

Chapter 59

Augmented Reality Apps for Tourism Destination Promotion

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ABSTRACT

Current chapter focuses on the effectiveness of Augmented Reality (AR) supported applications for mobile and wearable devices during the visitation of tourist destinations. AR as an innovative technology tool becomes inseparable part of destinations' marketing in different countries across the world. However, the use of AR for marketing purpose in tourism destinations is fully dependent on access and resource availabilities. Hence the effective of AR application in tourism destination marketing remains a subject to detailed and accurate information availability of a particular destination or a region. This chapter draws particular reference to the AR supported 'Mobile guides' that replaced conventional human tourist guides. The chapter is indebted to AR literature written in the Turkish. Results demonstrate that AR as an innovative technology can be applied for tourism destination promotion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Marketing of tourist destinations evidently interacts with innovative technologies. The unprecedented accessibility of the Internet acts as the facilitator and the most reliable powerful avenue for this interaction. The interfaces sway the conventional patterns of tourism destination marketing creating more spaces for interactive technology application. Development of wireless and mobile technologies in the last couple of decades made human lives easier and more enjoyable than ever before (Azim and Hassan, 2013). This chapter aims to investigate the effectiveness of Augmented Reality (AR) supported

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applications in handheld mobile and wearable devices for promoting tourist destinations. AR supported applications are also use in implementing interactive analysis system applications for trip management. Layered hologram applications, archaeological excavations and matching games, land information system, interactive surface system, e-catalogue, virtual assistants and objects, transparent LCD showcases applications, video mapping are some relevant applications that are supported by AR and can be used for tourism destination promotion. As mentioned earlier current chapter critically analyses the effectiveness of these applications in marketing of tourist destinations. The chapter will also focus on the reduction of tourists' mobility when they can roam to destinations that are mostly virtualized with the help of Augmented Reality. The chapter explores that in practice, tourists can go to wherever they want with the handheld mobile or wearable devices that connect servers of web-based information on GPS (Global Positioning System location). In the conclusion we reveal that the recent development and expansion of mobile phone applications is the key reason for tourism development in some destinations.

2. TOURIST DESTINATION

Destinations can be featured as a tourism product consisting of a variety of components. On this feature, destinations can be of many different types. From the theoretical understanding owed to Page (1995:1), tourism destinations can be classified as below:

- Capitals (i.e. London, Paris, New York) and cultural capital (i.e. Roman, Istanbul);
- Metropolitan Centers (i.e. cities that are built with walls) and small castle cities;
- Big historical cities (i.e. Venice, Oxford);
- Enlivened seaside areas (i.e. Sydney, Darling Harbour);
- Industrial cities;
- Coast resorts and winter sports resorts;
- Tourist resorts that are specially created;
- Tourist entertainment centers (i.e. Disneyland, Las Vegas);
- Cultural Art Cities (i.e. Florence).

In the recent decades tourism industry has experienced different changes. These changes forced destinations to promote their potential correctly to be able to get sufficient share from the competitive world tourism market, where intense competition reaches an international level. To achieve a successful market strategy and get monopoly, cooperative marketing communication should be enabled in destinations. Industrial products are produced firstly and they are delivered to the nearest retailer businesses with consumers and consumers purchases the products from retailers. However, unlike industrial products, tourism products are consumed where they are produced (Olalı, 1982; Olalı ve Timur, 1988). Considering key feature of touristic product, in order to be successful in destination marketing, all the organizations working in tourism industry must act together. Destination marketing organization needs support of public and private industry stakeholders for effective branding and positioning (Williams et al., 2004: 8).

Tourist destination is a part of tourism product or service provision. Hence, marketing and searching for more business opportunities become essential for them (Hassan, 2012a; Hassan, 2012b). However, a sort of conceptual confusion persists in featuring industry-led and theory-led tourism products and

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