

S20 Tourism and the digital revolution: New practices, behaviours and reshaping of the tourism offer

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The digital revolution is associated with the increasing and widespread use of digital tools available on mobile devices. By offering a set of innovative services “made possible and distributed via dedicated applications” digital uses tend to transform tourism practices (Buhalis and Law, 2008) and tourists behaviours (Steinbauer and Werthner, 2007). They thus contribute to the individualisation of practices considered as being part of what Violier calls “the third tourism revolution” (Violier, 2016). Last-minute booking in hotels but also restaurants, arrangement of tourism stays and activities on the spot, sharing experiences through social media (Munar and Jacobsen, 2014) are examples of the uses of mobile terminals by tourists before their departure, during their stay and on their return. But are these uses similar for all forms of tourism and all types of destination? As Madeleine Akrich (1989, p. 31) pointed out, one must go beyond “the ballistic metaphor [which] supposes the separate existence of a projectile, technology, and of a milieu, society”. The issue of adoption and ownership by end-users, i.e. their uses and functionality, needs to be considered (Geels, 2004). In addition, it is necessary to study these uses in the places where they occur (Delaplace, 2017). Indeed, the digital uses, both on the supply side (tourism actors and inhabitants) and on the demand one (tourists) cannot be understood independently of the related destinations. In other words, the uses are also conditioned by the way in which the actors of the tourism offer adopt and appropriate these tools in their own area. In addition, and in a feedback process, they will seize these new data, behaviours and practices to redefine their destination. The uses of digital technology offer many opportunities for innovation to build the destination of tomorrow, a smart destination (Gretzel et al., 2015), that is a destination in which the tourism experience will be central, and where the actors of the offer will be many, some of them even new to the tourism activity. As a matter of fact, the digital revolution upsets borders. New actors from the information technologies come into the scene as well as actors from the sharing economy. The new participatory or collaborative tools that characterize them and are accessible to all, blur the boundaries between the actors of supply and demand, of inhabitants and businesses.

Proposals for communication may relate to:

- transformations of tourism behaviours and practices due to digital technologies;
- the methods of appropriation of digital tools by the actors of the tourist destinations;
- the way in which these uses lead the actors to reconsider the tourist destinations they are responsible for;
- the new actors of tourist destinations and especially the role of ordinary people (inhabitants and tourists) within the framework of participatory tools.