Call for Papers
Exploring Destination Experiences

Special Issue of the Journal of Destination Marketing and Management
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Key Deadlines:
Initial expressions of interest: 24th February 2012
Submission of full papers: 30th June 2012
Submission of revised papers: 21st December 2012
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Background to the special issue

Academics have given considerable attention to the tourist and leisure experience (Quan and Wang, 2004; Ryan, 2002, Uriely, 2005, Walls, 2011a, 2011b) and, more recently, to the relevance of the experiential paradigm for conceptualising tourism (See e.g. Morgan et al., 2010; Ritchie and Hudson, 2009; Tung and Ritchie, 2011). Several dimensions of the experiential approach can be identified from the literature. At the heart of experience is emotion and hedonic, rather than rational, consumption. This is linked, in part at least, to the decision making process, which is not reduced to notions of utility; nor is it purely perceived to be a cognitive process (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). Sensations and feelings that evoke affective responses are understood to be central to consumer decision making, experiences and the outcome of experiences (Addis and Holbrook, 2001). The consumer experience is, therefore, not necessarily viewed to be utilitarian, meeting some particular need, but involves fun, fantasy and desire (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982).

The hedonic and affective nature of consumption is linked to involvement and investment (Arnould and Price, 1993; Ryan, 2010). Consumers become personally and emotionally engaged in consumption experiences and construct notions of individual and collective identities through consumption (Firat and Dholakia, 1998). Consequently, experiences also offer ways to generate and articulate notions of belonging to groups, networks or communities. Consumers may also be required to invest in developing particular skills and competencies to participate in the consumption experience, and the experiences themselves may be transformative – offering scope from growth. However, others (e.g. Carù and Cova, 2003) have raised
concerns about assuming that all experiences are extraordinary or memorable.

An important aspect of the experiential perspective is that it doesn’t focus exclusively on the consumption experience itself – treating it as a discrete event. Rather it recognises that consumption begins before the event, prior to consumer encounters with the service environment, organisation or destination, and continues long after the event has ended (Arnould et al., 2002). Prior to the event, consumers often engage in research and consult others; they have fantasies and desires that may be realised in future consumption. After the event, consumers reconstruct their experiences through stories and visual representations, often with or to others.

A final dimension of experiential consumption, which draws on the themes discussed above is the importance of co-creation. As noted previously, experience creation often involves investment, and requires the consumer to take an active role, whether it is in the form of research, information provision or actual labour (See e.g. Ford and Heaton, 2001; Lugosi, 2008; 2009, Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). The notion of co-creation also stresses that consumers interact with others, often at multiple stages of the consumption experience.

Researchers have begun to examine the relevance of this approach to the marketing and management of destinations (e.g. Hudson and Ritchie, 2009; Morgan et al., 2009). Broadly, the notion of experience creation and promotion has started to inform DMO’s practices, although engagement with the experiential paradigm has been limited (Morgan et al., 2009).

Regarding destinations, academic work has focused on destination branding (e.g. Morgan et al., 2011), destination marketing (Pike, 2004; 2008), destination management (Prideaux, 2009), sustainability (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003), the economics of destinations (Vanhove, 2004), or some combination of these perspectives (Wang and Pizam, 2011). Whilst recent contributions to this field (Wang and Pizam, 2011) have engaged with the experiential paradigm, there have been no systemic attempts to bring this approach to an understanding of destinations. This special issue seeks to fill this gap by offering a critical, holistic exploration of destination experiences.

We invite high-quality, rigorous empirical, theoretical and methodological papers that explore destination experiences. Topics may include but are not limited to:

The management and operation of destinations within the experiential paradigm

Experiential marketing and branding of destinations
Technology and social media within destination experiences

Representations of destinations and touristic experiences (e.g. film, literature, music etc)

The role of destination and touristic experiences in destination brand equity

Human resource challenges in destination experiences

Policy and planning perspectives on destinations within the experiential paradigm

Experiential understanding of supporting services, including transport and logistics

The challenges of co-creation in constructing destination experiences

The role of food, drink and other leisure activities in destination experiences

Social inclusion/exclusion and the marketing and management of destinations

Enhancing multiple-stakeholder engagement

Rigorous and systematic critiques of the ‘experientialisation’ of destinations

Innovative methods for evaluating and researching destination experiences

Any other topics related to experiences in the context of destinations

Please feel free to contact the guest editors for informal enquiries, ensuring that you copy both Andrew and Peter into emails.

Further details of the journal and instructions for authors, see:
http://www.elsevier.com/wps/find/journaldescription.cws_home/727232/description#description

Papers should be submitted via Elsevier’s online system (See link below). When submitting papers, please ensure that you include the term ‘DESTINATION EXPERIENCES’ at the beginning of your abstracts to indicate that your submission is for this special issue.

http://ees.elsevier.com/jdmm/default.asp

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