Chapter 8
Consuming "Innovation" in Tourism:
Augmented Reality as an Innovation Tool in Digital Tourism Marketing

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ABSTRACT

Upon understanding definition, features, application analysis of innovation and relevant theory of the Diffusion of Innovations, this study suggests Augmented Reality (AR) as a technological innovation. AR is an advanced stage of virtual reality that merges reality with computer simulated imageries in the real environment. This chapter synthesizes AR as an emerging and potential technology of digital tourism marketing and management. The aim of this analytical approach based chapter is to understand innovation from tourism product or services consumption perspective. Relevant evidences are also included on lenses of marketing, digitalization and innovation consumption. Results outline that, technology consumption is gradually reshaping and getting supported by the availability and accessibility of electronic formats as AR as a technological innovation. This symbolizes that the consumption of technological innovation as AR offers freedom to select, purchase and recommend in relation to the theory of Diffusion of Innovations by Rogers (1962).

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the world's largest industry that continuously contributing global economy. The economic and market structures of countries across the world are diverse that necessitates technology application to cater growing demands of both consumers and businesses. Technology application in tourism is said as linked with Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT has been continuously contrib-

uting business activities including tourism. The extended roles and capacities of ICT are also diverging traditional means of technology adoption in tourism. ICT has witnessed a sharp rise of up gradation over the last few decades where, innovations in ICT have contributed largely. This is thus significant that, ICTs in present days are more innovative than ever before that simultaneously affecting the tourism enterprises. The attachment of innovative natured technologies is adopted by both traditional and electronic tourism enterprises. On the other side, the gradual excellence of technology has given rise to innovative technologies as Augmented Reality (AR). AR is seen as blending computer simulations of digital imageries in a real environment (Dadwal & Hassan, 2015; Jung et al., 2015). The growing demand is one of the key reasons to introduce and adopt technological innovation as AR in the particular area of digital marketing.

Innovation is expressed through creativity or excellence and thus the process is simultaneously well balanced with product or service development. Through all of these, innovation is responsible for both of application and maintenance the use and application of technological standards. The outcome of technological innovations can appear in diverse forms and in numerous forms. The term invention as followed by innovation is more focused on the society and the human being. These can also generate both positive and negative effects those can have immense effects on both of the humans and the society, itself. Innovations normally widens in more areas through their adoption and application. However, in tourism this is well manageable with destination management, service or product development. Technological innovation relates interests and general understanding of the general academia. Still, studies related to innovation show conceptual directions to develop general marketing approaches in tourism (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Hassan, 2012a, Hassan 2013b; Hassan & Rahman, in press; Hassan & Rahman, 2015; Hassan & Iankova, 2014). Thus, the development of innovation researches in tourism is critical and challenging from many perspectives. This becomes more evident with the involvement of internet supported technologies those are adopted in diverse forms by numerous agents having active presence in tourism marketing.

Upon understanding this theory, definition, features and application analysis of innovation suggests AR as a technological innovation. This study considers AR as an innovation and relies on the Diffusion of Innovations Theory of Rogers (1962). Thus the aim of this chapter is to critically explain the consumption of technological innovation. AR is the example of such innovation relying on digital format as Internet. Rapid digitalization helps expanding tourism product or service markets as well as increasing consumption capacities. Relevant evidences and examples are also been presented to support arguments.

INNOVATION IN TOURISM

A number of researches outlines that, technologies of innovative nature surely are affecting tourism trade (Hassan & Dadwal, in press; Hassan & Donatella, in press; Hassan, 2015; Azim & Hassan, 2013a; Azim & Hassan, 2013b). Innovation is a relatively an uncommon concept that mostly relates to technological excellences. According to Sarker (2007), the word 'Innovation' is derived from the Latin word 'in+novare' that means to make new, to renew or to alter. Sarker (2007) also suggests that, theoretically innovation is intertwined with entrepreneurship that supports unlocking opportunities of a new market leading to enhanced efficiency and economic growth. Finally, Sarker (2007) defines innovation as about to have or apply a new idea or even applying other people's idea in novel and new ways. From a general understanding, innovation refers to the process of advancement as concerned with application of

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