

EDITOR'S NOTE

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The concept of sustainable tourism development becomes useful only when the DMOs move into the right direction. It's time to move from the rhetoric statements to the real implementation of sustainable projects. In this Issue, the first three articles are dedicated to this important theme.

The article "Innovation in nature-based tourism", authored by Heidi Holmgren, is dedicated to the case of marine fishing tourism in Northern Norway. The author considers that the territorial nature of the organization of fishing tourism production, the knowledge bases and the value chain coordination must be included in definition of the tourist product itself, as a necessary starting point. Following Swarbrooke's (1995) model, the concept of tourist product encompasses three different levels: the core product, the concrete product and the expanded product. The core product of fishing tourism consists of the fishing experience. The concrete product includes transportation, boat rental, accommodation, meals, guiding and facilities to cater for the fish. The expanded product is characterized primarily by the fish that guests take home, loans of equipment, social events and the personal attention guests receive. In her brilliant analysis Heidi Holmgren concludes that "to ensure that the capital, networks and knowledge extracted from fishing tourism are traced back to the local communities, a new locally controlled and independent production system must evolve. To do this, we need new knowledge and organization that will set a new imprint in the coastal communities' territory".

The sustainable tourism development depends on the level of consensus between tourists and host communities concerning the authenticity of the tourism products. However, as it is shown in the article “*Authenticity and eco-cultural tourism development in Kazakhstan*” (authored by Tiberghien, Garkavenko & Ashirbekova), heritage is inherently a contested phenomenon, especially when communities are comprised of multiple ethnic groups, belief systems, cultures and social norms. The concept of authenticity applied to cultural heritage in Kazakhstan has become particularly relevant to the specialists of cultural and sustainable tourism. Whereas the tourism industry tends to provide its own definitions of the traditional or typical, the question of authenticity in eco-cultural tourism practices becomes crucial as they tend to be negotiated through what is locally perceived as authentic and what tourists and developers view as key travel experiences. In consequence, authors come to the conclusion that Kazakhstan needs to rebrand its image.

Another dimension of the sustainable tourism development is related to the quality of tourist experience, considering that the former depends also on the public health. The second-hand smoke (SHS) is a traditional problem in many countries. In their article “*Customers’ post-implementation attitudes towards café smoking ban in a transition country*”, with a survey of Croatians, Ljudevit Pranić and Snjezana Pivac concluded that most respondents are generally aware of the dangers of café SHS; however they favor a ‘compromise’ outcome instead of either of the two extremes, such as banning smoking completely or allowing smoking everywhere. This finding suggests that lawmakers should consider population characteristics (namely, high smoking prevalence), seating allocation (namely, high proportion of café outdoor seating), and the combination with café smoking policies.

Nowadays, consumers are no longer silent receptors of advertising bulletins. They want to join in a conversation or start a relationship, they want an active role rather than that of a spectator. Consequently a review of traditional marketing strategies and tools is a necessity. The online social networks and virtual so-

cial environments have changed the way hospitality and tourism products are purchased, consumed, and experienced. This Issue dedicates two articles to this ongoing subject.

The first, “*Online social networks impact on potential travellers’ tourism and hospitality choices*”, authored by Masooma Al-Balushi and Tamer Atef, aims to explore the phenomena of online social networks and its impact on the destination and hotel purchase decision making process. The main conclusions are the following: (1) Potential customers participate in online social networks so as to plan their tourism consumption process better, in such a way as to reduce the level of perceived risk; (2) The most important advantages of online social networks as regarded by its users are the richness and credibility of information; (3) virtual tours can play a vital role in saving these valuable resources by helping travellers make better decisions before they purchase by virtually experiencing a destinations.

In the second article, Suzan Hassan presents Egypt as a case study, by analyzing the relationship between social media and destination positioning. From the data analysis of the 180 questionnaires from DMOs, the author suggests that the success in marketing destinations requires carefully prepared and planned social media positioning strategies. Furthermore, implementing and monitoring such strategies successfully would have a great competitive edge over competitors.

Tourism is a vast territory for research, with a huge amount of topics. Some of them are almost unexplored, as it is the case of training in the hotel and tourism industry. Mousa Masadeh presents an interesting study focused on the out-of-country training for middle managers in international hotel chains (IHCs) in Jordan. The results of the survey addressed to middle managers showed that employees who had been in the industry longer and those with longer managerial experience were more likely to have undertaken training abroad. The study confirms the managers’ overwhelming support for out-of-country training, and the perceived importance of training for promotion.

Finally, this current issue of EJTHR presents a study on one of the fastest growing components of the tourism industry: cruise tourism; “*Ports of call: In search of competitive advantage*”, by Graham Busby and Jennifer O’Neill. After a triangulation of interviews, content analysis and archival analysis, the authors conclude that the *competitive advantage* of ports depends on the following factors: (1) sufficient berth depth to accommodate cruises; (2) help and support from local authorities for improvements needed for the expanding cruise ships; (3) natural assets such as attractions within easy access for visitors.

Starting with the important issue of sustainability and how Tourism can contribute to the economic, social and environmental development of the countries if considered in a sustainable perspective, this issue also focus the need for new Marketing strategies regarding demanding consumers and the inevitable power of Internet and online social networks. Furthermore, the topic of tourism professionals and the importance of international work experiences for performance improvement is also considered. Ultimately, the relevant area of cruise Tourism is underlined, giving directions for its proper development.

Hoping to meet the expectations of the authors that have submitted their works to EJTHR and those of the readers that look for up-to-date research articles, we will keep on working in order to maintain the quality that EJTHR has already achieved within the scope of Tourism literature.