



Members of the program committee:

Michael Bosnjak

Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, School of Economics and Management, Bozen/Bolzano, South Tyrol, Italy

Perry Hobson

Director of The-ICE, Southern Cross University, School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Lismore, Australia

Bozidar Klicek

University of Zagreb, Faculty of Organization and Informatics, Varazdin, Croatia

Oswin Maurer

Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, School of Economics and Management, Bozen/Bolzano, South Tyrol, Italy

Linda Osti

Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, School of Economics and Management, Bozen/Bolzano, South Tyrol, Italy

M. Joseph Sirgy

Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Department of Marketing, Pamplin College of Business

Lindsay W. Turner

Victoria University, School of Applied Economics, Melbourne, Australia

Werner W. Wittmann

University of Mannheim, Department of Psychology II, Mannheim, Germany



Abstract 2

Intercultural marketing for SPA products: the example Italy - Germany

Thomas Bausch
Munich University of Applied Sciences, Department of Tourism, Germany
bausch@hm.edu

Topic(s):

Current theoretical developments and practical applications in consumer behavior applied to tourism

Keyword(s): consumer expectations, SPA tourism, intercultural marketing

Type of contribution: Paper presentation

Abstract:

SPA tourism is one of the most dynamic growing product segments in tourism. Alpine SPA destinations and their hoteliers more and more get under pressure by new competitors: cruise liners, leisure clubs in the Mediterranean or new mega destinations as Dubai enter more and more into the market. One strategy to Alpine competitors to defend and enlarge their market position could be a specialization to authentic Alpine SPA products. A key question in this context is "what do the consumer of traditional source markets expect from a typical Alpine SPA product?". Obviously consumers do not have a common understanding of SPA or so called wellness products, neither across all source markets nor in relatively homogenous source markets. Furthermore the understanding of SPA and wellness historically differs between culturally different areas, e.g. between mid and south Europe because of religion or traditions of health prevention.

In this context two aspects have to be analyzed: first the general and specific expectations of consumers and second the differences between the source markets. By a survey parallel performed in Germany (N=1600) and Italy (N=1000) which are traditional key source markets to most of the central alpine destinations the addressed questions have been analyzed. The presented paper will show the results of this comparative study and discusses the implications to be drawn to tourism marketing. The consequences in the fields of product development and communications strategies in the source markets to hoteliers as well as destinations marketing organizations will be shown.



Abstract 14

Rational Consumers, Learning and Choice Manipulation

Debora Di Caprio
School of Economics and Management, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy
DDiCaprio@unibz.it

Francisco J Santos Arteaga
School of Economics, Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy
FSantosArteaga@unibz.it

Topic(s):

Current theoretical developments and practical applications in consumer behavior applied to tourism

Keyword(s): incomplete information, choice manipulation, signaling, learning, rational herds

Type of contribution: Paper presentation

Abstract:

We illustrate how a principal can make easy use of the inefficiencies induced by information asymmetries within a given market to manipulate the choice of uninformed but perfectly rational agents. Banerjee's (1992) restaurant herding model with sequential moves and publicly observable signals is expanded to allow for the agents to examine all possible alternatives before making a choice. Agents follow Bayes' rule to update the probability functions defining the state of the economic system and the expected utility derived from their choices. A positive relationship is obtained between the number of signals issued by the principal and the induced bias on the choice probability of the agents. In this case, when the number of signals issued by the principal is large enough, the herding mechanism described by Banerjee is triggered among all agents. We provide several numerical simulations describing the evolution of the agent's decision process and how it is affected by the signals issued by the principal.



Abstract 24

The role of traveling in the forming of Hungarian society's happiness

Tamara Ratz
Kodolanyi Janos University College, Szekesfehervar, Hungary
ratztamara@freemail.hu

Gabor Michalko
Hungarian Academy of Sciences Geographical Research Institute, Budapest, Hungary
michalko@iif.hu

Topic(s):

Issues in well-being and quality-of-life research with a special emphasis on tourism

Keyword(s): happiness, tourism, Hungarians, quality of life

Type of contribution: Paper presentation

Abstract:

The need to understand the relationship between tourism and happiness is increasingly represented in the international literature. Earlier findings, focusing on either the tourist or the local society, provide an adequate theoretical basis for deeper investigation which requires more detailed empirical research on the symbiotic relationship of happiness and tourism. Issues to be studied include the place of tourism in the hierarchy of happiness factors, or the process through which an awareness of happiness may develop in individuals as a result of their participation in tourism.

In order to further deepen our understanding of the influence of tourism on one's happiness, a questionnaire survey with a sample size of 1400 was carried out in Hungary during the first half of 2008, with the assistance of students from the Kodolányi János University College Tourism Department. The findings of the research are discussed within the context of a representative survey of 11,500 households focusing on the relationship of tourism and quality of life, carried out by the Hungarian National Statistical Office in the second part of 2007.

The proposed paper discusses the factors of Hungarian society's sense of happiness, and analyses the contribution of tourist trips to one's awareness of happiness. While the data of the HNSO research project are used to provide an overview of the symbiosis of tourism and quality of life in Hungary, the findings of the KJUC study help us understand the place and role of tourism among the factors leading to happiness.



Abstract 25

Extreme Sports Tourism: A motivation and customer/tourists needs profile

Sabine Müller

*Department of Strategic Management, Marketing and Tourism Innsbruck University School of Management
sabine.mueller@uibk.ac.at*

Klaus Weiermair

*Department of Strategic Management, Marketing and Tourism I
klaus.weiermair@uibk.ac.at*

Topic(s):

Current theoretical developments and practical applications in consumer behavior applied to tourism

Keyword(s): Motivation, Extreme Sport, Lifestyle, Consumer Behavior, Alpine Destination

Type of contribution: Paper presentation

Abstract:

As social values and norms have changed we find ourselves moving towards societies which could be termed " Risk and Experience Societies. The latter suggests large-scale behavioural changes both in every day life and especially regarding the motivational base and behaviour of leisure and tourism activities. A rising segment of consumers in leisure and tourism prefers to pursue high risk leisure activities. Adventure and experience tourism have grown over proportionately in recent years. Similarly sport is increasingly playing a crucial role in many tourism destinations. Leisure activities such as mountain biking or rock climbing have all shown larger relative increases recently. Similarly there has been a large increase in the diversity and depth of sports from initially a few physical sports to an immense variety. Faced with this overall growth of adventure/extreme sport varieties and/or risk tourism, many but notably European alpine tourist destinations have to reassess their local and regional competitiveness focusing this newly emerging tourist segment. Before making hasty supply adjustment decisions and given that all evidence points to "Knowing thoroughly customer needs" as the prerequisite or driver for business success, it is of paramount importance to analyze the motivational foundation and customer needs for this particular customer/tourist activity or segment.

The paper attempts to fill the above cited knowledge gap regarding the motives, needs and activities of this particular leisure/tourism segment. After providing briefly some socio-psychological foundations of motivation theory and suggesting a specific theoretical and empirical model the paper provides empirical evidence from survey carried out among 149 German and Austrian extreme-sport athletes.

The questionnaire was aimed at subject's pursuing the following extreme sports: climbing, mountain biking, free riding, paragliding or kite surfing. Based on the motivation-model of Rheinberg (1989) the following research questions were posed and answered

- 1) Which are catalysts or positive/negative factors influencing the motivation to pursue extreme sports?
- 2) Are extreme sports people more process oriented (through the exercise of sports) or are they more driven by the rewards (e.g. in terms of performance characteristics)
- 3) Which factors either internal or external contribute to a person condition motivation?

Multifactor relationships within the set of motivation determinants are explored using factor analysis to be followed by a regression analysis showing interrelationships between a set of motivation catalysts and outcomes (in terms of specific customer needs and sports activities undertaken).



Abstract 27 (continued)

The paper is structured as follows: After the literature review the second part presents based presents the basic analytical framework for the study (e.g. Assael's family role model (1987) and Davis decision-making scenarios (1978) in combination of the core literature on travel decision behaviour in families serve as main pillars of the empirical study). In a next step the authors attempt to describe research design and present the results of the empirical survey of families in Tyrol.



Abstract 31

Hiking as a relevant wellness activity - discussing results of an exploratory study of hiking tourists in Portugal

Aurea Rodrigues
Universidade de Aveiro
aurea@ua.pt

Elisabeth Kastenholz
Universidade de Aveiro
elisabethk@ua.pt

Apolonia Rodrigues
Genuineland
genuineland@gmail.com

Topic(s):

Issues in well-being and quality-of-life research with a special emphasis on tourism

Keyword(s): hiking, wellness tourism, Portugal survey

Type of contribution: Poster presentation

Abstract:

New forms of tourism are gaining ground throughout the world. Nowadays, tourism destinations should offer variety and new tourism products, addressing special interest niches, in order to maintain a healthy and vibrant tourism industry. One tourism product that has been growing faster than others is health and wellness tourism. According to the European Travel Monitor (2004), this sector stands for 3 millions of international trips in Europe and will in the next future increase between 5 and 10% per year. Wellness typically integrates physical activity combined with relaxation of the mind and intellectual stimulus, basically enhancing well-being through a kind of fitness and balance of the body, mind and spirit, including a holistic dimension (Schobersberger et al, 2004). Promoting health and well-being are goals of each tourist when engaging in holidays as well as part of market strategies of tourism providers. Adventure, entertainment and outdoor sports play an important role in wellness holidays. In a study undertaken by Chen et al (2008) relaxation, pursuing multiple activities, recreation and enjoying nature are the top four motivations to travel to a wellness destination. One activity that can be integrated in wellness holidays is hiking, which has been identified as an important recreational and tourist activity in many countries, for a long time. A system of well designed walking paths may be an interesting and relatively inexpensive infrastructure, attracting visitors to natural, rural and mountain areas, and completing spa destinations' attractiveness, making corresponding heritage of these areas more accessible and visible and thereby motivating visitors to stay for longer periods of time. In the present study we show the results of an exploratory survey of Portuguese and foreign hikers (N= 200), and discuss implications of results on the planning and management of destinations, with a particular emphasis on the creation of integrated wellness products.



Abstract 36

The Alpine Pearls holiday

Desiree Verbeek
Tilburg University, Telos, The Netherlands
d.h.p.verbeek@uvt.nl

Bertine Bargeman
Tilburg University, Telos, The Netherlands
a.bargeman@uvt.nl

Topic(s):

Current theoretical developments and practical applications in consumer behavior applied to tourism

Keyword(s): Tourism, Mobility, Sustainability, Alps passage

Type of contribution: Paper presentation

Abstract:

In the Alpine region, municipalities and tourism boards of 22 villages are united in an association that aims for the sustainable development of tourism mobility. This "Alpine Pearls" association is predominantly aimed at the sustainable development of destination-related tourism mobility. It is devoted to the provision of tickets, information, and transport modes to improve the possibilities for environmental-friendly travelling to, between and in the network of Alpine Pearls villages. This paper is focused on whether and how this green "passage" (Peters, 2006) enables tourists to travel smooth, problem-free and environmental-friendly to and in the Alpine region. The following research question will be answered: "To what extent is the Alpine Pearls holiday, positioned as a green passage, truly a passage for environmental-friendly travelling, and what obstructs the creation of a sustainable tourism mobility passage?"

To analyse the Alpine Pearls holiday, we use a theoretical framework based on the Social Practices Approach (SPA). SPA focuses on social practices and on consumption junctions herein where end-users meet the structure of provision. It offers a contextual approach to consumption behaviour (Spaargaren, 1997; 2003; Spaargaren & Van Vliet, 2000). Here, the dynamics between travellers and providers of sustainable tourism and travel services along the green passage of the Alpine Pearls holiday are our main interest.

Data were gathered through participant observation and interviews. Whereas participant observation considers everything that happens in time-space settings, processes outside time-space settings that do influence the setting have been revealed through interviews with informants.

The analysis of the specific dynamics between travellers and providers in the Alpine Pearls holiday practice has pointed to clues for sustainable development of tourism mobility. One conclusion is that, in creating a passage for environmental-friendly Alpine holidays, the Alpine Pearls association is confronted with the nationally-organised railway infrastructures, and the sectorially-organised tourism industry. The creation of a passage for problem-free and enjoyable Alpine Pearls holidays, however, implies breaking through such structures. Another conclusion is that Alpine Pearls offers a storyline in which benefits for the environment go hand in hand with benefits for tourists and Alpine destinations.

References:

- Peters, P. (2006). *Time, Innovation and Mobilities. Travel in technological cultures*. Oxon, New York: Routledge.
- Spaargaren, G. (1997). *The Ecological Modernization of Production and Consumption. Essays in Environmental Sociology*. Wageningen: Wageningen University Press.
- Spaargaren, G. (2003). Sustainable consumption: A Theoretical and Environmental Policy Perspective. *Society and Natural Resources*, 16(8): 687-702.
- Spaargaren, G. & Van Vliet, B. (2000). Lifestyles, Consumption and the Environment; the ecological modernization of domestic consumption. *Environmental politics*, 9(1): 50-76.

