



Book Review "Gamification for Tourism"

Feifei Xu & Dimitrios Buhalis ISBN 978-1-84541-822-9, Channel View Publications, Bristol UK, 2021, 290 pp., Price

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"We are game-playing, fun-having creatures, we are the otters of the universe."

Richard Bach

Understanding the principles and contemporary practices of gamification in the tourism context is critical for successful tourism development. Tourists seek novel and authentic experiences, uncommon for their everyday life (McKercher and Prideaux 2020; Skavronskaya et al. 2020). The trends of the recent years (Buhalis and Sinarta 2019), as well as the forecast for the future travel demand (Amadeus IT Group SA 2015) demonstrate the growing importance of tourists participation in travel activities in addition to passive learning and observing them. The potential of incorporating the elements of games in a tourist customer journey in creating advanced tourist experience and promoting destinations has been recognised widely (Kim et al. 2021; Xu et al. 2017; Bulencea and Egger 2015). The book "Gamification for Tourism" provides a cutting-edge overview of games and gamified experience in tourism, developed to help readers to develop general understanding of the gamification potential for tourism, and to generate ideas for successful gamification strategy.

Designing advanced tourist experience requires theory-driven and actionable frameworks, developed for specific contexts (Xiang and Fesenmaier 2017). The first part of the book focuses on the theoretical background, necessary for creating games in a travel customer journey. It defines gamification and gaming motives, explains game thinking and the logic of developing gamified experiences, and finally, conceptualizes the pros and cons of incorporating the elements of a game in a non-game context such as tourism. Such knowledge is crucial for developing a sustainable strategy for gamified experience in tourism.

The second part of the book summarizes up-to-date cases of gamification in specific contexts. Tourist demand for services and resulting experiences are highly

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context-dependent (Volchek et al. 2020). The book provides its readers with examples of gamified services in tourism, hospitality, airlines and restaurants, in several countries, types of tourism and, importantly, applied technology to enable a gamified experience. Each of these factors defines tourist experience in a specific context (Buhalis et al. 2019). Exploring the success factors and the challenges of applying different games and technologies for tourists, is a background for articulating ideas for specific destinations.

The key advantage of the book “Gamification for Tourism” is the combined comprehensive overview of the key theoretical concepts of gamification and the relevant practical cases of gamified experience creation in the tourism context. Such a combination makes the book suitable for multiple stakeholders. First, it is beneficial for tourism-related study programs as students can learn the specifics of a gamified tourist customer journey and develop an understanding of the advantages and limitations of gamification for tourism. Second, the book can be valuable for tourism industry practitioners. It provides an overview of contemporary practices and can help in generating ideas and designing innovative solutions. Last but not least, the book represents a valuable source for academic researchers as it provides a high-quality and concise review of the state-of-art gamified tourist experience. Therefore, it will be great to see this book is updated with new theoretical concepts and cases in several years.

Given the growing demand for co-created novel and memorable experience, and the capabilities of digitalization to support it, the book “Gamification for Tourism” is a valuable source of theoretical and empirical knowledge for tourist academicians and practitioners, who search for innovative ways to design advanced tourist experience.

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Declarations

Conflict of interest I declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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