

Marketing 4.0 and Internet Technologies in the Tourism Industry Context

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the Internet and Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have been an incredible change for Marketing studies and its classical main activities, price, product, promotion, and distribution. At present, new trends such as collaborative economy and Marketing of social CRM (Customer Relationships Management) content are emerging, affecting Marketing practices around the world (Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan, 2017). In this sense, the four “Ps” have been redefined by the four “Cs” (co-creation, currency, community activation, and conversation) (Kotler et al., 2017). These technologies have allowed promoting the development of co-creation activities, with the aim of creating long-term and trust relationships with end users.

Particularly, the technological revolution and value co-creation process have notably affected one of the main economic sectors of the world, such as tourism (Grissemann and Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). Highlights new models of more sustainable, personalized and efficient travel. Virtual reality tools, personalized hotel rooms, voice-activated devices, chatbots or facial recognition technology have facilitated and improved the relationship that, up to the present, companies, destinations, and consumers maintained (Hosteltur, 2019).

Certainly, the relationship between tourism and co-creation is a matter of special interest in the literature (Grissemann and Stokburger-Sauer, 2012; Binkhorst and Den Dekker, 2009; Riera et al., 2015; Prebense, Vittersø and Dahl, 2013; Lee, 2012; Cabiddu, Lui and Piccoli, 2013; Rihova et al., 2015; Suntikul and Jachna, 2016). Cutting-edge tourist companies are carrying out co-creation processes with their consumers. However, and despite its relevance in the innovation process, empirical evidence in research on co-creation in tourism is scarce. Also, there is not enough research on co-creation in tourism (Hoyer et al., 2010; Grisseman and Stokburger-Sauer, 2012; Lee; 2012; Rihova et al., 2015).

In this context, the main objective of this chapter is to study the co-creation process in the tourism sector. First, the evolution of Marketing is analyzed. Second, the value co-creation process strategy 4.0 is examined in the tourism sector. Finally, this study proposes some conclusions, limitations and further research.

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BACKGROUND

In the past half century, Marketing has been through some different stages until reaching the most current era of Marketing, Marketing 4.0. As Erragcha and Romdhane (2014, p.137) posit “*Marketing is a discipline in constant change*”.

The first focus of Marketing is Marketing 1.0 and appeared after the Industrial Revolution due to the development of production (Kotler, 2012). It is a commercial approach to unidirectional management using traditional media (radio, press, television). In this era, the consumer is a passive user and the product is the focal point for the company (Erragcha and Romdhane, 2014). With reference to the tourism sector, a clear example of Marketing 1.0 is tourist brochures, which inspire consumers to choose the destination through photographs of monuments, places of interest and hotels.

Contrary to Marketing 1.0 only focused on the product, Marketing 2.0 places the customer in the middle of its vision (Kotler, Kartajaya and Setiawan, 2010). This is the result of the development of information technology and the Internet (Kotler et al., 2010). This is a new challenge faced by companies that must take advantage of social networks to reach customers directly and individually. In this new era, customers are well informed, can easily compare offers of similar products and choose between a set of functional and alternative features. In fact, each consumer has different preferences, so companies must segment and develop a superior product for a target audience (Kotler et al., 2010). Although companies begin to “*touch*” the heart and mind of consumers, even in Marketing 2.0, consumers are passive Marketing objects (Kotler et al., 2010).

The idea of Marketing 3.0 was conceptualized in 2005 by a group of consultants from MarkPlus, a Marketing services company led by Hemawan Kartajaya. After two years of collaboration with Philip Kotler, they launched the draft of the manuscript. In this new era of Marketing, companies stop focusing on the consumer and move to focus on the human being. It is the age driven by values. Instead of treating people as consumers, they are treated as human beings, with mind, heart, and spirit (Kotler et al., 2010). In this sense, consumers are concerned about sustainability and the environment and seek solutions to their concerns about globalization and economic justification. This Marketing is focused on the consumer, but the companies aim to contribute to the development of a better world and propose solutions to society’s problems (Kotler et al., 2010). As these authors point out, it is the era of participation and collaborative Marketing, globalization and cultural Marketing, the creative society and the Marketing of the human spirit. In Marketing 3.0, the co-creation concept was born. This concept was coined by Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004) as a new approach to innovation. The consumer is demanding and informed, has more power with respect to the company and can participate in the development of certain processes with the company. However, companies must develop new strategies to achieve the active and total participation of consumers as well as their emotional commitment (Zarco et al., 2019). In this sense, the key can reside in Marketing 4.0.

Based on these notions, and as a result of the evolution of Marketing 3.0, a new era of Marketing was born, Marketing 4.0, the evolution of Marketing 3.0 when it is used intensively with technology (Zarco et al., 2019). Marketing 4.0 happens as a result of complex changes caused by the increase in global competition, better informed and more demanding customers and the rise of new technologies and innovations (Vassileva, 2017). This new approach is part of the digital age and combines online and offline interaction between companies and consumers (Kotler et al., 2017). The barrage of new technologies such as the mobile Internet, the automation of knowledge management, the Internet of Things (IOTs), cloud technology, robotic advances or 3D printing has helped to develop multiple new sectors of the economy. Above all, the mobile phone has brought peer-to-peer connectivity and more consumer power. At the moment, they are smarter and better informed than in the past (Kotler et al., 2017).

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