

Preface

Welcome to the *Handbook of Research on Innovation, Differentiation, and New Technologies in Tourism, Hotels, and Food Service*. As editors, we are excited to present this comprehensive reference book, which delves into the intricate world of tourism and hospitality and explores the profound impact of innovation, differentiation, and new technologies within these industries.

Tourism and hospitality are assuming, in a growing and challenging way, complexity in the forms of their organization, in the means involved for their implementation, in the experiences required, in the associated technological support and in the links with the territories and their communities. Tourism, in its territorial relation and due to the transformations operated, promotes differentiated practices and consumption logics that require permanent monitoring, creativity and adaptation. On account of this an increasing number of services are associated and new functionalities are generated for its enjoyment.

The forms of organization in tourism, hospitality, and food service tend to be cherished more and more, and strategically planned, empowering organizations and territories with means and positioning that promote their competitiveness and qualification. The planning in tourism, hospitality and its sub-sectors requires a joint involvement of the different stakeholders, with emphasis on governance entities, able to create conditions for sustainability and qualification of destinations, providing the valuation of tourism assets, the creation of differentiated products or services, and their sustainability. The challenges and changes demand constant adaptation/readaptation, which promote instability and permanent updates in the means and positions, given the behavior of society, the economy demands, and social and environmental responsibility.

For the different tourism and hospitality players, it is crucial to be competent in their capacity to deal with permanent changes and reconfigurations, both in the markets and in the ways services are operated, promoting their competitiveness and forms of organization and cooperation that add value to their offer, their differentiation and, consequently, the valuation of their products and services.

Before changing contexts and the emergence of new demands, tourism players seek to broaden experiences and increase technological/digital supports that contribute to access a greater quantity and quality of data, supports, and resources that help make experiences safer, generate more accessible information, and enable a greater capacity to understand changes in the behavior of the demand and the experience promoted and desired. At the same time, tourism players per se and in corporate terms feel compelled to integrate, into their practices and strategies, greater concerns and investments concerning the triad of sustainability, namely, the environmental, economic and social aspects. It is crucial to promote the social responsibility of organizations in order to improve their processes continuously and obtain results that benefit all stakeholders, enhance human resources, generate greater concern for the communities and the environment where they are and with whom they interact. This involvement is

decisive in the appreciation of the touristic destination, in the understanding of local ecocultural realities and in the development of the preservation process and creation of services with identity, socially responsible, contributing to create differentiation in a context of globalization and sustainability. In this context, differentiation, specialization, digitalization and dematerialization emerge as critical factors for the enhancement of the tourism offer of destinations, the resource mobilization, the effectiveness of organizational processes and the acceleration of entrepreneurial initiatives.

In light of these challenges and changes, this handbook aims to explore the current landscape of tourism and hospitality, sparking thoughtful reflection and fostering the sharing of innovative approaches to developing tourism products, destinations, and hospitality practices. It also emphasizes the significance of technology and competitiveness in the realms of tourism, hospitality, and food service.

The overarching objectives of this book are manifold: expand knowledge about tourism, hospitality, and food service activities; systematize knowledge on innovation within these sectors; understand the processes and mediums of digitalization in tourism and hospitality; promote products, services, and differentiated practices in tourism; showcase best practices and strategies for operationalizing tourism and hospitality; introduce models of governance and innovation specific to tourism, hospitality, and food service; provide insights into management and planning models within the tourism and hospitality sector; facilitate the transfer of knowledge between research and the professional realms of the tourism sector; stimulate entrepreneurship activities in tourism; value heritage and cultural identities as invaluable assets for tourism and hospitality; establish scientific resources for evaluating the tourism and hospitality sectors and their trends; and, lastly, promote applied research within the domains of tourism, hospitality, and food service.

The intended audience for this handbook is diverse and includes professors, academics, students, and researchers in higher education institutions; tourism management organizations at national and local levels; tour operators; hotel managers; food service managers; event organizers; administrative entities; destination management organizations; local development associations; tourism technicians; trainers specializing in tourism, hospitality, and food service management; professionals representing various subsectors of tourism; professional associations; entrepreneurs; and planners and managers of tourism destinations.

The book covers a broad spectrum of topics and binomials, encompassing areas such as tourism and local development, territorial branding and differentiated tourism products, tourism planning and local development policies, information technologies in tourism, hospitality and hotel management, food service management, local governance and public policies for tourism, territorial innovation in tourism and hospitality, entrepreneurship in tourism, tourism and hospitality entertainment, management and entertainment of tourist destinations, gastronomy and territorial identities, enogastronomy and tourism marketing, digitalization and technological training, niche tourism, innovative projects and good practices in tourism and hospitality, human resource management in tourism and hospitality, dematerialization of operations in tourism subsectors, management of operational processes and provision of tourism services, contexts of differentiation and specialization, professional and logistical challenges in tourism, and finally, robotization and new technologies in tourism, hotels, and food service.

The 15 chapters which this book is structured in three sections, which allow the framing and interpretation of dynamics and challenges regarding Section 1, “Robotization, Digitalization, and New Technologies in Tourism and Hospitality”; Section 2, “Innovation, Experiences, and Quality Service in the Hotel and Food Service Industry”; Section 3, “Development Dynamics, Governance, and Promotion of Tourism and Hospitality.”

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In Section 1, “Robotization, Digitalization, and New Technologies in Tourism and Hospitality,” which includes five chapters, approaches are established on technological developments and the implications of digitalization in hospitality and tourism, with specificity on the themes of robotization and automation and management of hotel operations. This section highlights the contributions made to tourism and hospitality, its interactions and optimized development of operations and services are investigated.

Chapter 1, developed by Sameera Khan and Dileep Kumar Singh explores the significance of RPA in automating mundane tasks within the tourism, hotels, and food services industries. It discusses RPA use cases, the basic framework of RPA implementation, RPA tools, challenges in implementing RPA, and the future scope of RPA.

Ahmed Chemseddine Bouarar, Karolina Stojczew, and Kamel Mouloudj investigates within Chapter 2 the impact of COVID-19 on the hospitality industry in Poland and examines the industry’s digital transformation as a response to the pandemic. It identifies obstacles that may hinder digitalization in the hospitality industry and highlights the benefits of a sound digital transformation.

In Chapter 3, Züleyhan Baran, Şükran Karaca, and Huseyin Baran focuses on how new-gen technologies have revolutionized the tourism industry. It highlights the adoption of robotic systems by tourism businesses, such as hotels, food services, and transportation, to ensure social distancing and enhance hygiene measures. The chapter explores the challenges and benefits of digitization in the tourism industry.

Hande Mutlu Ozturk, Ozgur Guler, Pamukkale, and Olcay Polat investigate the factors that influence tourism income in Türkiye on Chapter 4. It employs statistical methods to analyze the impact of these variables and compares the performance of different prediction models, including machine learning models, in forecasting tourism income. The chapter sheds light on the importance of factors such as the country’s image, safety, and transportation opportunities in shaping tourism income.

Chapter 5 delves into the role of tourist intermediaries in connecting supply and demand in rural tourism. Predrag Miroslav Vuković and Marija Mosurović Ružičić emphasizes the importance of ICT application in improving business activities and promoting rural tourist destinations. This chapter aims to address the challenges faced in rural areas and proposes steps to enhance the development of these regions. The expectation is that this approach will increase the income and stop the negative trends burdening the life in rural areas (depopulation, population migration to urban centers, the decline in macroeconomic indicators, etc.) that are present not only in Serbia but also in other countries.

In 2, “Innovation, Experiences, and Quality Service in the Hotel and Food Service Industry,” five chapters are included that address the issues of innovation, modernization and sustainability in hotel and restaurant services, with approaches applied in terms of different countries and analyses on behaviors and satisfaction levels. Ways of behaving in services and the incorporation of artificial intelligence and virtual reality are explained. Food traditions, the search for the preservation of gastronomic heritage and its in compliance with new tourist experiences are explored simultaneously. Processes of the impact of the evolution of technologies on hospitality and tourism are analyzed.

Nilgün Demirel İli and Onur Çelen examine in Chapter 6 the effects of technology paradox and technostress on employees in the tourism industry. Through qualitative research methods, the chapter identifies the negative impacts of technology on employees and highlights the potential decrease in the labor force. It emphasizes the need to mitigate the adverse effects of technology on the industry.

Chapter 7 investigates the service quality of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the tourism industry, with a focus on Pondicherry. Jeganathan Gomathi Sankar and Arokiaraj David using a quantitative research approach, the chapter analyzes survey data to assess the impact of AI technology on service quality and

customer satisfaction in tourism. The findings highlight the positive influence of AI on service quality. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence to service quality in the context of AI technology and the importance of AI technology to enhance service quality and customer satisfaction.

Mihály László Vörös and Aleš Gačnik explore the gastronomy tourism potential and cultural heritage of the South-Danube region in chapter 8. It examines a case study on the culinary tradition of brewing and eating fish soup, which has become a prominent gastronomy tourism attraction in the town of Baja. The chapter discusses the impact of this tradition on the local economy and sustainable development.

Chapter 9 introduces HoST Lab, an integrative approach that promotes innovation based on the Mediterranean Diet (MD) in the tourism sector. Alexandra Rodrigues Gonçalves, Célia Ramos, and Carina Viegas present in this chapter research on the emotional and sensory experiences associated with enogastronomic experiences of the MD. The chapter aims to create a sharing and learning research space between academia, tourism, and hospitality sectors, in which proposals are tested, results transferred to the community, and well-being promoted among the local population and visitors, aspiring for a growing sustainable destination.

Chapter 10 focuses on the developments of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) in tourism marketing. Nesenur Altinigne provides an overview of the research progress in this field, highlights the theoretical backgrounds and methodologies employed, and suggests future research directions for improving the literature.

The last section, “Development Dynamics, Governance, and Promotion of Tourism and Hospitality,” is composed of five chapters that bring studies on governance and marketing practices of tourism and hospitality, with emphasis on the issues of dissemination of destinations and accessibility. The chapters provide insight into different realities and problems associated with accessibility and the inclusive dimension of tourist destinations, as well as the exploration of communication models and supports for the dissemination of tourism in different territorial contexts.

Chapter 11 evaluates the challenges and opportunities of innovation sustainability in tourism entrepreneurship. It conducts a systematic review of bibliometric literature to identify the barriers to implementing sustainability practices in the tourism industry. The chapter, developed by Albérico Travassos Rosário aims to raise awareness and provide insights for promoting sustainable tourism practices. This research essay aims to evaluate the challenges and opportunities of innovation sustainability in tourism entrepreneurship, thus building a clear image of what should be done to overcome the obstacles and increase awareness of the need for sustainable tourism.

Gorete Dinis and Zélia Breda examine whether destination management organizations (DMOs) actively develop inclusive destination promotion and advertising materials in Chapter 12. It focuses on Tourism of Portugal as a case study and explores the accessibility level of promotional materials. The chapter highlights the importance of inclusive tourism and suggests future research directions.

Yassine El Bouchikhi in Chapter 13 reviews the literature on nation branding, social media, and tourism in the context of Morocco. It examines the use of social media in promoting travel, cultural assets, and the recent developments and trends in the Moroccan tourism industry. This chapter also includes a netnographic study of influential media accounts promoting Morocco’s image.

Chapter 14 provides a comprehensive examination of eWOM communication in the tourism and hospitality industry. It analyzes existing scholarly literature on eWOM within this domain, including prevalent themes and research methodologies. The authors Mahmut Bakır and Ali Emre Sarılgan offer insights into the impact of eWOM on consumers’ decisions and suggests future research directions.

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The final chapter (15) focuses on accessibility in tourism, specifically addressing the ACT-Model. It emphasizes the importance of creating an accessible environment for all, including people with reduced mobility. The chapter developed by Borbála Gondos and Márta Nárai explores the roles of various actors involved in ensuring accessibility in tourism and highlights the economic potential of inclusive practices.

We hope that this handbook serves as an invaluable resource, providing profound insights and inspiration for both academics and professionals in the ever-evolving fields of tourism, hospitality, and food service. May it ignite new ideas, facilitate fruitful discussions, and contribute to the continued advancement and transformation of these industries.

Finally, we would like to thank all the authors for their contributions and commitment, allowing us to enrich this international publication, disseminating their research and projects and promoting a deeper and more up-to-date knowledge about technological advances in tourism and hospitality, the changes and challenges of these sectors. To highlight their concern to provide innovative studies that contribute to a better understanding of the current dynamics, problems and challenges of tourism, hospitality and food services.

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