Special Issue

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“Smart Tourism Destinations: Advancing Theory and Practice”

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The Smart Tourism Destination (STD) is an emerging paradigm for optimizing the use of touristic resources, enhancing tourism experiences, increasing destination competitiveness and improving residents' quality of life (Gretzel *et al.*, 2015; Lopez de Avila, 2015). The STD is built on a shared platform of state of art technologies that: integrates information on tourism businesses and use of resources; interconnects dynamically all the stakeholders to share relevant knowledge; manages big data and data analytics tools for decision-making and tourism experience co-creation (Wang *et al.*, 2013; Lamsfus *et al.*, 2015; Del Chiappa, Baggio, 2015; Buhalis, Amaranggana, 2013, 2015). To realize a STD, it is essential to embrace a holistic approach that takes into account complementary dimensions to technology, namely human and social capital, leadership, innovation and sustainable development (Boes *et al.*, 2015).

This Issue aims to identify new perspectives of analysis, relevant concepts and practices along with opportunities for future research.

By integrating smart tourism development and urban management, Della Corte, D'Andrea, Savastano and Zamparelli propose a classification system to strategically position city-destinations based on two variables: the adoption of a systemic approach and the degree of experiential innovation.

Liburd, Nielsen and Heape's research shows how tourism co-design can be leveraged to understand the dynamic and processes of smart tourism practices and social enactment, going beyond a mere technical, data driven and service-dominant logic.

Through the analysis of a tourism municipality in Gran Canaria Island, Hernández-Martín, Rodríguez-Rodríguez and Gahr explain how the delimitation of functional areas with tourism relevance can help destination managers to improve decision-making processes in the context of STDs.

Frikha, Mhiri and Gargouri elaborate a method for measuring trust between online friends and, deepening the Smart-TMT, a recommendation system, they show the value of social network web applications to improve the level of personalization in destination offer.

Relying on an analysis of best practices relating to the application of ICTs in cultural heritage sites, Buoincontri and Marasco analyze how these technologies can enhance all the experience dimensions. The paper demonstrates the value of adopting a multi-stage and multi-dimensional perspective of cultural heritage experience at tourism destination in exploiting smart technologies.

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