslýchavých a obluchblých lidí a lidí s kochleárním implantátem*. Praha: Středisko rané péče Tamtam.
- Kašpar, Z. (2008). *Technické kompenzační pomůcky pro osoby se sluchovým postižením*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Praha: Česká komora tlumočnicků znakového jazyka.
- Prokopiusová, Š. (2020, September). *Neslyšící a nedoslýchaví*. *Dtest*. <https://www.dtest.cz/clanek-8279/neslyšici-a-nedoslýchaví>
- Slowik, J. (2010). *Komunikace s lidmi s postižením*. Praha: Portál.
- UNWTO (World Tourism Organisation) (n.d.). *Accessible tourism*. Madrid, Spain: UNWTO. <https://www.unwto.org/accessibility>
- UNWTO (World Tourism Organisation) (2020). *UNWTO inclusive recovery guide – sociocultural impacts of Covid-19, issue I: Persons with disabilities*. Madrid, Spain: UNWTO. <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284422296>
- WHO (2021a, March 3). *World report on hearing*. Geneva: World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/world-report-on-hearing>
- WHO (2021b, April 1). *Deafness and hearing loss*. Geneva: World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/deafness-and-hearing-loss>

### **Questions and Activities**

1. Search for an accommodation website and evaluate it from the perspective of a person with a hearing impairment.
2. In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, what respiratory protection should catering and accommodation staff use when interacting with the hearing impaired?
3. How would you respond to the argument from accommodation operators that it is not worth their investment to improve accessibility for people with disabilities?

### 30 Revealed Case Studies

4. Research and identify an example of good practice in your area, such as a catering or accommodation facility that is friendly to people with hearing impairments; highlight the good practices to justify your choice.

#### **Recommended Reading**

Bennett, R. (2019). Time for change: Rethinking the term 'hearing impaired'. *The Hearing Journal*, 72(5), 16. <https://doi.org/10.1097/01.HJ.0000559500.67179.7d>

German National Tourist Board (n.d.). *Information for hearing impaired visitors in Germany*. <https://www.germany.travel/en/accessible-germany/disability-friendly-travel-for/hard-of-hearing.html>

Kaufman-Scarborough, C. (2019). Publicly researchable accessibility information: Problems, prospects and recommendations for inclusion. *Social Inclusion*, 7(1), 264-172. <http://doi.org/10.17645/si.v7i1.1651>

Martin-Fuentes, E., Mostafa-Shaalan, S., & Juan, P. M. (2021). Accessibility in inclusive tourism? Hotels distributed through online channels. *Societies*, 11(2), 34. <http://doi.org/10.3390/soc11020034>

Visit England/Action on Hearing Loss (2013.) *Listen up!* [https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/Documents-Library/documents/England-documents/listen\\_up.pdf](https://www.visitbritain.org/sites/default/files/vb-corporate/Documents-Library/documents/England-documents/listen_up.pdf)

WHO (2021, March 3). *World report on hearing*. Geneva: World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/world-report-on-hearing>



## **The Integration of QR-codes into Hotel Operations**

**by Klára Karakasné Morvay**

According to Entre Technology Service (2018, p.1): “The use of Technology in the hospitality and tourism industry has helped speed up operations and helped [to make] the travelling process much more enjoyable and efficient”. Improving service quality has always been a top priority of hoteliers; it needs both quality and consistency to meet or exceed guest expectations.

A quick response (QR) code is a machine-readable optical label with information on the associated item or product. It is capable of holding a great deal of information that is coded in two directions: horizontally and vertically (Chang, 2014), in contrast to a barcode which is one dimensional. If a user is not willing or unable to input a long or complex URL provided in an offline context, a QR code can encode the link, thus providing all the same possibilities offered by online links, such as adding parameters for tracking. Therefore QR codes direct users via URLs to track information about products, especially in marketing and advertising campaigns, and to track consumer behaviour (Smith Corona, n.d.); they may connect guests directly to hotel or airline websites, or the hotel or restaurant’s own application, so facilitating a self-service model (for example, for advance check-in or in-room food ordering), for guests who prefer remote interaction through digital channels, of particular value during the coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic (cf. Smith Corona, n.d.).

Recently, QR technology has been used in hotels across all departments to enhance guest experiences, promote products, disseminate operations and improve communication between staff and guests. When guests use QR code technology in hotels, the interactive platform can improve the response time, which should help the relevant department to give immediate feedback and/or to fix a problem quickly (Local Measure, 2020). This interactive platform is a non-personalised, instant tool and easily accessible to the guests who may or may not be familiar with technology; it is a perfect tool to make every guest’s experience a memorable one (Entre Technology Services, 2018). Such innovative technology can also help to reduce physical contact and optimise operations and services so offering direct added value to hospitality businesses and their guests (Rahimzhan & Irani, 2021).

QR Codes may be presented in two forms - printed or digital. Examples for the former include tent cards in hotel rooms and facilities, wall posters, conference notepads, bar coasters and paper napkins. In all cases, these codes should be placed strategically as a visible prompt for their intended purpose. For example, a tent card in the room fridge might direct guests to order drinks via room service or on the dining table to the restaurant menu (See Figure 1). Digital displays have greater flexibility for change and allow hotels to leverage existing signage options such as in-room television screens, digital screens in communal spaces, conference room display boards and elevator screens. The key is that QR codes must be visible, convenient and placed strategically; to derive added value, QR Codes may be used to increase the marketing subscriber base, loyalty programme sign-ups or re-target customers via marketing campaigns, all of which should increase the hotel's revenue (Local Measure, 2020).

**Figure 1**

*Example of Menu Access via QR Code*



Source: <https://www.qr-code-generator.com/guides/create-pdf-qr-code-for-menu/>

## References

Chang, J. H. (2014). An introduction to using QR codes in scholarly journals. *Science Editing*, 1(2), 113-117. <https://www.escienceediting.org/upload/se-1-2-113.pdf>

Entre Technology Services (2018). *How information technology has affected the tourism and hospitality industry*. <https://www.entremt.com/information-technology-affected-tourism-hospitality-industry/>

Local Measure (2020, December 15). *The rise in popularity of QR codes for hotels*. <https://www.localmeasure.com/post/the-rise-in-popularity-of-qr-codes-for-hotels>

Rahimizhian, S., & Irani, F. (2021). Contactless hospitality in a post-Covid-19 world. *International Hospitality Review*, 35(2), 293-304. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IHR-08-2020-0041>

Smith Corona (nd.). *QR codes a way to analyze consumer behaviour*.  
<https://www.smithcorona.com/blog/qr-codes-analyze-consumer-behavior/>

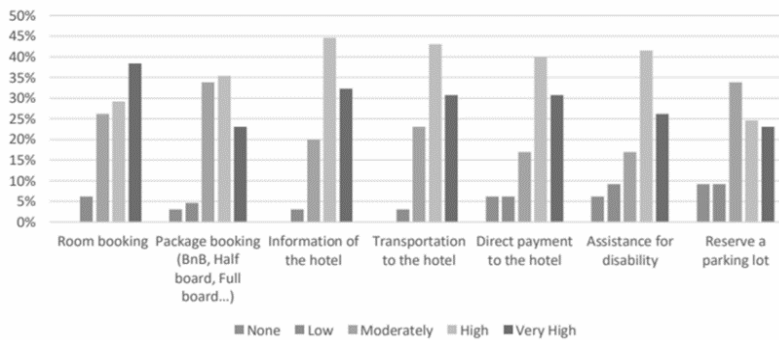
**Questions and Activities**

1. Begin by watching the video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ja5rSiOUVco> then answer and/or discuss the following questions:  
 What type and quality of hotels can the QR code be used for?  
 In your opinion, which guest market segments will be open to using new technologies?  
 Justify your response.
2. Your hotel has introduced an interactive platform incorporating the use of QR codes and, two months later, regular guests are surveyed regarding their experiences. The results are shown in the Figures 2, 3 and 4. Review the results, analyse and explain their content then advise the hotel manager on how to improve the QR codes.

**Figure 2**

*Guests' Expectations of the Type of Information Accessible via the Interactive Platform Prior to Arrival*

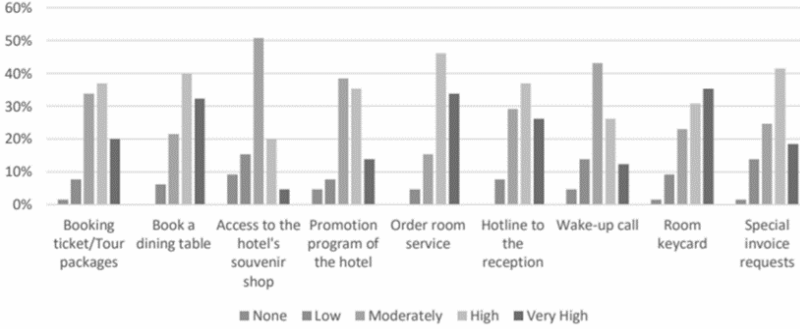
Percentage of respondents



**Figure 3**

*Guests' Expectations of the Type of Information Accessible via the Interactive Platform After Arrival*

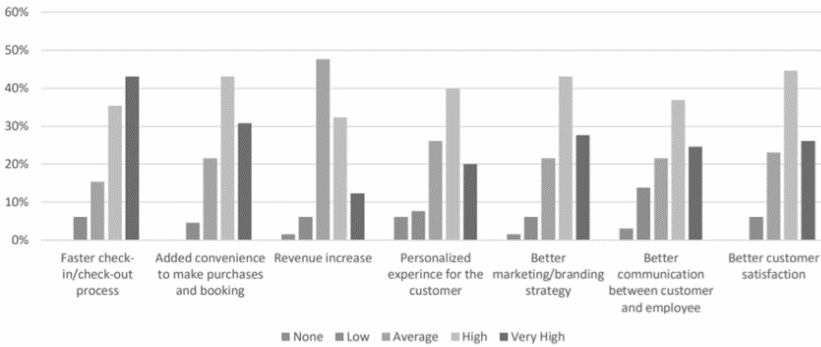
Percentage of respondents



**Figure 4**

*The Benefits Gained from the Interactive Platform*

Percentage of respondents



**Recommended Reading**

Khatri, I. (2019). Information technology in tourism & hospitality industry: A review of ten years' publications. *Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Education* 9, 74-87.

## **Tour Operators' Online Reputation Management**

**by Zdenka Petrů and Zuzana Kvítková**

Online reputation management is gaining increasing importance, mainly in the field of tourist destination management, but also in the hospitality and tourism sectors; online reviews continue to be treated as a problem to be solved, given the importance of online reputation (cf. Xiang, Du, Ma & Fan, 2017). Multiple authors have defined the online reputation concept from the approach of business management. For example, Del Fresno (2012) described it as a social issue, which includes the credibility, reliability, morality, and coherence of a person, body, agency, institution, or company, while Portmann, Meier, Cudré-Mauroux and Pedrycz (2015) defined online reputation as a social evaluation that is expressed publicly by someone based on previous experience and shared on the Internet. Furthermore, there are various definitions of 'reputation'. Briefly, it may be defined as the specific image that stakeholders have of the company. This image represents: the company and the way in which it tries to communicate and act with individual stakeholders; its values, vision, and mission; and the capacity the company must have to meet the needs and demands of its customers (Zraková, Demjanovičová & Kubina, 2019).

Social media (for example, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and others) can give information about hotels or restaurants as can comments and rankings on TripAdvisor. If postings are positive, they may be considered as beneficial elements in the public digital spectrum and so contribute to an increase in online reputation, which may be seen as a way to generate more value (cf. Hearn, 2010). With the increasing use of technology and web 2.0, additional forms of interaction between and amongst tourists are emerging. Litvin, Goldsmith and Pan (2008) argued previously, but to little avail, that given the intangible nature of this sector, it is important that tourists generate online content which can guide others in the process of selecting their trips. Since then, increasing numbers of consumers are recounting and transmitting their personal experiences of each trip on global platforms and projecting images that could impact strongly, either positively or negatively, on the reputation of tourist destinations.

Most of the studies and articles on online reputation and tourism refer to the hotel sector (for example Perez-Aranda, Vallespín & Molinillo, 2019; Anagnostopoulou, Buhalis, Kountouri, &

### 36 *Revealed Case Studies*

Manousakis, 2020), and to specific tourist destinations (cf. Cillo, Rialti, Del Giudice & Usai, 2019) but some articles have paid attention to the online reputation of other sectors, especially restaurants (Ertürk, 2019; Jinha & Youn-Kyung, 2020), visitor attractions (Carrasco-Santos, Ciruela-Lorenzo, Méndez Pavón & Cristófol Rodríguez, 2021), etc. To date, minimal attention has been paid to tourism service intermediaries, such as OTAs (Online Travel Agencies/Agents), tour operators etc. Talwar, Dhir, Kaur and Mantymaki (2020) uncovered some reasons why people purchase from OTAs. The intermediaries' reputation depends not only on their own services but very much on the services offered by tourism service providers. The sale of these services is mediated either individually (mainly by travel agents), or these services are included in the tour operator's own product/package tour.

There are many factors which can affect the reputation of OTAs and tour operators as intermediaries. Hotels are the most important stakeholders, in turn the reputation of which impacts the reputation of tour operators (Ghada & Maher, 2015). Tour operators may be selling "once in a lifetime" experiences to travellers, many of whom could be new guests; therefore, direct, and honest marketing strategies are crucial to tour operators continued success as is the management of their online reviews. However, managing the online reputation of a tour operator is not only about image, but also about achieving two much more important things: (i) ensuring that negative online reviews or ratings do not cause buyers or existing customers to get the wrong idea about the company's/tour operator's products and services; and (ii) using reviews to proactively improve the company's quality and customer service.

#### **The Case: Management of the Reputation of Tour Operators**

XY is one of the leading outbound tour operators in the Czech Republic. In 2021, it was recognised as the tour operator with the best quality of services provision in 2020 in the Czech Republic and in the top three tour operators offering air package tours. XY was founded in 1997 and its reputation has been very high over the last 20 years. Currently, it has 41 offices (own branches) located in all of the most important cities in the Czech Republic. In terms of distribution, XY has contracts with local travel agents, including the leading virtual one. Via XY's own branch offices, or online, it is possible to purchase holidays to Egypt, Greece, Italy, and Tunisia; and to exotic destinations such as Zanzibar and Maldives. The company values are focused on providing high quality travel services and consultancy for their clients.

### Challenges in Online Reputation Management

With the increasing number of online comments from its guests and other bloggers, XY found the management of the contracts of the many package tours in their portfolio to be challenging, especially with respect to complex leisure products (accommodation, meal plans, medical treatments and procedures, different rules for entry to each country due to coronavirus (COVID-19), entertainment services, on-site tours etc. Furthermore, XY applied different rules for selling the package tours dependent on the client profile, selling channels, seasonality etc. In addition, the provision of services for the B2B and B2C markets in specialised interfaces had to meet several requirements simultaneously, including fast response time, flexibility and an optimal user experience. Finally, it was challenging to amass all the services sold within one unique, coherent environment for the purpose of processing them then having a detailed overview of the sales, being able to control them and able to apply adjustments and optimise the process in real time.

To better manage their reputation, XY decided to implement new technology in the form of system modules with specialised tools for each area. Such modules were, for example, modules for B2C and B2B communication, etc. This move brought them multiple benefits in addition to increasing their online reputation and overall ranking.

### References

- Anagnostopoulou, S. C., Buhalis, D., Kountouri, I., & Manousakis, E. (2020). The impact of online reputation on hotel profitability. *Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(1), 20-39.
- Carrasco-Santos, M. J., Ciruela-Lorenzo, A. M., Méndez Pavón, J. G., & Cristófol Rodríguez, C. (2021). An online reputation analysis of the tourism industry in Marbella: A preliminary study on open innovation. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 7(2), 111. <https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc7020111> Retrieved from <https://www.mdpi.com/2199-8531/7/2/111>
- Cillo, V., Rialti, R., Del Giudice, M., & Usai, A. (2019). Niche tourism destinations' online reputation management and competitiveness in big data era: Evidence from three Italian cases. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(2), 1-15
- Del Fresno, M. (Ed.) (2012). *El consumidor social: Reputación online y social media (1st ed.)*. Barcelona: UOC.
- Ertürk, M. (2019). An investigation of negative reviews on TripAdvisor about the seafood restaurant in Kyrenie. *Journal of Business Management and Economic Research*, 3(7), 33-45.
- Ghada, K., & Maher, A. (2015). Determining the critical factors affecting tour operator reputation based on stakeholders' perceptions: Reputation quotient approach. *Journal of Association of Arab Universities for Tourism and Hospitality*, 12(1), 140-157.

### 38 Revealed Case Studies

Hearn, A. (2010). Structuring feeling: Web 2.0, online ranking and rating, and the digital reputation economy. *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organisation*, 10, 421-438.

Jinha, L., & Youn-Kyung, K. (2020). Online reviews of restaurants: Expectation-confirmation theory. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 21(5), 582-599.

Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., & Pan, B. (2008). Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. *Tourism Management*, 29, 458-468.

Perez-Aranda, J., Vallespín, M., & Molinillo, S. (2019). Hotels' online reputation management: Benefits perceived by managers. *Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 31(2), 615-632

Portmann, E., Meier, A., Cudré-Mauroux, P., & Pedrycz, W. (2015). FORA - A fuzzy set based framework for online reputation management. *Fuzzy Sets Systems*, 269, 90-114.

Talwar, S., Dhir, A., Kaur, P., & Mantymaki, M. (2020). Why do people purchase from online travel agencies (OTAs)? A consumption value perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 88, 102534-102545.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102534>

Xiang, Z., Du, Q., & Ma, Y., & Fan, W. (2017). A comparative analysis of a major online review platforms: Implications for social media analytics in hospitality and tourism. *Tourism Management*, 58, 51-65.

Zraková, D., Demjanovičová, M., & Kubina, M. (2019). Online reputation in the transport and logistics field. *Transportation Research Procedia*, 40, 1231-1237.

#### Questions and Activities

1. What are the main benefits of booking and travelling with a tour operator? Are there any drawbacks? Justify your responses.
2. How would you rate a tour operator? Justify your choice of criteria.
3. How would you obtain information to verify client satisfaction/dissatisfaction with a tour operator's services?
4. Where can potential guests (as well as tour operators) check the quality of services in an hotel, which is part of a package tour offering?
5. Research online portals where it might be possible to compare package tours from different tour operators. Which criteria are used most frequently for comparative purposes?
6. How might a tour operator implement online reputation management? What might be the benefits of such an exercise?
7. Identify and discuss any internal instruments and measures that could lead to a tour operators' positive online reputation.



**Recommended Reading**

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2012). *Marketing management. (14<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Hoboken, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Vollenbroeck, W., De Vriers, S., Constantinides, E., & Krommers, P. (2014). Identification of influence in social media communities. *International Journal of Web Based Communities*, 10(3), 280-297.

## **Cliffly Travel Company**

**by Maria Tătărușanu**

Cliffly Travel Company was founded in 2010 as a joint stock company operating in Crete, Greece. Their main activity is carrying out business operations that aim to create and market tourism products in various destinations, especially in Europe. One of the component companies of the group is Kazantakis, within which the Hotel CON operates; it comprises 4-star accommodation for 300 people, a restaurant with a capacity of over 200 seats, several swimming pools and specialist facilities for organising events and entertainment activities; it is located on the island of Crete.

Kazantakis uses specialised websites to promote its holiday packages, offering not only all-inclusive, full board and half board holidays in the summer season but also events for companies focused on the off-season; a key advertising feature is the natural landscape and clement weather of the Mediterranean island of Crete. In addition, Kazantakis has contracts with tour operators, who work with local retail agencies to promote and sell tourism products, in several European countries.

The manager of the Hotel CON claims that, mainly, the guests come from the northern European Union, Scandinavia and Great Britain, as they are seeking destinations where they can enjoy the milder climate, sunshine and warm water of the Mediterranean Sea. Furthermore, he believes the island's wild landscapes and majestic mountains, that tower over its natural harbours, as well as locally grown food and local wines, are strong pulling factors. Recently, he noted that there had been an increased demand for cultural tourism. In part, he insists that this demand has been motivated through the Kazantakis group's informative websites in which Crete is marketed as a cultural tourism destination. There is mention of the Minoan civilisation, its link to the ancient Greek civilisation then to the subsequent evolution of European culture. Potential visitors are informed that they can visit the Minoan Palace of Knossos, which was excavated at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, and the Heraklion Archaeological Museum in which the history of the Cretan culture is highlighted and presented in an attractive way. Another key historical attraction in Crete is referred to - the work of the Venetians who built the ancient

harbour and lighthouse of Chania in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, in addition to various watchtowers and other fortifications. These structures are claimed to be so impressive that they have defied time; also, they have contributed to local legend and folklore.

International package and individual tourists' access to the island is usually by air via Heraklion, Chania or Lassithi; the air traffic is heavy, especially during the summer months. A recent increase in demand is due mainly to the declining attraction of cultural destinations of North Africa such as Tunisia and Egypt, attributed to frequent political changes, political instability and terrorist attacks, all of which may pose a threat to tourists' security, health or even their lives. Crete can also be accessed by sea via one of six main ports, which enable daily access to and from Piraeus (port of Athens) and other Greek islands. It is a popular destination for Mediterranean cruises so its main ports of Heraklion and Chania benefit from infrastructure to receive large numbers of tourists, some of whom may want to explore the island.

On the downside, the best bathing beaches are quite far from the hotel with the nearest one being about 20 minutes' walk away. For this reason, a decision was taken from the outset to invest in several swimming pools. There are four pools for adults, one of which is indoors and three are outdoors: the first outdoor pool is designated for water games, sports and exercise classes; the second is for lane swimming; and the third is for guests who want to relax. There is also a children's pool and, last year, Kazantakis decided to invest in the construction of a water park. As the hotel is 2 km from the closest town, cultural and entertainment activities are organised in a special area every evening.

Three Romanian families decided to purchase full board packages at the Hotel CON in order to spend a special holiday in this resort. They were looking forward to participating in local trips to learn more about the island, its history including a visit to the Palace of the famous Minoan king, Knossos. Last but not least, they were attracted by reports of the vibrant Greek lifestyle, especially their freshly prepared food, their music and their well-known dance - the director of the famous film "Zorba the Greek" was born in Cyprus, another Mediterranean island. In addition, they thought the children would enjoy the water park, the kids' club activities organised in the hotel, paddling in the sea and healthy morning or evening walks on the shore. The price of the package was 1900 euros per family, including direct flights and local transfers; it was considered acceptable given the expected quality of services and their anticipated image of the destination.

## 42 Revealed Case Studies

On arrival at the Hotel CON, the families, especially the adults, were amazed to find that almost nothing at the hotel seemed to be reminiscent of their prior conceptions of Crete yet they had researched the destination so carefully prior to booking the trip! The bar was stocked with drinks that were almost entirely made by well-known American brands and the dinners were internationally themed with only one Greek evening during the whole holiday, even though the famous dip, tzatziki, was always present at the table. The employees were mainly from the island, but the manager was from the United States. The loud music that played incessantly, both inside the hotel and in the grounds, was evocative of music that was played regularly on most European and American radio and television stations. The animation team was from various western European countries so they produced evening shows that focused on international themes, sometimes related to their own cultures with a focus on American and European music that had been successful in previous decades; there was no evidence of local Greek music or entertainment.

The Romanians left the Hotel CON feeling that, although they had a great holiday, their expectations of a Greek cultural experience had not been met, especially in terms of the lifestyle of the Greek people. They thought, however, that such a holiday could have been just as good had they chosen a closer, more familiar seaside destination and it would have been much less expensive!

### **Activities**

1. In pairs, discuss the reasons why the guests were dissatisfied with their holiday.
2. Examine the concepts of globalisation and glocalisation in hotel management and determine their potential impact on island tourism.
3. Based on the above case, you are asked to advise Cliffly's Board of Directors on predicting and planning a future business strategy for the Hotel CON, in particular to monitor and improve the guests' experiences. In groups of three or four, based on desk research, draft and justify your plan. Make a short presentation of your findings and recommendations to the whole group then invite comments and questions.

### **Recommended Reading/Watching**

GeoStudio (2020, April 18). *Videařcházky 01 – Úvod* [Video].

YouTube. <https://youtu.be/MZINyQG9XyU>

Proterozoic in Bohemia (n.d.)

<http://prvohoryvcechach.cz/home/sbirka-nalezu/karbon/>

UNESCO Global Geoparks (2021).  
<https://en.unesco.org/global-geoparks>

## **Service Sector Hospitality Marketing post Coronavirus (COVID-19): Opportunities and Challenges in Innovating the 6Ps**

by **Crispin Dale, Chris Phelan, Neil Robinson and Lauren Sinton**

### **Introduction**

This case study reviews possible methods that could be employed to facilitate increased customer demand associated with service sector hospitality provision, centred on the 6Ps marketing model.

### **The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Hospitality Sector**

The hospitality sector plays a key role within the service sector; it generates employment, infrastructure and income for national, regional and local economies alike (cf. Andriotis, 2002). At a global level, hospitality businesses make up 10% of the World economies gross domestic product (GDP) (WTTC, 2021).

In 2020, and during the first half of 2021, the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant financial impact upon the service sector economy including retail, tourism and hospitality (Suneson, 2020; Dale, Robinson & Sheikh, 2021). In 2020, the decline in international trade equated to 62 million jobs globally (WTTC, 2021). Although it has been reported that global consumer confidence in the summer of 2021 exceeded January 2020 levels (Ipsos, 2022), the huge negative impact of COVID-19 continues to hit the wider supply and demand issues associated with supply chain management (cf. Aigbedo, 2021).

Considering the above impacts, national governments such as the United Kingdom adopted mechanisms including job retention schemes in which employees were furloughed (given temporary leave with government support (see <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-could-be-covered-by-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>); to prevent or lessen the impact of job losses. The COVID-19 pandemic acted as a continual disrupter to the global hospitality industry with successive lockdowns resulting in the forced closure of, and near cessation of consumer purchasing in, physical retail outlets, while Fotiadis, Polyzos & Huan (2021) predicted that it could impede future growth in the tourism industry. In consequence, though always

important, the assurance of health and safety measures in hospitality outlets can be argued to have increased and will continue to in the future (cf. WTTC, 2021), which has, in turn, influenced consumer attitudes and behaviours towards the purchase and consumption of hospitality products.

On the positive side, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about new products, modes of ordering and service, in addition to means of transaction with online, contactless card or mobile phone payment becoming the norm. The insperience economy has grown with consumers gravitating towards purchasing hospitality takeaway and delivery services that can be consumed in a home or other domestic setting (cf. Mintel, 2020; Shardlow, 2020). In this context, the traditional standard take away foods have been augmented by home delivery (for example, uber eats) and various enterprising schemes such as postal or supermarket delivery boxes with recipes, ingredients and instructions for home preparation and cooking (for example: côte.co.uk; gousto.co.uk; hellofresh.co.uk; Marks & Spencer; Morrisons and even Michelin star chefs through American Express). To ensure safe distancing, the role of robots in production and service has also become a growing feature (Wan, Chan & Luo, 2021). In line with these trends has been the growth of hospitality and accommodation rental companies, such as Airbnb, to provide services that cater for the current market preferences. Furthermore, the move towards “staycation” holiday product purchase in the form of camping, caravanning and property lets has been influenced by consumer propensity for risk aversion (Kim et al., 2021).

### **The 6Ps Marketing Model**

#### *Product*

Hospitality firms turned to providing alternative products and services in an attempt to reduce the financial impact caused by COVID-19. Many businesses took innovative approaches to developing new opportunities and adapting their business models (Breier et al., 2021). For example, many restaurants offered delivery services, created new products and menus, and launched e-commerce platforms, in order to suit the needs of consumers who were now being forced to spend more time at home (Alonso et al., 2020).

#### *Price*

Tourism and hospitality are discretionary activities, with high price elasticity in times of crisis. With the growing economic uncertainty, as COVID-19 spread, consumers have exercised more caution in their purchasing choices and paid increasing attention to value for money considerations (Pappas & Glyptou, 2021). As hospitality firms struggled with the decreased

## 46 *Revealed Case Studies*

demand and excess capacity, they needed to be mindful of this heightened price sensitivity. As tempting as discounting and deep price cuts were, such actions would not raise volume and might even destroy value rather than build it (Abdelnour, Babbitz & Moss, 2020). Some companies employed temporary promotions and non-monetary discounts. However, the service sector had learned from earlier periods of crisis recovery that great care should be taken; significant price cutting can increase price sensitivity during the recovery phase and erode a company's future competitive position (Radwan & Radwan, 2017).

### *Promotion*

As the financial impact of COVID-19 became apparent, many hospitality brands paused their advertising spend to preserve media budgets for the expected post lockdown recovery (Li & Hall, 2020). As consumers spent more time at home, and increasingly online, promotional posts pivoted to proactive digital communication; in particular the latter was focused on the leveraging of existing social media and email channels to emphasise the actions being taken to provide a safe environment; attempts were made to regain consumer confidence by proactively communicating how safety and hygiene standards were being maintained (Jiménez-Barreto, Loureiro, Braun, Sthapit & Zenker, 2021). As leisure travel and dining experiences became more local, hospitality promotion became hyper-local or domestic, with hospitality businesses, as well as regional and national tourism authorities, attempting to cater for the growing staycation phenomenon (Jacobsen, Farstad, Higham, Hopkins & Landa-Mata, 2021).

### *Place*

During the COVID-19 pandemic, for many hospitality businesses, location was paramount in enabling them to offer an adapted service (Ntounis, Parker, Skinner, Steadman & Warnaby, 2021). For those businesses that were positioned in relatively remote locations, with little passing consumer traffic, it was more difficult to provide and sell an adapted 'take home' product offering; delivery services in these instances became key (Ahuja, Chandra, Lord & Peens, 2021).

### *Processes*

Hospitality organisations had to change their service practices and processes due to COVID-19. New health and safety procedures were implemented, meaning that communication with customers had to change, service blueprints needed to be adapted (Pandey & Kulshrestha, 2021) and customer information had to be collated, to ensure a safe service provision (cf. GOV.UK, 2022). Technology was also employed in service environments to minimise human-to-human



contact (Gursoy, Chi & Chi, 2020), such as self-check-in kiosks and mobile applications to order food and drink; these technologies are likely to be integral in the future of the hospitality industry.

### *People*

People are the defining aspect of service delivery, and, in hospitality, the service is often inseparable from the person providing it; however, COVID-19 caused a dramatic shift from face-to-face interaction and the need to mitigate through social distance, the wearing of face masks and, within some businesses, the use of Perspex screens to separate the consumer from the service provider has changed the 'people' component of the hospitality sector radically. As with 'process' element above, technology and 'contactless hospitality' has been seen as the panacea (Rahimizhian & Irani, 2020) that can create memorable experiences and build trust (Hao & Chon, 2022); however, the extent to which technology can offset 'people' as the essential component of hospitality service remains to be seen. Whether the emphasis is on service people or service automation is considered to be a point of differentiation and the question is raised: Which would offer a potential competitive advantage going forward?

### **Challenges and Opportunities**

The fundamental challenges posed by COVID-19 are two-fold: first, how do we ensure that an industry heavily reliant on the human factor can adjust when human resources are reduced due to the impact of the pandemic? Second, and of equal importance, innovation in production and distribution needs to ensure that full service provision in terms of menu items' availability and ingredient sustainability are not affected adversely. A 'doing more with less approach' seems impossible in the current climate. One suggestion is that conversations with experts in behavioural sciences and human resource management might just identify methods for long-term service provision based on a McDonaldization approach as put forward by Ritzer (1993). This approach could include, for example, standardised service delivery incorporating robotic technologies that ensure consistency and health and safety standards are met.

### **Conclusion**

Looking to the future, service sector businesses need to become more business savvy when dealing with pandemic related crises. Indeed, those businesses that are not pandemic resilient might see their business reduced to nothing. Simple changes in product ranges, distribution variables and ingredient sourcing strategies, that are not solely reliant upon international

distributors/manufacturers, could ensure availability of key ingredients. In parallel, product ranges and services' capacity constraints – that ensure both manufacturing and service provision – are not highly dependent upon the human element would seem to be ideal; in this context, manufacturing and product service would be delivered with minimal human involvement!

## References

Abdelnour, A., Babbitz, T., & Moss, S. (2020). *Pricing in a pandemic: Navigating the COVID-19 crisis*. New York, NY: Mckinsey & Company.

<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/marketing-and-sales/our-insights/pricing-in-a-pandemic-navigating-the-COVID-19-crisis>

Ahuja, K., Chandra, V., Lord, V., & Peens, C. (2021). *Ordering in: The rapid evolution of food delivery*. New York, NY: Mckinsey & Company.

<https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/technology-media-and-telecommunications/our-insights/ordering-in-the-rapid-evolution-of-food-delivery>

Aigbedo, H. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality industry: A supply chain resilience perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *98*, 103012.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.103012>

Alonso, A. D., Kok, S. K., Bressan, A., O'Shea, M., Sakellarios, N., Koresis, A., Solis, M. A. B., & Santoni, L. J. (2020). COVID-19, aftermath, impacts, and hospitality firms: An international perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *91*, 102654.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102654>

Andriotis, K. (2002). Scale of hospitality firms and local economic development—evidence from Crete. *Tourism Management*, *23*(4), 333-341.

Breier, M., Kallmuenzer, A., Clauss, T., Gast, J., Kraus, S., & Tiberius, V. (2021). The role of business model innovation in the hospitality industry during the COVID-19 crisis. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *92*, 102723.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102723>

Dale, C., Robinson, N., & Sheikh, F. (2021). Tourist safety and security post COVID-19: Global perspectives. In V. Gowreesunkar, S. Maingi, H. Roy, & R. Micera (Eds.), *Tourism Destination Management in a Post-Pandemic Context: Global Issues and Destination Management Solutions* (pp. 85-97). Bingley, England: Emerald Publishing Limited.

Fotiadis, A., Polyzos, S., & Huan, T-C. (2021). The good, the bad and the ugly on COVID-19 tourism recovery. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *87* 103117.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.103117>

GOV.UK (2022, February 24) *Working safely during coronavirus (COVID 19)*.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-covid-19/hotels-and-guest-accommodation>

Gursoy, D., Chi, C. G., & Chi, O. H. (2020). Restaurant and hotel customers' sentiment analysis. Would they come back? If they would, WHEN?. *COVID-19 Report 2: Restaurant and Hotel Industry*. Pullman, WA: Carson College of Business, Washington State University.

<https://uwi.edu/covid19/sites/covid19/files/Covid-19%20Summary%20Report%20-%20Restaurant%20and%20hotel%20customers%E2%80%99%20sentiment%20analysis.pdf>

Hao, F., & Chon, K. K. S. (2022). Contactless service in hospitality: Bridging customer equity, experience, delight, satisfaction, and trust. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34(1), 113-134. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-05-2021-0559>

Ipsos (2022, January 21). *Global consumer confidence indexing at the same level as pre-pandemic*. [Press release].

<https://www.ipsos.com/en/global-consumer-confidence-index-january-2022>

Jacobsen, J. K. S., Farstad, E., Higham, J., Hopkins, D., & Landa-Mata, I. (2021). Travel discontinuities, enforced holidaying-at-home and alternative leisure travel futures after COVID-19. *Tourism Geographies*, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14616688.2021.1943703>

Jiménez-Barreto, J., Loureiro, S., Braun, E., Sthapit, E., & Zenker, S. (2021). Use numbers not words! Communicating hotels' cleaning programs for COVID-19 from the brand perspective. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 94, 102872. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.102872>

Kim, J., Park, J., Lee, J., Kim, S., Gonzalez-Jimenez, H., Lee, J., Choi, Y. K., Lee, J. C., Jang, S., Franklin, D., Spence, M. T., & Marshall, R. (2021). COVID-19 and extremeness aversion: The role of safety seeking in travel decision making. *Journal of Travel Research*, 1-18. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00472875211008252>

Li, C., & Hall, S. B. (2020). *This is how COVID-19 is affecting the advertising industry*. <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/coronavirus-advertising-marketing-covid19-pandemic-business/>

Mintel (2020, November 26). *Experiences 2021: Virtual Lives*. London, UK: Mintel Group Ltd.

Ntounis, N., Parker, C., Skinner, H., Steadman, C., & Warnaby, G. (2021). Tourism and hospitality industry resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic: Evidence from England. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 25, 46-59. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2021.1883556>

Pandey, A., & Kulshrestha, R. (2021). Service blueprint 4.0: A service design for hotels beyond COVID-19. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 13(5), 610-621. <https://doi.org/10.1108/whatt-05-2021-0076>.

Pappas, N., & Glyptou, K. (2021). Accommodation decision-making during the COVID-19 pandemic: Complexity insights from Greece. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 93, 102767. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102767>

Radwan, H. R. I., & Radwan, I. (2017). Managing hotels during economic challenges: A case study on hotels in Sharm El-Sheikh and Hurghada, Egypt. *Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 5(2), 84-100.

Rahimzhanian, S., & Irani, F. (2020). Contactless hospitality in a post-COVID-19 world. *International Hospitality Review*, 35(2), 293-304.

## 50 Revealed Case Studies

Ritzer, G. (1993). *The McDonaldisation of society : An investigation into the changing character of contemporary social life*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Shardlow, E. (2020, November 21) *The insperience economy: what brands need to know*. Retrieved from <https://www.stylus.com/threeminute-trend-the-insperience-economy>

Suneson, G. (2020, March 21). Industries hit hardest by coronavirus in the US include retail, transportation, and travel. *USA Today*.  
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2020/03/20/us-industriesbeing-devastated-by-the-coronavirus-travel-hotels-food/111431804/>

Wan, L. Chan, E., & Luo, X. (2021). Robots come to rescue: How to reduce perceived risk of infectious disease in COVID19-stricken consumers? *Annals of Tourism Research*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.103069>

WTTC (2021). *Travel & tourism economic impact 2021: Global Economic Impact & Trends 2021*. London, Author.  
<https://wttc.org/Portals/0/Documents/Reports/2021/Global%20Economic%20Impact%20and%20Trends%202021.pdf>

### **Questions and Activities**

1. Analyse the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on a hospitality organisation of your choice.
2. How might service sector enterprises go about ensuring that customers feel confident and safe when visiting their establishments? For example with respect to staff training, product information associated with sanitisation provision, visible methods to reassure customers at point of product delivery/service etc.
3. How might the service blueprint of an hotel have changed in response to COVID-19? Consider this question in the context of the different customer touchpoints, and the customer journey, from booking the hotel to departing the hotel after their stay.
4. Contactless hospitality represents a broad-spectrum from a digital concierge to app-controlled rooms through to robot servers. Research and identify five examples of contactless service then compile a list of the advantages and disadvantages of each. In the long-term, do you think these smart approaches compliment or compete with the hospitality service employee? Justify your answer.

# **Strawberry Fields Forever: Opportunities for Green Engagement and Happiness**

by **Nicholas Catahan, Crispin Dale and Neil Robinson**

## **Introduction**

The focus of the present case is on the role of garden centres as facilitators of mental health, physical wellbeing and social inclusion, examined from a leisure and recreation perspective. The external environment associated with this green and pleasant land in which we live has many facets akin to its beauty and wonderment. Indeed, the manner in which the countryside and its historical and cultural heritage exist, often represented by remarkable old buildings and areas of outstanding natural beauty, should in no way be underestimated or taken for granted. One such suggestion that has been mooted is the role of outdoor engagement to facilitate general physical health and mental health wellbeing (Stewart, 2020). This case study considers the possible merits of the role of garden centres as facilitators of mental health wellbeing and social inclusion.

## **Mental Health Well-being and Inclusion: An Outdoor Perspective**

Recreation in the outdoors has been particularly prevalent during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic with activity in open air environments being actively encouraged by Governments. Though that is not to suggest that COVID-19 has not had a direct or indirect impact upon outdoor recreational activity as studies have found (Randler, Tryjanowski, Jokimäki, Kaisanlahti-Jokimäki & Staller, 2020). Outdoor recreation can include a breadth of activity ranging from the physically demanding, including hill walking, mountain and rock climbing, to the potentially less strenuous activities of fishing, birdwatching and gardening. The power of the outdoors and its health-related benefits have been well documented (Elliot, White, Taylor & Herbert, 2020; Novak, Komives, Harangi-Rakos & Peto, 2020; Wojcieszak-Zbierska, Jeczmyk, Zawadka & Uglis, 2020). These authors claim that the benefits may be both physical and mental, including enhanced fitness, weight loss, a sense of wellbeing, relaxation, life satisfaction and happiness. Outdoor recreation can also be associated with rediscovering a lost harmony with nature and perpetuating a sense of social cohesion and togetherness when participated in with others (Baklien, Ytterhus, & Bongaardt, 2016). It is not unusual, therefore, that the outdoors can be

argued to play a role in cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) (Freeman, Akhurst, Bannigan, & James, 2017). The opportunities for everyone to engage in outdoor recreation are influenced by several factors including physical and mental capability, finance, free time, etc. Clearly, at a local level, garden centres can play a key role in facilitating a number of the benefits that are associated with the outdoor recreation.

### **Garden Centres as Group Focal Points**

A culture of garden tourism and garden centre related leisure and tourism is a global phenomenon; gardens and gardening play a prominent role in driving tourism in many places around the world (Benfield, 2021). The United Kingdom (UK) is often referred to as the '*gardening capital of the world*', which creates and sustains much employment. This component of the tourism system and visitor economy continues to generate millions of visitors who spend *£*billions annually whilst creating a lucrative multiplier effect across other sectors (Oxford Economics, 2018).

Garden centres are horticultural retail outlets where people commonly purchase both gardening and non-gardening items, which can be stand-alone centres or part of other organisations, such as supermarkets, DIY outlets and general stores (HTA, 2021). UK households spent around *£*7.5 billion on garden goods in 2017 with the UK garden market estimated to have contributed *£*28.2 billion to national GDP that same year, sustaining 674,200 jobs across the country (HTA, 2021). Further, they report that there are an estimated 1800 garden centres in the UK, and over two-thirds of British adults visit a garden centre each year. In a 2020 survey, British adults were asked what benefits they believe gardens and gardening offer: 87% believe gardens and green spaces benefit their state of mind; 84% their physical health; 94% the environment; 94% make an area a pleasant place to live; and 93% help to support wildlife (HTA, 2021.). As pressures on the Environment and National Health Service in the UK continue to grow, in 2018 the government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) published a 25 Year Plan to improve the environment, with an emphasis on health and wellbeing (DEFRA, 2018). Garden centres in collaboration with stakeholders such as botanic gardens and health professionals could play a key role in supporting the delivery of the key action area by connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing alongside other aims and key areas.

Garden centres alongside a global network of botanic gardens, health professionals and other stakeholders should be supported for cross pollination opportunities for the greater good of services for people, places, and planet. Further development of roles and collaborative partnerships between these service providers could be introduced for strategic, transformative, place-based, service provision, policies, and strategies. There are many benefits to be realised and embedded into policy and practice for transformative services, places, and communities to develop more responsibly and sustainably (Parker, 2008; Ostrom et al., 2010). Greater access to gardens and gardening leads to vital opportunities of health and wellbeing of people and planet (Westwood, Cavender, Meyer & Smith, 2021). Engagement with gardens, gardening, and nature offers profound benefits for mental, physical, and social health and wellbeing (Buck, 2016; DEFRA, 2018). Gardens and gardening stimulate physical activity, ease stress and anxiety disorders, promote social cohesion and may be of relevance for non-medical, social prescription (Howarth, Brettell, Hardman & Maden, 2020). Mental and physical activities as a result of gardening can divert huge amounts of economic costs from a range of disorders associated with unhealthy lifestyles (Buck, 2016). With reference to the benefits from accessing natural outdoor environments and related activities, green spaces play significant environmental, sociocultural, and economic roles in sustainable development, and in turn the health and wellbeing of both people and place (Boyd, White, Bell & Burt, 2018). Such activities are found to facilitate healthy places and people, with key transformative, physical, and psychological benefits (Christensen, 2017). Garden centres can, therefore, also serve as conduits for the plethora of benefits awaiting people from all different backgrounds and situations.

Bearing in mind the evidence from the literature, managers and owners of botanic gardens and garden centres may be uniquely positioned to collaborate with health professionals to tackle a range of complex sustainable development challenges with health and wellbeing as one of many key global goals. Opportunities for place-based, holistic approaches with key public, private and voluntary authorities is suggested as a way forward for the vitality and viability of transformative service regarding health and wellbeing progression. Such collaborative partnerships, informed approaches and expertise would enrich and enable the creation, development and nurturing of gardens and gardening via garden centre retail outlets, from the high street indie to the corporate supermarket, to the diversity of both urban and rural offerings and garden centres in between. The development of collaborative partnerships between authorities on all aspects of gardens and gardening, namely the global network of botanic gardens and stakeholders, alongside institutions with expertise on health, amongst others, may lead to: the development and efficacy of green

infrastructure; greenspace creation; the creation of responsible gardens with a defined purpose; and sustainable development outcomes, including the connection of people with the environment for the purposes of health and wellbeing. With such support, garden centres could develop their role and responsibilities in delivering co-created strategies for a healthy and vibrant community, whilst enhancing valuable and much needed ecosystem services, people, place, and planet need to remain viable.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion the benefits of outdoor recreation linked to commercial enterprises such as garden centres have possibly been underestimated for many years. First, the kinship and wellbeing associated with the actions of individuals meeting and interacting at such locations offers those individuals a high degree of camaraderie that would not normally be experienced at other so called retail enterprises such as shopping malls. Second, the mental health and wellbeing associated with visits to establishments where likeminded individuals can shop, chat, dine and engage with fellow green fingered thinkers offers something more than the average visit to other retail sites where isolation and loneliness might manifest themselves. Finally, the potential financial saving to health care providers from a rejuvenated population engaging in recreational opportunities at garden centre outlets also needs to be recognised.

## **References**

- Baklien, B., Ytterhus, B. & Bongaardt, R. (2016). When everyday life becomes a storm on the horizon: families' experiences of good mental health while hiking in nature. *Anthropology & Medicine*, 23(1), 42-53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13648470.2015.1056056>
- Benfield, R. (2021). *New directions in garden tourism*. Oxfordshire, UK: CABI.
- Boyd, F., White, M. P., Bell, S. L., & Burt, J. (2018). Who doesn't visit natural environments for recreation and why: A population representative analysis of spatial, individual and temporal factors among adults in England. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 175, 102–113. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.03.016>
- Buck, D. (2016). *Gardens and health. Implications for policy and practice*. London: King's Fund.
- Christensen, S. (2017). Seeding social capital? Urban community gardening and social capital. *Civil Engineering and Architecture*, 5(3), 104–123. <https://doi.org/10.13189/CEA.2017.050305>
- DEFRA (2018). *A green future: our 25 year plan to improve the environment*. London: DEFRA. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf)



- Elliott, L., White, M., Taylor, A., & Herbert, S. (2020). Energy expenditure on recreational visits to different natural environments. *Social Science & Medicine*, 139, 53-60.
- Freeman E., Akhurst, J., Bannigan, K., & James, H. (2017). Benefits of walking and solo experiences in UK wild places. *Health Promotion International*, 32(6), 1048-1056.
- Howarth, M., Brettle, A., Hardman, M., & Maden, M. (2020). What is the evidence for the impact of gardens and gardening on health and well-being: A scoping review and evidence-based logic model to guide healthcare strategy decision making on the use of gardening approaches as a social prescription. *BMJ Open*, 10(7), 1-16. <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/10/7/e036923>
- HTA (Horticultural Trades Association) (2021). *Garden industry statistics*. London, Author. <https://hta.org.uk/industry-data/garden-statistics.html>
- Novak, N., Komives, P., Harangi-Rakos, M., & Peto, K. (2020). The role of rural areas in the preservation of health. *International Review of Applied Sciences and Engineering* 11(2), 157–166
- Ostrom, A., Bitner, M., Brown, S., Burkhard, K., Goul, M., Smith-Daniels, V., Demirhan, H., & Rabinovich, E. (2010). Moving forward and making a difference: Research priorities for the science of service. *Journal of Service Research*, 13(1), 4-36. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1094670509357611>
- Oxford Economics (2018). *The economic impact of ornamental horticultural and landscaping in the UK*. London: Oxford Economics Ltd.
- Parker, C. (2008). Extended editorial: Place – the trinal frontier. *Journal of Place Management and Development*, 1(1), 5-14.
- Randler, C., Tryjanowski, P., Jokimäki, J., Kaisanlahti-Jokimäki, M. L., & Staller, N. (2020). SARS-CoV2 (COVID-19) pandemic lockdown influences nature-based recreational activity: The case of birders. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17(19), 7310. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17197310>
- Stewart, D. (2020). Can 10 years of recreation trends help us predict the future? *Journal of the Outdoor Recreation Network*, April, 5-11. <https://www.outdoorrecreation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/ORN-April-Journal-2020-Non-Member-Version.pdf>
- Westwood, M., Cavender, N., Meyer, A., & Smith, P. (2021). Botanic garden solutions to the plant extinction crisis. *Plants, People, Planet*, 3(1), 22-32. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ppp3.10134>
- Wojcieszak-Zbierska, M. Jeczmyk, A. Zawadka, J., & Uglis, J. (2020). Agritourism in the era of the Coronavirus (COVID-19): A rapid assessment from Poland. *Agriculture*, 10(9), 397-416. <https://doi.org/10.3390/agriculture10090397>

### **Activities**

1. From both micro and macro perspectives, consider what garden centres do or could provide for visitors, regarding experiences, and health and wellbeing opportunities for people, place and the planet.

## 56 *Revealed Case Studies*

2. Create a typology (classification) of people who visit or could visit garden centres with descriptions on health and wellbeing indicators in relation to potential experiences, impacts and consequences.
3. “One possible future suggestion for the treatment of mental health and anxiety related illnesses is to prescribe group walks in the countryside and visits to local garden centres”. Discuss in a small group, research and present your findings to the others.

## **Tourists' Sustainable Intelligence and its Role within the Smart Destination Scenario**

**by Yaiza López-Sánchez and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández**

The emergence of smart tourism destinations (STDs) invokes a new planning and management approach for destinations to adopt sustainability as a crucial part of their agenda. The concept of a STD has been defined from various viewpoints and in multiple ways by researchers (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2013; Shafiee, Ghatari, Hasanzadeh & Jahanyan, 2019). Although some authors have introduced certain dimensions and components of this system, none of the studies has proposed a model of how these components might work together.

Is it possible that the sustainability of destinations could be improved through measures implemented exclusively from the supply perspective? Although sustainability cannot be covered exclusively from a supply perspective, on the contrary, tourism demand in the form of tourists plays a key role in achieving sustainable tourism. Knowledge of the meaning of 'sustainable development' from the tourists' perspective, that is the ways in which they interpret this term and the real importance they attach to it, is believed to be the key to designing the most appropriate actions with the aim of achieving the transformation towards a new tourism model whose central value is sustainability.

"Previous studies on smart tourism and competitive advantage [have] demonstrated that tourism lacks a shared vision across the interests of various stakeholders" (Koo, Mendes Filho & Buhalis, 2019, p.2). As smart tourism research is in its infancy, the most investigated issues still have a few gaps to fill (Mehraliyev, Chan, Choi, Koseoglu & Law, 2020). In that sense, although the relationship between STDs and sustainable tourism indicators may have been studied extensively (Foronda-Robles, Galindo-Pérez-de-Azpillaga & Fernández-Tabales, 2020; Ivars-Baidal, Celdrán-Bernabeu, Femenia-Serra, Perles-Ribes & Giner-Sánchez, 2021; Ivars-Baidal, Vera-Rebollo, Perles-Ribes, Femenia-Serra & Celdrán-Bernabeu, 2021), there appears to be an information gap regarding the incorporation of tourists' perspectives of sustainability and its measurement through indicators. Considering this gap in the literature, a proposal for "Indicators of Tourists' Sustainable Intelligence" is put forward for employment as a fundamental tool in the

incorporation of tourists' perspectives in the progress towards making STDs even more sustainable.

Tourist behaviour is a fundamental issue in tourism studies and, in particular, pro-sustainable tourist behaviour is a thriving field of study (López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández, 2016). Reviewing the literature, many definitions focus on this concept, both in terms of segmenting tourists and in the denomination of different typologies (Dolnicar, 2004; Juvan & Dolnicar, 2016; Passafaro et al. 2015). The scientific debate regarding consumer behaviour in sustainability issues is intense and some ways controversial. Accordingly, it is of interest to examine the relations between the values, attitudes and actual behaviour of tourists with respect to sustainable consumption patterns. A problem in the study of consumer attitudes to, and behaviour towards, sustainability is the variety of variables that can be considered, which may depend on the researchers' understanding of sustainability. Tourists in favour of sustainability are not a homogenous and static group; their perspectives vary depending on the extent of their "sustainable intelligence", a concept which may embrace variables related to their commitment, attitudes, knowledge and behaviours regarding a destination's sustainability (cf. López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández, 2016).

The psychologist, Daniel Goleman, in his successive studies on emotional, social and ecological intelligence (cf. Goleman, 1995; 2006; 2009, respectively), has attained interesting conclusions allowing for the modification of the classical concept of "intelligence". He argues that there are different ways in which one might be labelled 'intelligent' and that intelligent behaviour may be assessed by self-awareness, impulse control, persistence, enthusiasm, empathy, self-motivation and social skills, for example, not just by intelligence quotient (IQ). As Goleman (2009) argues,

emotional intelligence and social intelligence are built on the ability to view the perspective of others, to feel what they feel and show our respect [...] ecological intelligence extends this ability to all natural systems, showing the same empathy where we notice any signs of suffering in the world and making the efforts to improve things (p.63).

Goleman (2009, p. 61) defines intelligence as "the ability to learn from experience and to adequately address and respond to our environment". Accordingly, the term "sustainable intelligence", applied in this case to the tourist, refers to the ability of tourists to apply their experience and knowledge regarding the effects of tourism on the environment in which it is

practised and to develop proactive behaviour towards sustainable tourism, from the perspectives of both consumption and production. A tourist with high "sustainable intelligence" shows empathy towards sustainable tourism development in the territory where s/he enjoys holidays. Consequently, such tourists have an intellectual understanding of sustainability and take measures to facilitate its incorporation in the processes of production and tourism consumption, which are fundamental pillars in the progress of STDs.

Recent literature defines tourist "sustainable intelligence" "as an inherent capacity for a certain type of tourist, the possession of which conditions their motivations, expectations and behaviours" (López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández, 2016, p.61). From a statistical perspective, "sustainable intelligence" is a latent variable (not directly observable); therefore, it had to be quantified by indirect indicators, which, to a greater or lesser degree, are related to the latent variable. The variables put forward as measures of sustainable intelligence in Table 1, alongside their definitions, are abstracted from López-Sánchez and Pulido-Fernández (2016). The authors performed a latent class analysis on data collected from a sample of 1188 tourists regarding their levels of commitment, attitudes and/or behaviours with respect to sustainability in the Western Costa del Sol, Spain. It was proposed that these variables may be linked to the constructs of 'sustainable intelligence' to produce the four dimensions in Column 3. From the perspectives of the tourists, various issues related to sustainability: knowledge, attitude or valuation, behaviour and economic implications became apparent (López-Sánchez and Pulido-Fernández, 2016).

Indicators are a fundamental tool for destinations in their progress towards a more sustainable tourism development and implementing sustainable tourism principles and policies in real contexts. This case study briefly introduces some novelties in the dialogue between STDs and sustainability, specifically from the demand analysis. In order to incorporate tourists in the analysis and progress of the sustainability of STDs, it is necessary to evaluate and measure the tourists' levels of commitment, attitudes, knowledge and behaviours regarding sustainability, defined as "sustainable intelligence", within the framework of smart sustainability.

STDs are a relatively new concept on which there is currently no overall consensus (Ivars, Celdrán-Bernabeu, Mazón & Perles-Ivars, 2019; Shafiee, Ghatari, Hasanzadeh & Jahanyan, 2021). From the smart cities approach, there are still many gaps in the research on smart sustainable cities which require integrated models that incorporate both smartness and

sustainability (Bastidas-Manzano, Sánchez-Fernández & Casado-Aranda, 2021; Bibri & Krogstic, 2017; Rocha, 2020).

**Table 1**

*Variables that Define Tourists' "Sustainable Intelligence"*

Variables	Definition	Dimension
Variable A	Knowledge of the meaning of sustainable tourism destination	Knowledge
Variable B	Importance of working for the sustainability of tourism destinations	Attitude/valuation
Variable C	Type of sustainable behaviour during the stay	Behaviour
Variable D	Valuation of characteristics relating to sustainability of the destination	Attitude/valuation
Variable E	Willing to pay for a more sustainable tourism destination	Economic implication
Variable F	Acknowledgment of responsible business behaviour	Knowledge
Variable G	Provide an additional amount (to the total cost of the trip) ensuring by contract that the money is earmarked for projects to improve the sustainability of the destination	Economic implication
Variable H	Provide an additional amount (to the total cost of the trip), tax deductible, to improve the sustainability of the destination	Economic implication
Variable I	Attitude towards the establishment of a tax to improve the sustainability of the destination	Economic implication

*Source:* Table adapted from López-Sánchez & Pulido-Fernández (2016).

These gaps are even more evident in the field of tourist destinations because the evolution of destinations towards sustainability had still not been resolved before the paradigm of the smart destinations arose; the integration of the two perspectives is not clear and favours only rhetorical approaches and few practical results (cf. Perles & Ivars, 2018)

In order to include the perspective of tourist "sustainable intelligence" in a more complete definition (and measurement) of STDs, further development based on the "Indicators of Tourists Sustainable Intelligence" may offer an opportunity to define and measure the different tourist "sustainable intelligence" dimensions, related with the commitment, attitude, knowledge and behaviours of tourists with respect to sustainability. Furthermore, this tool could be used to

incorporate the demand perspective for the sustainable management of STDs as a key element in achieving greater destination sustainability.

## References

- Bastidas-Manzano, A. B., Sánchez-Fernández, J., & Casado-Aranda, L. A. (2021). The past, present, and future of smart tourism destinations: A bibliometric analysis. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 45(3), 529-552.
- Bibri, S. E., & Krogstic, J. (2017). Smart sustainable cities of the future: An extensive interdisciplinary literature review. *Sustainable Cities and Society*, 31, 183-212.
- Buhalis D., & Amaranggana A. (2013). Smart tourism destinations. In Z. Xiang & I. Tussyadiah (Eds), *Information and communication technologies in tourism 2014* (pp. 553-564). Champaign, IL: Springer.
- Dolnicar, S. (2004). Insights into sustainable tourists in Austria: A data-based a priori segmentation approach. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 12(3), 209-218.
- Foronda-Robles, C., Galindo-Pérez-de-Azpillaga, L., & Fernández-Tabales, A. (2020). Progress and stakes in sustainable tourism: Indicators for smart coastal destinations. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1864386>
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (2006). *Social intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam Books.
- Goleman, D. (2009). *Inteligencia ecológica*. Barcelona, Spain: Paidós.
- Ivars-Baidal, J. A., Celdrán-Bernabeu, M. A., Femenia-Serra, F., Perles-Ribes, J. F., & Giner-Sánchez, D. (2021). Measuring the progress of smart destinations: The use of indicators as a management tool. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 19, 100531. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2020.100531>
- Ivars-Baidal, J. A., Celdrán-Bernabeu, M. A., Mazón, J. N., & Perles-Ivars, Á. F. (2019). Smart destinations and the evolution of ICTs: a new scenario for destination management?. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 22(13), 1581-1600.
- Ivars-Baidal, J. A., Vera-Rebollo, J. F., Perles-Ribes, J., Femenia-Serra, F., & Celdrán-Bernabeu, M. A. (2021). Sustainable tourism indicators: what's new within the smart city/destination approach? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2021.1876075>
- Juvan, E., & Dolnicar, S. (2016). Measuring environmentally sustainable tourist behaviour. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 59, 30-44.
- Koo, C., Mendes-Filho, L. & Buhalis, D. (2019). Smart tourism and competitive advantage for stakeholders. *Tourism Review*, 74(1), 1-4.

## 62 Revealed Case Studies

López-Sánchez, Y., & Pulido-Fernández, J. I. (2016). In search of the pro-sustainable tourist: A segmentation based on the tourist “sustainable intelligence. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 17, 59-71.

Mehraliyev, F., Chan, I. C. C., Choi, Y., Koseoglu, M. A., & Law, R. (2020). A state-of-the-art review of smart tourism research. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 37, 78-91.

Passafaro, P., Cini, F., Boi, L., D'Angelo, M., Heering, M. S., Luchetti, L., Mancina, A., Martemucci, V., Pacella, G., Patrizi, F., Sassu, F., & Triolo, M. (2015). The “sustainable tourist”: Values, attitudes, and personality traits. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 15(4), 225-239.

Perles, J. F., & Ivars, J. A. (2018). Smart sustainability: a new perspective in the sustainable tourism debate. *Journal of Regional Research*, 42, 151-170.

Rocha, J. (2020). Smart tourism and smart destinations for a sustainable future. In W. L. Filho (Ed.) *Encyclopedia of the UN sustainable development goals decent work and economic growth* (pp.871- 880). New York, NY: Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

Shafiee, S., Ghatari, A. R., Hasanzadeh, A., & Jahanyan, S. (2019). Developing a model for sustainable smart tourism destinations: a systematic review. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 31, 287-300.

Shafiee, S., Ghatari, A. R., Hasanzadeh, A., & Jahanyan, S. (2021). Smart tourism destinations: A systematic review. *Tourism Review*, 76(3) 2021, 505-52.

### Questions

1. Research the main differences and similarities between smart cities and smart tourist destinations. What role does sustainability play in both concepts?
2. Would you include any additional variables to the proposed initial concept of sustainable intelligence? If so, in which dimension(s) would they be included? Justify your answer
3. To what extent does the tourist have the power to influence the success of a STD? Justify your answer.
4. Indicators are tools for tourism actors to voluntarily measure their progress in compliance with the main objectives of STDs. Do you think this statement is sufficient to ensure real progress? Why? Why not?
5. With reference to Table 1, which of the variables listed (if any) do you consider could impact positively on the managers’ destination management policies? Justify your decision. If you have argued in favour of any variable(s), in what ways might it/they make an impact either collectively or individually?



# **Tourism in Latvia during the Coronavirus (COVID 19) Pandemic**

by **Eriks Lingeberzins**

## **Introduction**

Global international tourist arrivals decreased significantly in 2020, compared to pre-pandemic levels and data from 2019 with just a 4% rise on 2020 in 2021 (UNWTO, 2022). During this period, most European countries introduced a variety of monetary support mechanisms via state/government and/or national tourism organisations (cf. Bera, Dreła, Malkowska & Tokarz-Kocik, 2020) in order to promote domestic tourism so minimising the negative impacts of the decrease of international tourist arrivals (cf. OECD, 2020); travelling to destinations in closer proximity to the home base and/or using private transport or trains, instead of air transport was prioritised, limiting possibilities to attract international tourists (cf. Romei, 2020).

Latvia was no exception and similar policies, and initiatives were introduced. Although Latvia has land borders with four countries (Lithuania, Estonia, Russia and Belarus), a combination of domestic travel and “low travel” did not support efforts to increase the number of tourist arrivals in 2021. Compared to the global growth from 2020 to 2021, international tourism arrivals in Latvia not only remained far below numbers of 2019 but there was a further decrease from 2020 to 2021 in both domestic and international tourists. Official data on tourist arrivals (CSB, 2021) are now analysed by the author to highlight current challenges of the tourism structure in Latvia.

## **Domestic Tourism in Latvia**

Although domestic travel has been the main driving force of global tourism recovery in 2021 (UNWTO, 2022), this has not helped much in the case of Latvia; according to tourism statistics (CSB, 2021) the number of domestic tourists did not increase sufficiently to counteract the negative impact of decreasing number of international tourist arrivals (CSB, 2022).

In 2019 Latvia accommodated 907,414 domestic guests. With the start of the pandemic and introduction of limitations, the number of domestic guests dropped by 18% to 747,990 domestic

## 64 *Revealed Case Studies*

guests in 2020 despite a domestic tourism campaign and a comparably good epidemiological situation during the summer months. Still, this season created a light euphoria about the reinvention of domestic tourism and gave at least an emotional boost to the industry after a period of uncertainty and initial shock because of applied restrictions. However, in 2021, when Europe experienced reopening of borders and tourism in general demonstrated certain improvement, especially in the domestic tourism segment, the number of domestic tourists in Latvia remained still down by 5% compared to 2019. But the main challenge remained in place - total number of tourist arrivals in Latvia in 2021 was down by 55% compared to 2019 and by 12% compared to 2020. This raised the question about the resilience of the tourism ecosystem in Latvia and possible scenarios of further recovery. There are some answers embedded in the geographical distribution of the population in Latvia with high concentration of residence in Riga and surroundings.

### **International Tourism in Latvia**

Until the beginning of 2020, international tourism was considered to be one of the most important industries in Latvia, and the most important in the service sector, contributing up to 4% of total GDP (World Bank) equivalent to one billion euros per annum (OECD, 2020); its contribution equated to 10% of the annual state budget (Latvian Public Broadcasting, 2022). Over seven million passengers passed through Riga International in 2019 (Riga International Airport, 2022) and, in that year, they contributed remarkably to the fast-growing tourism industry. Tourism and marketing strategies were expanded to include overseas markets, prioritising the USA, China, South Korea, and Japan; the first ever charter flights between South Korea and Latvia took off in the spring of 2019, however, this rapid growth was about to change.

In 2019, the number of international tourist arrivals in Latvia was 1.9 million but in 2020, the total fell by 37%, and by 2021, it was down 78% to 429,000. (Latvian Public Broadcasting, 2021). Comparing 2020 with 2021 data, the decreasing trend in Latvia contrasted with that of all the other European countries, where the numbers of tourist arrivals increased in 2021 (UNWTO, 2022).

The inbound market structure also experienced some drastic changes in 2021. Until 2020 the Baltic countries of Estonia had a share of 9% and Lithuania had a share of 11% of international tourist arrivals in Latvia while the Scandinavian countries market share was Finland, 7%, Sweden

4% and Norway 3%; Russia with a 15% share of all international tourist arrivals and Germany with 12% were among the most important markets. In 2021 this balance changed and Lithuania became the most important market segment with a total share of 17% of all international tourist arrivals. Estonia followed in second place with a share of 11% but almost one third of all international tourists originated from two of the neighbouring Baltic countries. Interestingly, even with substantially fewer visitors, Germany kept its share at 12%.

Nevertheless, as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, Latvia has experienced several key changes in its international tourism visitor market including a remarkable decline in tourists from Russia whose share dropped to under 4% (CSB, 2021), below the percentage of arrivals from the United Kingdom and Poland. Special attention might have been paid to the increasing number of visitors from Poland as for the first time this market appeared on the list of the countries with the highest number of visitors to Latvia. Also figures indicating the number of international arrivals from Sweden and Norway changed dramatically both falling below 2% (CSB, 2021) of the total share of the number of international tourist arrivals, equalling the number of visitors for example from Spain which has never been a priority market in the context of Latvia tourism marketing strategy. For the marketing activity planning period 2018-2023 all the possible tourism markets to Latvia were categorised as: high priority; priority; and long-haul then the form and intensity of marketing activities was planned according to the defined market groups. Russia, Germany, Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Sweden and Norway were defined as high priority markets; United Kingdom, Belarus, Poland, Belgium, France, The Netherlands as priority markets; and United States, China and Japan as long-haul-markets. (LIAA, 2018).

At the same time in 2021 further issues for consideration have been observed by the Association of Latvian Travel Agents and Operators (ALTA) in their research of members who were leading inbound and outbound tour operators and travel agents. According to the survey done in October 2021, tour operators offering incoming services reported that their business in 2020 and until October 2021 had not exceeded 8% of their total business in 2019. Incoming tour operators reported that their business had been mainly from Germany, France, Spain, and Italy in 2021. At the beginning of 2022, the main concern of the ALTA was whether these changes might be temporary or permanent (Lingebērziņš (2021)). Do they indicate a major market transformation in the international tourism world post COVID-19?

## References

- Bera, A., DreĻa, K., Malkowska, A., & Tokarz-Kocik, A. (2020). Mitigating risk of the tourism sector in the European Union member states during the COVID-19 pandemic. *European Research Studies Journal*, 23(4), 107-122.
- CSB (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia) (2021). *Key indicators. Hotels and other tourist accommodation establishments*.  
<https://stat.gov.lv/en/statistics-themes/business-sectors/tourism/2715-hotels-and-other-tourist-accommodation>
- CSB (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia) (2022, February 15). *In 2021, 38 % fewer foreign visitors and 16 % more resident visitors in tourist accommodation establishments*.  
<https://stat.gov.lv/en/statistics-themes/business-sectors/tourism/press-releases/8200-latvian-hotels-and-other>
- Latvian Public Broadcasting (2021, February 15). *Number of foreign tourists in Latvia fell by nearly two-thirds in 2020*.  
<https://eng.lsm.lv/article/economy/transport/number-of-foreign-tourists-in-latvia-fell-by-nearly-two-thirds-in-2020.a392951/>
- Latvian Public Broadcasting (2022). *Saeima passes 2022 budget*.  
<https://eng.lsm.lv/article/politics/saeima/saeima-passes-2022-budget.a431173/>
- LIAA (Investment and Development Agency of Latvia) (2018). *Kā attīstīt tūrismu Latvijā? Tūrisma marketinga stratēģija 2018.-2023*.  
[https://www.liaa.gov.lv/sites/liaa/files/content/Turisms/turisma\\_marketinga\\_strategija\\_kopsavilkums.pdf](https://www.liaa.gov.lv/sites/liaa/files/content/Turisms/turisma_marketinga_strategija_kopsavilkums.pdf)
- Lingebērziņš, Ē. (2021, December 22). Labi, slikti vai tomēr cerīgi? *Baltic Travel News*.  
<https://m.travelnews.lv/?pid=131554>
- OECD (2020, December 14). *Rebuilding tourism for the future: COVID-19 policy responses and recovery*. Paris, OECD Publishing.  
[https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=137\\_137392-qsvjt75vnh&title=Rebuilding-tourism-for-the-future-COVID-19-policy-response-and-recovery](https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/view/?ref=137_137392-qsvjt75vnh&title=Rebuilding-tourism-for-the-future-COVID-19-policy-response-and-recovery)
- Riga International Airport. (2022). *RIX statistics report 2021*.  
<https://www.riga-airport.com/about-rix/rix-statistics/en>
- Romei, V. (2020, June 15). Tourism blow from pandemic set to linger in global economy; countries turn to domestic travellers as they race to reposition themselves. *The Financial Times*, P3.
- UNWTO. (2022). *Tourism grows 4% in 2021 but remains far below pre-pandemic levels*. Madrid: World Tourism Organisation.  
<https://www.unwto.org/news/tourism-grows-4-in-2021-but-remains-far-below-pre-pandemic-levels#:~:text=Global%20tourism%20experienced%20a%204,to%20preliminary%20estimates%20by%20UNWTO.>

### **Questions and Activities**

1. What do you think are the possible reasons that impacted on the decrease in domestic tourism in Latvia in 2021? Justify your response.
2. Research and discuss the mechanisms that other countries have used to stimulate domestic tourism, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when the numbers of international tourists decreased remarkably.
3. What do you think are the most effective methods to raise awareness of the possibilities offered by domestic tourism?
4. Which international tourism markets would you prioritise to secure efficient recovery of the Latvian tourism industry? Research and justify your answer.
5. Do you think that the recent market changes discussed above may be just short-term or might they also be long-term? Justify your answer.
6. Suggest some activities that Latvian tourism stakeholders might do to promote long-term diversification of the international tourism markets.

## **Technology-Based Solutions to Effective Sustainability Benchmarking in the Hotel Industry**

by **Michael Kruesi and Detlev Remy**

### **Introduction**

Despite recent setbacks resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, tourism remains one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world (Ngoc, Tien & Trang, 2021). The hotel sector is a major part of the broader tourism industry, accounting for 56% of the industry and 40.5% of the income generated (Ergashev & Bozorov, 2021). Within the hotel sector, sustainability continues to be one of the most widely discussed issues, due in part, to the fact that several environmental issues can emerge quickly and because they can have a significant influence on the operations of hotels and on their various stakeholders (Janković & Krivačić, 2014; Kim, Barber & Kim, 2019). The implementation of sustainable practices can therefore be a way to aid in the smooth operation of day-to-day business, both in the present and in the future (Han, Hsu, & Sheu, 2010; Wijesinghe, 2014). Moreover, it should be recognised that such practices have further benefits for hotels, such as the improvement of corporate reputations and brand perceptions, consequently also acting as a driver for attracting more customers (Barber & Deale, 2014; Peiró-Signes, Segarra-Oña, Verma, Mondéjar-Jiménez, & Vargas-Vargas, 2014).

The impact that hotels have on the environment can be categorised as follows: energy usage; water usage; waste produced; and overall carbon footprint (Baicu, Oehler-Sincai & Popescu, 2019). Water usage is particularly high in hotels owing to the nature of the business, where limiting water usage by guests is not an option and where a substantial amount of laundry services is not only required but also expected (Antonova, Ruiz-Rosa & Mendoza-Jiménez, 2021). In terms of energy, the major sources are electricity, gas, and oil and these come mostly from non-renewable resources (Ricaurte & Jagarajan, 2021). Furthermore, by using the data on how much energy hotels consume, hoteliers are also able to evaluate their carbon footprint (Ricaurte & Jagarajan, 2021). This information is vital as, except for hospitals, hotels have the highest negative impact on climate change among all commercial and service buildings (Bohdanowicz & Martinac, 2007). Finally, the waste created by hotels, generally split between

food waste and non-food waste, is also very high, again due to the nature of the business and the service expectations of the guests (Omidiani, & Hashemi Hezaveh, 2016).

Due the importance of sustainable operations in the hotel sector, it is not surprising that all the major hotel groups have put measures in place to reduce their water and energy usage, lower their carbon footprint and reduce the amount of waste they create. These organisations have made available to the public at large the measurement methodologies at their disposal and with the right data on hand, they are consequently able to assess how they are doing in terms of sustainability and put measures in place for continuous improvement (Ngoc, Tien & Trang, 2021; Ricaurte & Jagarajan, 2021). Generally, however, these publicly available methodologies use the equation functions in spreadsheet software, such as Excel, to calculate the key indicators of interest (Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, n.d.). The issue faced by hoteliers is that such outputs do not allow for visual representations of the results (Anderson, Falk & Catalfamo, 2020). Data visualisation is emerging as an impactful and, consequently, popular tool that can be used for analysing the large amounts of data for, among other things, the examination of financial performance, the acceleration of internal and external communication, the opportunity for overall performance improvement and, importantly, for performance benchmarking (Solis, 2019). One effective tool for the visualisation of raw data, is the use of performance dashboards, built through mobile technologies. These dashboards are visually appealing and easy to interpret for managers who do not have a 'feel' for the numbers, as they are focused predominantly on the day-to-day operation of their individual hotels (Anderson et al., 2020). In fact, performance dashboards allow for the creation of 'data stories' that focus on visual imagery, consequently improving communication and engagement with stakeholders (Fallucchi, Petito & De Luca, 2019), a critical consideration when aiming to involve and motivate the employees of an organisation. As such, mobile applications, which are easily accessible for employees, could also provide a dashboard solution that integrates large amounts of raw sustainability data, making it easier for the data to be understood (Lim, 2012).

The present case examines the opportunities, as well as the difficulties, that hoteliers face in making their hotels more sustainable. Although the traditional Excel-based methodologies mentioned above provide accurate information and allow for the objective measurement of sustainability performance, and consequently also for benchmarking, expertise is required to interpret the data and substantial effort to organise and illustrate it visually. The question is posed: How effective are these methodologies for hoteliers in terms of motivating their

## 70 *Revealed Case Studies*

employees regarding being more sustainable given the results may not be easily understood and the data may not be presented in a visually appealing manner? It is mooted that a technology-based solution, in the form of a mobile application, could be the answer to tackling this problem and proposed that a functional technological tool could allow for more effective evaluation and interpretation of the environmental impact that hotels have at present and how they compare to the industry leaders.

### **Benchmarking**

Benchmarking is defined as “a process that enables organisations to improve their performance by comparing their products, services, and processes with recognised and established references which are representative of the best performing companies” (Wang & Huang, 2021 p.426). The practice is recognised as an essential tool for continuous improvement of quality and as a result, decision makers actively seek to continuously improve their benchmarking efforts (Wang & Huang, 2021).

The practice of benchmarking involves the identification of performance indicators and evaluating how an organisation compares to recognised industry leaders. Furey (1987) listed the main goals of benchmarking:

1. The identification of key measures that can be used as a proxy for performance.
2. The measurement of internal performance relative to the performance of leading competitors.
3. The comparison of the performance levels and the identification of comparative advantages and disadvantages.
4. The implementation of strategies to close the gaps between the leading competitors and the internal performance measures.

According to Castro and Frazzon (2017), benchmarking acts as a continuous quality improvement process by which an organisation can assess its internal strengths and weaknesses, evaluate comparative advantages of leading competitors, identify best practices, and incorporate these findings into a strategic action plan geared at obtaining a superior position in the market.

Benchmarking is a well-established practice in the hospitality industry (Wang & Huang, 2021). Hotel operators and investors use several metrics as performance indicators to assess their current operations and to make forecasts and plans. Three commonly used metrics in the hotel



sector are occupancy, average daily rate (ADR), and revenue per available room (RevPAR), as such these metrics are also often used in hotel benchmarking efforts (Wang & Huang, 2021).

#### *Sustainability Benchmarking in the Hotel Sector*

Similar to the performance indicators outlined above, hotels are also able to use established, industry wide sustainability metrics, to accurately measure the environmental impact of their daily operations (Baicu et al., 2019; Ricaurte & Jagarajan, 2021). In order to evaluate their waste management practices, for example, hoteliers are able to use the Hotel Waste Measurement Methodology (cf. Ricaurte, Ruggles-Brise, Aggarwal & McBride, 2021). This methodology allows for benchmarking by establishing the level of total waste that hotels produce and reducing it to waste per square metre or waste per occupied room, allowing for industry comparisons. Moreover, hoteliers are similarly able to refer to the Hotel Carbon Measurement Initiative (Ricaurte & Jagarajan, 2021), using either square metres or occupied room as unit for which to measure their energy usage in kWh, their water usage in litres and their carbon footprints in kilograms of carbon dioxide emitted. Through the use of these methodologies, hoteliers are in a position to establish credible performance indicators, according to industry specific segmentation and global metrics, which allow for the advancement of commonly defined, transparent, and rigorous modelling of energy, water, waste and carbon footprint, based on hotel-specific attributes and data that are applicable and up to date.

#### **Mobile Technology in the Hotel Sector**

The use of mobile technology in hotels has significantly affected the hospitality and tourism industry (Law, Chan & Wang, 2018), providing innovative service solutions for customers and employees alike (Han, Lee, Edvardsson & Verma, 2021). As such, it is not surprising that there has been a steady growth of mobile technology adoption in the hotel sector (Lee, Edvardsson & Verma, 2022). Specifically, mobile technology has been applied to improving hotel branding (Bellman, Potter, Treleven-Hassard, Robinson & Varan, 2011), enhancing consumer service experiences (Heidenreich & Handrich, 2015) and evaluating consumption values (Wang, Liao & Yang, 2013), as well as improving the performance of hotel employees (Jeong, Lee & Nagesvaran, 2016).

In terms of the interactions with their guests, hoteliers are using mobile technologies to anticipate value co-creation opportunities allowing for the enhancement of their service experiences (Heidenreich & Handrich, 2015). Moreover, according to Dieck, Jung, Kim, &

## 72 *Revealed Case Studies*

Moon, (2017), with the goal of creating extra efficiency, convenience and a personalisation of experiences, hoteliers have been aiming to encourage their guests to use smartphones and tablets at all stages of their interactions with the hotel property, including before, during and after service encounters. An example of such an initiative is the introduction of instant messaging services on various platforms to facilitate the use of concierge services and enabling personalised and prompt responses, as well as facilitating the process of making bookings and other travel arrangements (Coussement & Teague, 2013; Harkison, 2017).

The adoption of mobile technology in the workplace has also been shown to be advantageous for hotel employees (Jeong et al., 2016). Since most hotel employees own their own mobile devices for personal use, the adoption of these devices in the workplace has been shown to be relatively easy (Jeong et al., 2016). According to Jeong et al., (2016), the use of mobile technology has been shown to increase decision making speed and to improve employee responsiveness and productivity, as well as acting as a mechanism for resolving internal issues more expediently. Importantly, mobile technologies can be used to present a broad set of metrics and key performance indicators in addition to optimising the creation of visually appealing dashboards (cf. Anderson et al., 2020; Solis, 2019), which have been shown to influence the decision making of hoteliers alongside aiding in the internal communication of hotel performance and the motivation of staff in general (Antonio & Serra, 2018; Lamest & Brady, 2019; Phillips, Barnes, Zigan & Schegg, 2017). Moreover, due to the easy access that employees have to mobile devices, they are able to continuously access and evaluate the information provided by them.

Although the use of mobile technology is still in its early stages (Han et al., 2021), it is expected that the sheer proliferation of mobile technology in our modern society, will be a driver for making mobile phones and tablets well-established tools for hoteliers to improve their interactions with their customers (Coussement & Teague, 2013; Dieck, et al., 2017; Heidenreich & Handrich, 2015) and improve the performance and productivity of their employees (Cisco, 2012; Jeong et al., 2016).

### **The Case**

John Smith is the CEO of Hotels Inc., a medium sized hotel chain, with 25 hotels already operating and a further 15 hotels in the pipeline, spread across five countries. The fast growth of Hotels Inc. has been very encouraging for Mr. Smith; however, with the increasing importance of operating hotels in a sustainable manner, it is becoming a matter of serious concern for him

that the hotels in his chain are not actively tracking how sustainable they are relative to the industry's top performers.

After doing some desk research, Mr. Smith finds that there are objective measures for assessing the relative sustainability of hotels. Specifically, he finds that this can be done by tracking overall energy and water usage, measuring the waste that hotels produce and assessing the hotels' carbon footprint. He finds that methodologies are available to him to establish sustainability baselines in his hotels, such as the Hotel Carbon Measurement Initiative (HCMI) and the Hotel Waste Measuring Methodology (HWMM). These methodologies would offer an objective way of assessing the current sustainability profile of Hotels Inc. then, through publicly available data, Mr. Smith would be able to benchmark his sustainability relative to industry leaders in his market segment.

Emboldened by this prospect, Mr. Smith endeavoured to implement sustainability tracking into his operations. He encouraged the managers of his hotels to establish sustainability baselines, which could be used for future benchmarking purposes; however, he found that although they were accurate, the numerical results of these analyses were difficult for his managers to understand, and his great idea did not appear to capture his managers' interests. The process of following the methodologies to evaluate environmental impact is viewed as a tedious chore by his managers, who were more concerned with the daily operation and profitability of their properties. Moreover, the results of the analyses were not presented in a manner that illustrated clearly their meaning and implications in a visually appealing format. Despondent and lacking any practical ideas Mr. Smith went for his daily jog and pondered these problems.

Mr. Smith, an avid jogger, regularly checks his step tracking app at the end of every day. He finds it motivating to reach his step goal every day and also gets satisfaction from seeing how many steps he takes relative to the other users of the app. That night, a thought occurred to him; what if his hotel managers were able to use a similar technology to track the sustainability of their operations and to compare them to the industry leaders? The interface of his step tracking app is visually appealing, and it takes little effort to understand the information provided. He had already been thinking of integrating more mobile technology into his operations. He decided that he could use such technology as a way of improving the sustainability of his hotels. The following morning, Mr. Smith called his IT department and shared his idea with his team.

## References

- Anderson, C., Falk, E., & Catalfamo, N. (2020). Market data for hotel revenue management. In P. Szende (Ed.) *Hospitality revenue management: Concepts and practices* (pp. 193-230), Palm Bay, FL: Apple Academic Press.
- Antonio, N., & Serra, F. (2018). Software as a service: An effective platform to deliver holistic hotel performance management systems. *Tourism & Management Studies*, 14(1), 25-35.
- Antonova, N., Ruiz-Rosa, I., & Mendoza-Jiménez, J. (2021). Water resources in the hotel industry: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 33(2), 628-649. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-07-2020-0711>
- Baicu, C. G., Oehler-Sincai, I. M., & Popescu, D. (2019). Bioeconomy and social responsibility in the sustainable hotel industry. *Amfiteatru Economic*, 21(52), 639-653.
- Barber, N. A., & Deale, C. (2014). Tapping mindfulness to shape hotel guests' sustainable behavior. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 55(1), 100-114.
- Bellman, S., Potter, R. F., Treleven-Hassard, S., Robinson, J. A., & Varan, D. (2011). The effectiveness of branded mobile phone apps. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 25(4), 191-200.
- Bohdanowicz, P., & Martinac, I. (2007). Determinants and benchmarking of resource consumption in hotels—Case study of Hilton International and Scandic in Europe. *Energy and Buildings*, 39(1), 82-95.
- Castro, V. F. D., & Frazzon, E. M. (2017). Benchmarking of best practices: An overview of the academic literature. *Benchmarking: An International Journal*, 24(3), 750-774.
- Coussement, M. A., & Teague, T. J. (2013). The new customer-facing technology: mobile and the constantly-connected consumer. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 4(2), 177-187.
- Dieck, M. C., Jung, T. H., Kim, W. G., & Moon, Y. (2017). Hotel guests' social media acceptance in luxury hotels. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(1), 530-550.
- Ergashev, R. K., & Bozorov, A. R. (2021). Opportunities for the development of tourism infrastructure and increasing their efficiency in Kashkadarya Region. *Academic Journal of Digital Economics and Stability*, 7, 129-137.
- Fallucchi, F., Petito, M., & De Luca, E.W. (2019). Analysing and visualising open data within the data and analytics framework. In E. Garoufallou, F. Sartori, R. Siatri, & M. Zervas (Eds.). *Metadata and Semantic Research. MTSR 2018. Communications in Computer and Information Science, Vol. 846* (pp. 135-146). Champaign, IL: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14401-2\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14401-2_13)
- Furey, T. R. (1987). Benchmarking: the key to developing competitive advantage in mature markets. *Planning Review*, 15(5), 30-32. <https://doi.org/10.1108/eb054202>.
- Han, H., Hsu, L. T. J., & Sheu, C. (2010). Application of the theory of planned behavior to green hotel choice: Testing the effect of environmental friendly activities. *Tourism management*, 31(3), 325-334.

- Han, S. H., Lee, J., Edvardsson, B., & Verma, R. (2021). Mobile technology adoption among hotels: Managerial issues and opportunities. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 38, 100811, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2021.100811>.
- Harkison, T. (2017). The importance of the human touch in the luxury accommodation sector. *Research in Hospitality Management*, 7(1), 59-64. DOI: 10.1080/22243534.2017.1355488
- Heidenreich, S., & Handrich, M. (2015). Adoption of technology-based services: the role of customers' willingness to co-create. *Journal of Service Management* 26(1), 44-71. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JOSM-03-2014-0079>
- Janković, S., & Krivačić, D. (2014). Environmental accounting as perspective for hotel sustainability: Literature review. *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 20(1), 103-120.
- Jeong, M., Lee, M., & Nagesvaran, B. (2016). Employees' use of mobile devices and their perceived outcomes in the workplace: A case of luxury hotel. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 57, 40-51.
- Kim, Y. H., Barber, N., & Kim, D. K. (2019). Sustainability research in the hotel industry: Past, present, and future. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 28(5), 576-620.
- Lamest, M., & Brady, M. (2019). Data-focused managerial challenges within the hotel sector. *Tourism Review*, 74(1), 104-115. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-03-2017-0064>
- Law, R., Chan, I. C. C., & Wang, L. (2018). A comprehensive review of mobile technology use in hospitality and tourism. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*, 27(6), 626-648.
- Lee, J., Edvardsson, B., & Verma, R. (2022). Developing a strategic viability-fit model of mobile technology adoption in hotels. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 13(1), 85-99. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-05-2020-0109>
- Lim, T. Y. (2012, July). Designing the next generation of mobile tourism application based on situation awareness. *Proceedings of the Southeast Asian Network of Ergonomics Societies conference (SEANES)* (pp. 1-7), <https://doi.org/10.1109/SEANES.2012.6299599>.
- Ngoc, P. B., Tien, N. H., & Trang, T. T. T. (2021). Current path to community based sustainable tourism development of Khanh Hoa Province in Vietnam. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 18(09), 508-525.
- Omidiani, A., & Hashemi Hezaveh, S. (2016). Waste management in hotel industry in India: A review. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 6(9), 670-680.
- Peirô-Signes, A., Segarra-Oña, M-D-V., Verma, R., Mondéjar-Jiménez, J., & Vargas-Vargas, M. (2014). The impact of environmental certification on hotel guest ratings. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 55(1), 40-51.
- Phillips, P., Barnes, S., Zigan, K., & Schegg, R. (2017). Understanding the impact of online reviews on hotel performance: an empirical analysis. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56(2), 235-249.
- Ricaurte, E., & Jagarajan, R. (2021). *Hotel sustainability benchmarking index 2021: Carbon, energy, and water*. Cornell Hospitality Indices. <https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/109990>

## 76 Revealed Case Studies

Ricaurte, E., Ruggles-Brise, O., Aggarwal, S., & McBride, M. (2021). *Hotel waste measurement methodology*. Sustainable Hospitality Alliance  
<https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/resource/hwmm/>

Solis, J. (2019). Data visualization is king. *The Journal of Private Equity*, 22(3), 102-107.

Sustainable Hospitality Alliance (n.d.). *Hotel carbon measurement initiative (HCMI)*.  
<https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/resource/hotel-carbon-measurement-initiative/>

Wang, T. C., & Huang, S. L. (2021). Benchmarking tourist hotels performance for strategies development. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(3), 424-441.

Wang, H. Y., Liao, C., & Yang, L. H. (2013). What affects mobile application use? The roles of consumption values. *International Journal of Marketing Studies*, 5(2), 11-22.

Wijesinghe, G. (2014). Reimagining the application of sustainability to the hospitality industry through a virtue ethics framework. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(1), 31-49.

### **Questions and Activities**

First read the questions then examine the issues raised using selected pertinent references:

1. What are the main challenges for companies in the hotel sector that plan to adopt benchmarking for use in improving hotel sustainability? Make suggestions for overcoming the challenges.
2. Outline, and critically reflect on, the actions needed to conduct a sustainability analysis within a hotel.
3. Make practical recommendations for Hotels Inc. regarding the application of mobile technology, to encourage the staff to make progress towards being sustainable.
4. Discuss how technology-based sustainability benchmarking would help hotel organisations to improve their operations.
5. What are the possible implications of Hotels Inc. becoming more sustainable due to their use of technology-based benchmarking?
6. How would you advise hotel businesses to optimise the usage of mobile technology to improve their sustainability?

## **COVID-19 and the Stock Price of the Tourism Sector: A Case Study of Spain**

**by Isabel Carrillo-Hidalgo and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández**

The global pandemic, declared in March 2020 and caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), has blocked and weakened the global economy. Tourism was the most affected and distorted sector since, in order to reduce the spread of infection, governments around the world responded with a series of decisive and radical actions: bans on national and international mobility and mass gatherings; social distancing; hotel and restaurant closures; and bans on travellers from countries with a high incidence of contagion (Liew, 2020a).

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on global tourism per se, as it has been shown that health-related crises “influence the perception of tourism risk, causing a sudden decline in demand, with significant socio-economic repercussions, especially in countries dependent on tourism” (Novelli, Burgess, Jones & Ritchie, 2018, p. 85). In fact, 2020 was the worst year for the tourism sector worldwide, as global international arrivals fell by 73% and tourism revenues by 64% (UNWTO, 2021). This decline was maintained during the first few months of 2021, when destinations around the world received 180 million fewer international arrivals than in the same period in 2020 (-83%). By region, Asia and the Pacific sustained the largest decline (-94%) in international arrivals during the first quarter of 2021, followed by Europe (-83%), Africa (-81%), the Middle East (-78%) and the Americas (-71%) (UNWTO, 2021).

Behavioural finance studies (for example, Ichev and Marinč, 2018) have shown that investor decisions are influenced by their feelings and, therefore, may affect the stock price. Furthermore, Nhamo, Dube and Chikodzi (2020) note that stock market yields respond to major events such as environmental disasters, pandemics, and political turbulence. Studies at the beginning of the pandemic pointed out that the decline in the stock price of companies in the tourism sector was sufficiently significant to justify concern around the medium- and long-term outlook (Sharma & Nicolau, 2020). It has since been concluded that no previous outbreak of an infectious disease has affected the stock market as strongly as the COVID-19 pandemic (Baker et al., 2020).

It has been argued that the possible negative impact of a crisis on stock prices could be minimised, and possibly prevented, by improving the response to the crisis. In this way, uncertainty regarding share prices and the movement of the stock market is minimised so maintaining investor confidence and avoiding drastic and widespread variations over time (Chen, Chen, Tang & Huang, 2009). When the stock market is faced with a pandemic, it is a question of knowing not only the severity of the pandemic but also how damaging it is perceived to be by the market and investors (Ru, Yang & Zhou, 2020), since they are the ones who, depending on their expectations, will influence companies' stock prices (Nhamo et al., 2020). The COVID-19 studies conducted thus far coincide in their final conclusions: the first outbreak affected stock prices in the tourism sector negatively over and above other sectors; and the effect of COVID-19 on these stock prices is considered to be temporary (cf. Liew, 2020b).

### **Spanish Sector Tourism Stock Price and COVID-19**

Spain is the world's second biggest tourist destination by number of international arrivals, with 83.7 million tourists in 2019, and income level, amounting to 80 billion dollars in that year (UNWTO, 2020). Moreover, it was one of the first countries to face high levels of COVID infections. In fact, a State of Emergency and full national lockdown were decreed just five days after the declaration of the global pandemic. Tourism is one of Spain's main productive sectors, accounting for 12% of its GDP and employment, which saw its activity reduced to minimum levels during the pandemic (Torres & Fernández, 2020), with a 97% decline in international arrivals to Spain during the first month of the pandemic. On average, these arrivals fell by 80% in the first quarter of 2021 and 71% in 2020 (UNWTO, 2021), and revenue from inbound tourism in Spain fell by 77% in the same year.

Throughout the pandemic, the Ibx35 daily abnormal stock price (hereafter ASP)<sup>1</sup>, reflecting the behaviour of the market, and those of the tourism sector listed on the Madrid Stock Exchange,

---

<sup>1</sup> ASP is calculated applying the following formula for each day's values (Brown and Warner, 1985):  $ASP_{jt} = C_{jt} - \bar{C}_j$ .

Where  $ASP_{jt}$  is the abnormal listed price of stock  $j$  at time  $t$ ,  $C_{jt}$  is the actual observed listed price of stock  $j$  at time  $t$ , and  $\bar{C}_j$  is the average of the daily stock prices listed on stock index  $j$  during the (-30,-11) estimation period.  $\bar{C}_j$  is calculated as follows (Chen & Siems, 2004):

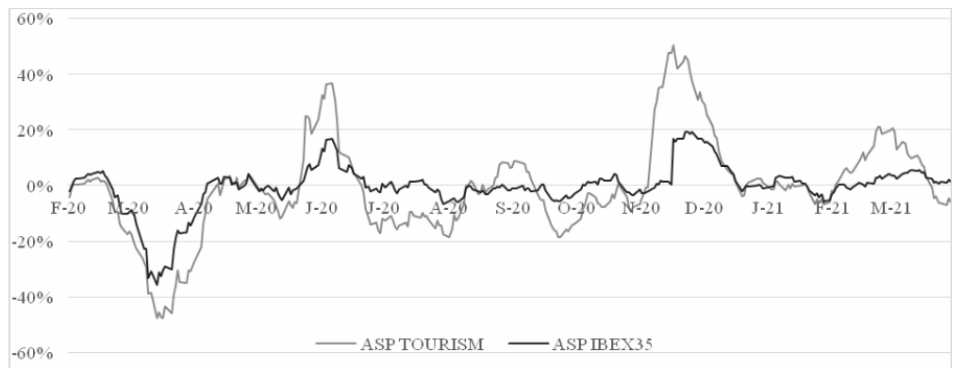
$$\bar{C}_t = \frac{1}{20} \sum_{t=-30}^{-11} C_{jt}$$



are observed in Figure 1. As we can see, especially in the case of tourism, these show negative or less positive values in the periods when there were peaks of COVID-19 in Spain: in March and April, July and August, October and November 2020 and the end of January and February 2021. Figure 1 also shows that, during the pandemic, ASP fluctuations are more pronounced in the tourism sector than in the market as a whole, as the scientific literature has shown (cf. Bartik et al., 2020; Nhamo, Dube & Chikodzi, 2020; Sharma & Nicolau, 2020).

**Figure 1**

*Deviations from 0% in the Tourism Sector Stock Prices and the Ibex35 (February/2020 - March 2021)*



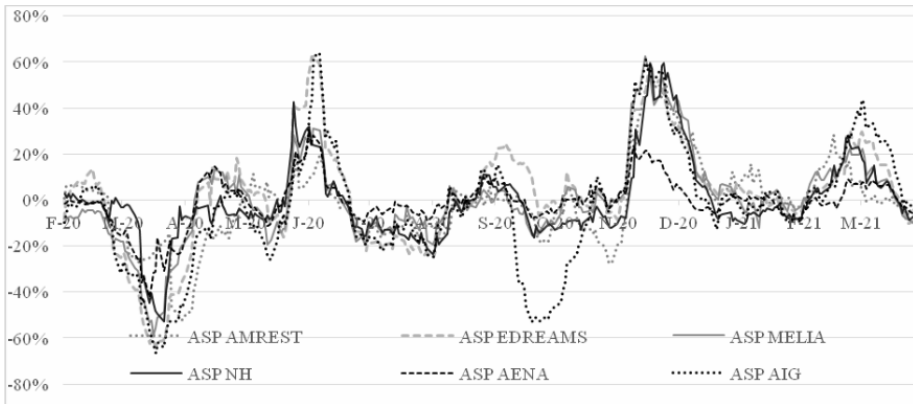
*Source:* The figure was adapted from Bolsa de Madrid (2021); x-axis: month-year; y-axis: % change.

The impact of the pandemic on stock market values (cf. Huo & Qiu, 2020) is noteworthy. The ASP of the tourism sector hit a low of -48%, coinciding with the declaration of the State of Emergency, on 16 March 2020 and the restriction on air and maritime transport in the Peninsula, the Canary Islands, and the Balearic Islands, on 20 March 2020. On those dates, the ASP of the Ibex35 was -35.76% (minimum value in the series) and 29.07% respectively. Therefore, as pointed out by Nhamo et al. (2020), these data confirm that the tourism sector was impacted more than the market as a whole by the onset of the pandemic, as well as the initial measures to contain the spread of the virus.

In contrast, two moments are highlighted in terms of their positive impact on the stock market: First the lifting of strict national lockdown measures in May 2020, with the last extension of the state of emergency, which triggered stock prices, with a market ASP of 16.49% and 38.67% for the tourism sector; also during this period, the ASP of the tourism sector rose on 26 May 2020 to 24.85%, when it was announced that foreign tourists would no longer have to self-isolate. Second, the highest recorded value for the tourism sector's ASP was on 16 November 2020, an upward trend favoured by news of the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccines. On the 9 November 2020, the pharmaceutical companies Pfizer and BioNTech had announced that the first phase of testing indicated that their COVID-19 vaccine was more than 90% effective (Pfizer, 2020). In addition, on 16 November 2020, Moderna had reported a preliminary efficacy of 94.5% for its vaccine (Ansedo, 2020).

**Figure 2**

*Deviations from 0% of Companies in the Tourism Sector (February/2020 - March 2021)*



Source: The figure was adapted from Bolsa de Madrid (2021); x-axis: month-year; y-axis: % change

The evolution of the ASP of companies in the tourism sector, which are listed on the Madrid Stock Exchange, is shown in Figure 2. In general, they all show similar behaviour, with marked periods of upward and downward trends. The company IAG, with an average ASP of -3.11%, was the most volatile, with more pronounced maximum and minimum values than the rest of the companies. It should be noted that the ASP observed during the month of September 2020 moves away from the sector trend, attributed to a process of capital increase in which the listed

price of subscription rights collapsed and dragged stock prices down with them (De la Quintana, 2020).

The second most volatile company recorded in Figure 2, is Edreams, with an average ASP of 2.41%, which means that it is more sensitive in its price increases than decreases. Notably, the hotel subsector was the least volatile in the sector, with average ASP closer to 0 than the rest (NH -0.40% and Meliá 0.49%).

## References

- Ansede, M (2020, November 16). La empresa Moderna anuncia que su vacuna contra la covid tiene casi un 95% de eficacia. *El País*.  
<https://elpais.com/ciencia/2020-11-16/la-empresa-moderna-anuncia-que-su-vacuna-contra-la-covid-tiene-casi-un-95-de-eficacia.html>
- Baker, S. R., Bloom, N., Davis, S. J., Kost, K., Sammon, M., & Viratyosin, T. (2020). The unprecedented stock market reaction to COVID-19. *The Review of Asset Pricing Studies*, 10(4), 742-758.
- Bartik, A. W., Bertrand, M., Cullen, Z. B., Glaeser, E. L., Luca, M., & Stanton, C. T. (2020). *How are small businesses adjusting to COVID-19? Early evidence from a survey* National Bureau of Economic Research. Working Paper No. 26989.  
<https://www.nber.org/papers/w26989>
- Bolsa de Madrid (2021). *Madrid stock exchange official webpage*.  
<https://www.bolsamadrid.es/esp/asp/Portada/Portada.aspx>
- Brown, S. J., & Warner, J. B. (1985). Using daily stock returns: the case of event studies. *Journal of Financial Economics* 14, 3-31.
- Chen, C. D., Chen, C. C., Tang, W. W., & Huang, B. Y. (2009). The positive and negative impacts of the SARS outbreak: A case of the Taiwan industries. *The Journal of Developing Areas*, 43(1), 281-293.
- Chen, A. H., & Siems, T. (2004). The effects of terrorism on global capital markets. *European Journal of Political Economy*, 20(2), 349-366.
- De la Quintana, L. (2020, September 21). IAG se desploma un 12,67%: si pierde los 0,92, no compensa acudir a la ampliación de capital. *El Economista*.  
<https://www.eleconomista.es/mercados-cotizaciones/noticias/10780549/09/20/IAG-se-desploma-otro-13-si-pierde-los-092-no-compensa-acudir-a-la-ampliacion-de-capital.html>
- Huo, X., & Qiu, Z. (2020). How does China's stock market react to the announcement of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown? *Economic and Political Studies*, 8(4), 436-461.
- Ichev, R., & Marinč, M. (2018). Stock prices and geographic proximity of information: Evidence from the Ebola outbreak. *International Review of Financial Analysis*, 56, 153-166.

## 82 Revealed Case Studies

Liew, V. K-S. (2020a). Abnormal returns on tourism shares in the Chinese stock exchanges amid the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Economics and Management*, 14(2), 247-262.

Liew, V. K-S. (2020b). The effect of novel coronavirus pandemic on tourism share prices. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, 8(1), 109-124. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JTF-03-2020-0045>

Nhamo, G., Dube, K., & Chikodzi, D. (2020). *Counting the cost of COVID-19 on the global tourism industry*. Champaign, IL: Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56231-1\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56231-1_13)

Novelli, M., Burgess, L. G., Jones, A., & Ritchie, B. W. (2018). 'No Ebola... still doomed'—The Ebola-induced tourism crisis. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 70, 76-87.

Pfizer (2020, 9 November). *Pfizer and BioNTech Announce Vaccine Candidate Against COVID-19 Achieved Success in First Interim Analysis from Phase 3 Study*. Retrieved from <https://www.pfizer.com/news/press-release/press-release-detail/pfizer-and-biontech-announce-vaccine-candidate-against>

Ru, H., Yang, E., & Zou, K. (2020). What do we learn from SARS-CoV-1 to SARS-CoV-2: Evidence from global stock markets. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 3569330. <http://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3620524>

Sharma, A., & Nicolau, J. L. (2020). An open market valuation of the effects of COVID-19 on the travel and tourism industry. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 83:102990. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102990>

Torres, R., & Fernández, M. J. (2020). La política económica española y el COVID-19. *Funcas, Cuadernos de Información Económica*, 275. [https://www.funcas.es/wp-content/uploads/Migracion/Articulos/FUNCAS\\_CIE/275art02.pdf](https://www.funcas.es/wp-content/uploads/Migracion/Articulos/FUNCAS_CIE/275art02.pdf)

UNWTO (2020, April 28). La organización mundial del turismo transmite al rey de España la importancia del turismo para la recuperación frente al covid-19. Madrid: UNWTO. <https://www.unwto.org/es/news/omt-transmite-al-rey-de-espana-la-importancia-del-turismo-para-la-recuperacion-frente-al-covid-19>

UNWTO (2021). *UNWTO world tourism barometer*, 19(3), May 2021. Madrid: UNWTO. <https://www.e-unwto.org/toc/wtobarometereng/19/3>

### Questions and Activities

1. Review and comment on the main impacts of COVID-19 in the tourism sector.
2. Which country suffered the greatest impact of COVID-19 based on the number of international arrivals?
3. Was the behaviour of the stock price of the tourism sector in Spain during COVID-19 worse or better than that of the market? Explain and justify your response.
4. Which two moments stand out for their positive impact on the stock price of the tourism sector in Spain? Qualify your response.
5. Analyse and report on the effects of COVID-19 on the different tourism sub-sectors in Spain.

# **Integrating Data Analytics in Crisis Management**

**by Detlev Remy, Michael Kruesi and Shin Wong**

## **Introduction**

Data analytics play an increasingly important role in the hospitality industry (cf. Yallop & Seraphin, 2020). Although the industry has been slow to adopt and implement new technologies, the relevance and importance of data analytics has started to be recognized in recent years (for example, Buhalis & Leung, 2018). A domain to which data analytics could contribute meaningfully is efficient crisis management; specifically, data analytics could be used to identify potential upcoming crises, foresee the implications and establish crisis management and business continuity plans to lessen the impact of the crises (Al-Ma'aitah, 2020; Park, 2021).

Due to the significant disruptions caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, both socially and in the operation of most businesses, crisis management has become an increasingly important consideration (Burhan Salam, Abou Hamdan & Tariq, 2021). Specifically, the hospitality industry has been impacted by a myriad of crises, ranging from community reluctance to welcome travellers to the host destination (Qiu, Jiang, Liu, Chen & Yuan, 2021), travel restrictions and a general reluctance to travel (Gössling, Scott & Hall, 2020), as well as the retrenchment waves of hospitality staff (Tu, Li & Wang, 2021). It is evident, therefore, that COVID-19 has significantly impacted the tourism and hospitality sector in multiple ways. While it was initially thought only to exert a short-term impact on tourism, the pandemic has proven to be remarkably resilient; at the time of writing, it shows no signs of abating, and as a result, tourism is still suffering. Although it is hoped that mass vaccinations will enable people to start travelling again, it is likely that COVID-19 will change fundamentally how we travel in the future (Walters & McKercher, 2021).

The present case examines the difficulties and opportunities that hospitality operators face in forecasting demand during the current COVID-19 crisis using data analytics. The erratic and consequently unpredictable nature of the pandemic, as well as the general fear that is caused by it, has resulted in travellers frequently changing their plans to visit certain destinations (cf. Liu & Stern, 2021). Clearly, this situation puts the hotels in such destinations in jeopardy, especially

because, as highlighted above, this shifting of demand may simply be based on the sentiments of the traveller (Zhang, Li, Ruan & Liu, 2022).

The question that presents itself is how to detect such sentiment and, subsequently, to cope with it. In this scenario, data analytics come into play. Data analytics allow for the collection of an enormous amount of data which is crunched to detect patterns and trends (Zhao, Lu, Liu, Lin & An, 2018). Considering possible responses to this question, one way to apply data analytics would be to collect social media data on the sentiments of travellers towards the destination of concern and then to analyse it (for example, Vu, Law & Zhang, 2018). In order to prevent further damage, based on an identified sentiment by travellers, the hotel industry can counteract this by running Public Relations campaigns or using influencer marketing to persuade consumers of the safety in the destination of concern (Yozcu & Cetin, 2019).

### **Crisis Management**

According to Coombs (2014, p.3) a crisis is defined as “an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders related to health, safety, environmental, and economic issues, which can seriously impact an organisation's performance and generate negative comments”. As originally conceptualised, crisis management initially aims to address the prevention and mitigation of crises to prepare the organisation for a potential crisis before it happens. This procedure is followed by the possible responses to the crisis before the recovery phase. Finally the effectiveness of the planning and the response are evaluated (cf. Rosenthal & Pijnenberg, 1991). In other words, crisis prevention, crisis preparedness, crisis response and crisis evaluation are the four commonly accepted steps in disaster and crisis management (Heath, 1993; Hosie & Smith, 2004; Rosenthal & Pijnenberg, 1991); the latter (1991) name this process either as MPRR (mitigation, preparation, response, recovery) or PPRR (prevention, preparation, response, recovery).

The term ‘crisis’ can have a very broad meaning, from the risk of technical or human errors right through to disasters (cf. Coombs, 2022; Faulkner & Vikulov, 2001). As crises happen, if the risk is not managed properly and effectively, the consequences for the organisation can become significantly worse. Risk is defined as the possibility of harm or possible loss (Dorfman & Cather 2013) and refers to the fluctuation in neutral or negative outcomes that result from an uncertain event on the basis of probability. The scope of risk management includes goal setting, risk identification, risk measurement, handling of risk and implementation techniques as well as the

effectiveness of monitoring (Dorfman & Cather, 2013). On the other end of the spectrum, crises become disasters once they are deemed to have catastrophic consequences. Disasters generally refer to events that are outside of an organisations' control, such as natural disasters and global pandemics. In other words, crisis management can be seen to range from risk management to disaster management.

### **Crisis Management Research in Hospitality and Tourism**

Crisis management, including risk management and disaster management, has increasingly come into focus for hospitality and tourism organisations, not least as a result of the enormous losses incurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Wut, Xu, & Wong, 2021). Understanding the attributes of a crisis is crucial for its prediction, management, and control (Kovoor-Misra, Clair, & Bettenhausen, 2001). According to McKercher and Hui (2004) the hospitality and tourism industry is disrupted on a regular basis by various crises. Although the research on crisis management in hospitality and tourism started with natural disaster management, terrorism and disease management (Laws & Prideaux, 2005), Pforr and Hosie (2008) claimed that crisis management had received insufficient attention in the hospitality and tourism research for decades.

Also in 2008, Buhalis and Law noted that technology related concerns had been heavily investigated in hospitality and tourism. Specifically, social media crises became an emerging research focus on the forefront of research attention (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014), as well as concerns related to data security and privacy over confidential company information and customer personal information. More recently, given the global outbreak of COVID-19 and the economic downturn faced by many countries, crisis management in this context has attracted organisational and research attention (Lai & Wong, 2020; Qiu et al., 2021; Gössling et al., 2020).

### **Data Analytics**

Within data analytics, Alaei, Becken and Stantic, (2019) defined sentiment analysis as

[the] aim to determine the overall contextual polarity of a text document, a review, an opinion, or an emotion expressed in online UGC, whereby polarity can be positive, neutral, or negative (p.176). Sentiment analysis, particularly in relation to customer reviews, is built on the premise that information provided through text (for example, a review) is either subjective (i.e., opinionated) or objective (i.e., factual). Subjective reviews

are based on opinions, personal feelings, belief, and judgment about entities or events. Objective reviews are based on facts, evidence, and measurable observations (p.177).

Global consumers can use social media platforms on a daily basis to communicate, express opinions, indicate likes and general preferences, thus making them “rich resource[s] for text mining and sentiment analysis” (Younis, 2015, p.44).

Although well researched in other industry settings, sentiment analysis has only started to gain popularity in hospitality and tourism (Alaei, et.al, 2019). It is being recognised that service providers can use textual analysis, in particular sentiment analysis, to monitor emotions and emerging topics from a set of unstructured data (cf. Skiera, Yan, Daxenberger, Dombois & Gurevych, 2021), which can aid service organisations in their strategic decisions.

### **The Case**

Hotel ABC is a luxury hotel in Singapore. It has 550 rooms and is located in the central business district; its clientele focus on both business and leisure travellers. The COVID-19 crisis has affected the Singaporean hotel industry by causing unprecedented disruptions of business processes due to obligatory cancellations resulting from closure orders by the government (Gössling et al., 2020). Whilst still amid the COVID-19 crisis in 2020-21, all the hotels in Singapore depended heavily on revenue generated from staycations, consequent on the ongoing travel restrictions and remaining border closures.

Although at the beginning of 2022, the government allows for some restricted travel via the so-called Vaccinated Travel Lanes (VTL), the travel regulations are changing constantly with little advance notice. In addition, factors such as increases in COVID-19 cases, hospitalisation rates, ICU occupancy and vaccination rates contribute to the daily fluctuations between the forecasted and the actual number of guests. Therefore, in common with other local hotels, the management of Hotel ABC have major difficulties in trying to forecast its upcoming demand; their forecasting attempts are challenging and seldom very accurate. To compound the situation, guests, who have booked their staycations well in advance, are cancelling at the last minute, possibly due to a fear of infection resulting from increasing numbers of new COVID-19 cases, as well as the appearance of new COVID-19 variants.



Doug Miller, the director of revenue management at Hotel ABC, is a very experienced industry professional in his field. He has always been very proud of his highly accurate forecasting, which he has achieved based on the collection and analysis of historical data. COVID-19, however, has changed everything, specifically in terms of revenue management and his ability to forecast effectively. At this point in time, historical data are of limited value due to the high volatility of demand and supply patterns. Thus, forecasting has to be reconceptualised, starting with some data sets from COVID-19 bookings, based only on domestic demand and with an understanding that it will be fraught with a high level of inaccuracy. In fact, some industry experts might even argue that “revenue isn't coming in, so you don't need revenue management right now” or “there's no demand to revenue manage” (Pernici, n.d., p.1).

Doug is eager to improve the situation, especially in terms of forecasting more effectively. He has read recently that external data need to be added to his process to better understand the dynamic market conditions. Also, he has heard about sentiment analysis and is keen to explore how the sentiments of hotel guests might impact on his forecasting. He understands that external data comprise market forward-data, such as Google search data, flight schedules and bookings, and especially the sentiment of travellers (cf. Stephens, 2021). It seems to Doug that he needs to gather more intelligence to deal with the current situation; he believes that the external data will increase his control and so ameliorate the forecasting situation.

In order to cope with these challenges, Doug believes that a knowledge of data analytics should enable him to cope better with the forecasting but he needs to learn more about utilising data analytics to gain a better understanding of the market's momentum (cf. Alaei et. al, 2019) and find ways to deal with it. He decided to enrol on a rapid data analytics course at a local university in Singapore over a course of three days; the main focus of the course was sentiment analytics.

The following week, feeling well equipped with the necessary data analytics' knowledge, Doug met his revenue management team and allocated tasks. Inter alia, the tasks included gathering and incorporating market forward data (cf. Stephens, 2021) to indicate a certain level of sentiment amongst Singaporean guests towards travel, specifically in terms of staycations. One month later, Doug called for a regular revenue management meeting and shared with his team that not only the accuracy of the forecasts but also the predictions for no-shows and cancellations had increased substantially. In the light of this evidence, the Hotel ABC revenue management team collaborated with the marketing team to create new staycation packages that

allowed their guests increased flexibility so promoting their confidence in making future bookings.

## References

Alaei, A., Becken, S., & Stantic, B. (2019). Sentiment analysis in tourism: Capitalizing on big data. *Journal of Travel Research, 58*(2), 175–191.

Al-Ma'aitah, M. A. (2020). Utilizing of big data and predictive analytics capability in crisis management. *Journal of Computer Science, 16*(3), 295-304.

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet—The state of eTourism research. *Tourism management, 29*(4), 609-623.

Buhalis, D., & Leung, R. (2018). Smart hospitality—interconnectivity and interoperability towards an ecosystem. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 71*, 41-50.

Burhan, M., Salam, M. T., Abou Hamdan, O., & Tariq, H. (2021). Crisis management in the hospitality sector SMEs in Pakistan during COVID-19. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 98*, 103037. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.103037>

Coombs, W. T. (2014). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Coombs, W. T. (2022). *Ongoing crisis communication: Planning, managing, and responding (6<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Dorfman, M. S., & Cather, D. A. (2013) *Introduction to risk management and insurance (4<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Boston, MA: Pearson

Faulkner, B., & Vikulov, S. (2001). Katherine, washed out one day, back on track the next: A post-mortem of a tourism disaster. *Tourism Management, 22*, 331-344.

Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2020). Pandemics, tourism and global change: A rapid assessment of COVID-19. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 29*(1), 1-20.

Heath, R. (1993). Dealing with complete crisis—the crisis management shell structure. *Safety Science, 30*, 139-150.

Hosie, P., & Smith, C. (2004). Preparing for crises with online security management education. *Research and Practice in HRM, 12*(2), 90-127.

Kovoor-Misra, S., Clair, J. A., & Bettenhausen, K. L. (20001). Clarifying the attributes of organizational crises. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 67*(1), 77-91.

Lai, I. K. W., & Wong, J. W. C. (2020). Comparing crisis management practices in the hotel industry between initial and pandemic stages of COVID-19. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 32*(10), 3135-3154.

- Laws, E., & Prideaux, B. (Eds.). (2005). *Tourism crises: Management responses and theoretical insight*. London: Routledge.
- Liu, Z., & Stern, R. (2021). Quantifying the traffic impacts of the COVID-19 shutdown. *Journal of Transportation Engineering, Part A: Systems*, 147(5), 1-14.  
<https://doi.org/10.1061/JTEPBS.0000527>
- McKercher, B., & Hui, E. L. (2004). Terrorism, economic uncertainty and outbound travel from Hong Kong. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 15(2-3), 99-115.
- Park, Y. E. (2021). Developing a COVID-19 crisis management strategy using news media and social media in big data analytics. *Social Science Computer Review*, 1-18.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/08944393211007314>
- Pernici, C. (n.d.). *The importance of revenue management in times of uncertainty*.  
<https://ideas.com/revenue-management-times-uncertainty/>
- Pfarr, C., & Hosie, P. J. (2008). Crisis management in tourism: Preparing for recovery. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 23(2-4), 249-264.
- Qiu, S. C., Jiang, J., Liu, X., Chen, M. H., & Yuan, X. (2021). Can corporate social responsibility protect firm value during the COVID-19 pandemic?. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 93, 102759. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102759>
- Rosenthal, U., & Pijnenberg, B. (1991). Simulation-oriented scenarios. In U. Rosenthal, & B. Pijnenberg (Eds.), *Crisis management and decision making: Simulation oriented scenarios* (pp. 1-6). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer.
- Skiera, B., Yan, S., Daxenberger, J., Dombois, M., & Gurevych, I. (2021). Information-seeking argument mining: A step towards identifying reasons in textual analysis to improve services. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.385109>
- Stephens, M. (Host). (2021-present). *How to use forward-looking demand data in revenue management*. [Audio podcast] . eHotelier.  
<https://insights.ehotelier.com/podcasts/2021/12/14/how-to-use-forward-looking-demand-data-in-revenue-management/>
- Tu, Y., Li, D., & Wang, H. J. (2021). COVID-19-induced layoff, survivors' COVID-19-related stress and performance in hospitality industry: The moderating role of social support. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 95, 102912  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2021.102912>
- Vu, H. Q., Li, G., Law, R., & Zhang, Y. (2018). Tourist activity analysis by leveraging mobile social media data. *Journal of Travel Research*, 57(7), 883-898.
- Walters, G., & McKercher, B. (2021, November). Special issue on “Where to from here? COVID 19 and the future of tourism.” *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 26(11), 1171–1172.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/10941665.2021.1979171>

## 90 Revealed Case Studies

Wut, T. M., Xu, J. B., & Wong, S. M. (2021). Crisis management research (1985–2020) in the hospitality and tourism industry: A review and research agenda. *Tourism Management*, 85, 104307. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104307>

Yallop, A., & Seraphin, H. (2020). Big data and analytics in tourism and hospitality: Opportunities and risks. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, 6(3), 257-262.

Younis, E. (2015). Sentiment analysis and text mining for social media microblogs using open source tools: An empirical study. *International Journal of Computer Applications*, 112(5), 44-48.

Yozcu, O. K., & Cetin, G. (2019). A strategic approach to managing risk and crisis at tourist destinations. In N. Kozak & M. Kozak (Eds.). *Tourist destination management* (pp. 273-287). Champaign, IL: Springer, International Publishing.

Zeng, B., & Gerritsen, R. (2014). What do we know about social media in tourism? A review. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 10, 27-36.

Zhang, S. N., Li, Y. Q., Ruan, W. Q., & Liu, C. H. (2022). Would you enjoy virtual travel? The characteristics and causes of virtual tourists' sentiment under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic. *Tourism management*, 88, 104429. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104429>

Zhao, X., Lu, X., Liu, Y., Lin, J., & An, J. (2018). Tourist movement patterns understanding from the perspective of travel party size using mobile tracking data: A case study of Xi'an, China. *Tourism Management*, 69, 368-383.

### **Questions and Activities**

First read the questions then examine the issues raised using selected pertinent references:

1. What are the main challenges for companies in the hospitality sector that plan to adopt data analytics for use in crisis management? Make suggestions for overcoming the challenges.
2. Outline, and critically reflect on, the stages needed to conduct sentiment analysis within data analytics.
3. Make practical recommendations for hotel businesses regarding the application of sentiment analysis, such as data collection, processing and data visualisation.
4. Discuss how sentiment analysis could help companies in the hospitality industry in crisis management.
5. What are the possible implications of hotel businesses' focusing excessively on sentiment analytics?
6. How would you advise hotel businesses to optimise the usage of data analytics in crisis management?

## Part 3

### **Points for Discussion**



## **Part 1 Non-revealed Case Studies**

### **Workplace Culture** by Sheree Anne O'Neill

#### **Points for discussion**

- Leadership styles
- Workplace culture
- Motivational theory

### **Online Reputation of a Restaurant and Interaction with Bloggers** by Kateryna Fedosova and Dmytro Kharenko

#### **Points for Discussion**

- Distinguishing negative comments from fake ones.
- Options to interact with bloggers
- Impacts of bloggers on restaurant reviews in social media

### **Tourist Taxes as a Tool to Solve Problems Derived from Tourist Activity** by José Luis Durán-Román and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández

#### **Points for Discussion**

- Know and incorporate tourists' preferences when planning taxes linked to tourist activity in order to achieve greater acceptance following implementation.
- Establishment of specific taxes on tourist businesses.
- Greater awareness on the part of tourists regarding the negative impacts generated by tourist activity.
- Public transparency regarding the objectives, amount, and final destination of funds raised by tourist taxes.

### **The Early Bird Catches the Worm (or Not?)** by Gabriela Potoczek-Kantor

#### **Points for Discussion**

- Impacts of hotels selling inclusive meal packages (B&B; DB&B; all inclusive) with accommodation on (i) the business; and (ii) guests bringing in take away food
- Power of front office staff versus managers to deal with guests' complaints

## 94 *Points for Discussion*

- Willingness of hotels to compensate for guests' inconveniences: chain versus independent hotels
- Guests trying to gain compensation from a hotel; share your knowledge and/or experience
- Impact of negative comments on an hotel's social media account

### **The Region of the Knights of Blaník - the Use of Legend for Development of Sustainable Rural Tourism**

by Jiří Vaníček and Liběna Jarolínková

#### **Points for Discussion**

- Destinations that have an image and/or tourism products based on a local legend
- Advantages and limitations of marketing based on tourist legends
- Important issues concerning sustainable and unsustainable rural tourism
- How do DMOs work in your country?
- What is the value of a DMO in the management of local or regional tourism?

## **Part 2 Revealed Case Studies**

### **What Barriers do People with Hearing Impairments Overcome in Catering and Accommodation Facilities?**

by Blanka Bejdáková

#### **Points for Discussion:**

- Contribution of new technologies to the accessibility of tourism services for people with hearing impairment.
- Economic benefits versus costs of accessibility for physically challenged visitors to catering and accommodation facilities
- Role of governments in increasing the accessibility to tourism venues for physically challenged visitors



**The Integration of QR codes into Hotel Operations**  
by Klára Karakasné Morvay

**Points for Discussion**

- Examples of the use of QR codes in hotels
- QR codes as a revenue generator tool
- QR codes as a marketing tool
- QR codes during pandemics

**Tour Operators' Online Reputation Management**  
by Zdenka Petrů and Zuzana Kvítková

**Points for Discussion**

- Differences between tour operators and travel agents
- Role, relative size and importance of tour operators and travel agents in your country
- Differences between reputation and brand
- Impact of COVID-19 on the tour operators' and travel agencies'/agents' markets in your country

**Cliffly Travel Company**  
by Maria Tătărușanu

**Points for Discussion**

- Marketing via websites
- Ethical issues
- Management of the Hotel CON

**Service Sector Hospitality Marketing post Coronavirus (COVID-19): Opportunities and Challenges in Innovating the 6Ps**  
by Crispin Dale, Chris Phelan, Neil Robinson and Lauren Sinton

**Points for Discussion**

- Impact of COVID-19 on hospitality businesses
- Marketing challenges and opportunities in a crisis

**Strawberry Fields Forever: Opportunities for Green Engagement and Happiness**  
by Nicholas Catahan, Crispin Dale and Neil Robinson

**Points for Discussion**

- Impact of outdoor recreation on mental health
- Role of garden centres as outdoor recreation

**Tourists' Sustainable Intelligence and its Role within the Smart Destination Scenario**  
by Yaiza López-Sánchez and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández

**Points for Discussion**

- Incorporating the demand perspective for the sustainable management of STDs
- “Sustainable intelligence” as a key concept for STD policymakers and destination managers
- Identification of segments of demand with a trend towards sustainable behaviour
- Management of the “sustainable intelligence” of tourists in a tourism destination

**Tourism in Latvia during the Coronavirus (COVID 19) Pandemic**  
by Eriks Lingeberzins

**Points for Discussion**

- Factors that impact the numbers of tourism in Latvia
- Ways in which geographical location, international relations with neighbouring countries and socio-political and economic factors can impact directly and indirectly on the tourism sector
- Criteria that enable travel agents and tour operators to identify and source incoming tourism markets in order to secure long-term, stable tourism development

**Technology-Based Solutions to Effective Sustainability Benchmarking in the Hotel Industry**  
by Michael Kruesi and Detlev Remy

**Points for Discussion**

- Application of technology to evaluate sustainability in the hospitality sector.
- Application of strict requirements for improving sustainability, from tracking key metrics to implementing strategies to improve overall environmental impact
- Impact of technology-based decision making in terms of accuracy.

**COVID-19 and the Stock Price of the Tourism Sector: A Case Study of Spain**  
by Isabel Carrillo-Hidalgo and Juan Ignacio Pulido-Fernández

**Points for Discussion**

- Influences on the decision of investors in stocks
- Impact of COVID-19 on tourism worldwide and in Spain
- The value of being able to predict the behaviour of the stock price of the tourism sector

**Integrating Data Analytics in Crisis Management**  
by Detlev Remy, Michael Kruesi and Shin Wong

**Points for Discussion**

- Application of data analytics in the hospitality sector
- Application of strict requirements for data analytics, from data collection and cleansing to visualisation.
- Impacts of a data-driven decisions-making process

---

Bun de tipar: 2022. Apărut: 2022

Editura Tehnopress, str. Lascăr Catargi nr. 38,  
700108 Iași Tel./fax: 0232 260092  
email: [tehnopress@yahoo.com](mailto:tehnopress@yahoo.com)  
[www.tehnopress.ro](http://www.tehnopress.ro)

---



This book offers a range of cases written by specialists from industry and academia, who have drawn on their knowledge and experiences to offer problem solving exercises and activities in hospitality, tourism and event management. Although reference is made to specific national settings, most of the problems can be transposed to other locations and so offer management students and trainees a wide range of opportunities for interactive learning.

Each case concludes with a series of questions for students and trainees and/or ideas for associated activities. In addition to references, recommendations for further reading and links to websites and videos are provided as appropriate. Furthermore, for the guidance of teachers, trainers, students, trainees and managers, the authors have indicated points for discussion and suggested follow-up activities relevant to the scenarios.

The cases may be used for individual, group or team exercises and offer students and trainees, who aspire to hospitality, tourism or event management careers, opportunities for considering, debating, analysing and evaluating real and simulated scenarios set in various international locations.

*“The case studies in this volume provide an inspirational insight into hospitality and tourism that is beneficial for those people considering entering the industry and as a source of training for both managers and colleagues working in operations. This vision transpires across various types of hospitality and tourism employment both in the UK and internationally. The book is perceived to be a valuable source of experience shared by academics and industry professionals to help those embarking or on their journey within the industry.”*

**Adrian Ellis**

**Chair of Manchester Hoteliers' Association**

**General Manager, The Lowry Hotel, Manchester, UK**

ISBN 978-606-687-497-5



9 786066 874915