
Editorial

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Biographical notes: Rajagopal is a Professor of Marketing at the Graduate Business School (EGADE) of Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM) in Mexico City Campus and a Fellow of the Royal Society for Encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce, London. He is also a Fellow of the Institute of Operations Management and Professional Member of the Chartered Management Institute. His biography is listed in various international directories including Who's Who in the World and International Biographic Center, Cambridge, UK since 2008. He holds a PhD from Ravishankar University, India and has been conferred the award of National Researcher Level-II of Mexican National System of Researchers.

Recent growth in international trade, globalisation and cross-cultural business environment has also let the leisure and tourism industry grow in the competitive marketplace. Route to tourism market is a distinct process followed by customers towards buying services through a familiar channel. It is observed that multiple channel tourism strategies enhance the portfolio of service outputs provided to the customer and enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty (Jindal et al., 2007). Tourism and leisure shopping hold symbiotic relationship and development in this sector which drives more effective ways of managing tourist impacts in the region. An externally focused and quality-oriented strategy for retailers located in tourist areas and understanding the shopping behaviour of the tourist consumer is important. The recreational facilities to attract leisure shopping may play a pivotal role to deliver a divulging impact of consumer behaviour on tourism. Hence, leisure shopping supported with recreational attractions may be identified as one of the major drivers in promoting tourism by demonstrating the quality fashion products and store preferences among tourist shoppers (Rajagopal, 2007).

Various leisure and tourism business channels, which successfully connect various client groups with tourist interests, continue to build strength to the place brands, leisure stores and recreational parks. Firms engaged in marketing leisure and tourism services are developing convergence of customer loyalty and value for money concepts to sustain the increasing competition in the segment (Krizek, 2003). Hence, tourism is increasingly seen as a potential lever towards high economic growth, measured in terms of both income and employment, which is evident from the expansion of consumer interest in tourism beyond urban areas. Tourists are rapidly increasing throughout many small and medium European cities and new tourism destinations are being explored in the region (Gasparino et al., 2009).

This issue of *International Journal of Leisure and Tourism Marketing (IJLTM)* includes five contributions on economic, socio-cultural and environmental impact of cruise tourism, factors influencing golfers preferred driving ranges, health tourism in

Thailand, managing urban parks, and understanding heritage tourist segment. Brida and Zapata have critically examined as how tourism destinations are transformed by the arrival of an increasing number of cruises. This paper discusses evolution of the cruise tourism industry and review the experiences of different tourism cruise destinations based on the analysis of main cruise destinations and cruise lines. Hwang and Won have discussed the factors influencing golfers preferred driving ranges using conjoint analysis in reference to Korea. Their study investigates priorities set by the Korean golfers while choosing an outdoor driving range. The authors have conducted the study considering four major attributes that include range size, monthly fee, facility condition and location for playing golf.

In the third paper of the issue, Komaladat has addressed the need for developing appropriate strategies of health tourism in Thailand. The author has focused on the health tourism at Raksawarin Hot Spring in Thailand and has analysed demographic factors, tourism services and expectation of stakeholders of this tourism centre. It is argued in the paper that an effective tourism service combined with government initiative towards management would not only help attracting tourists, but also nurture the factors required for developing a sustainable place brand. The following paper of Chaudhry and Tewari has dealt the issue of administering proper entrance fee for the city's parks and gardens in reference to a major city in India, by meaningfully utilising this consumer surplus on one hand and revenue generation for the local administration on the other. Another paper in this issue authored by Goh has addressed the perspectives of heritage tourism in reference to Australia. The author has investigated perception of tourists and brand image associations of heritage destinations as a form of leisure activity based on the theory of planned behaviour.

Qualitative research on the factors related to the quality of service in restaurants in Mexico was discussed analysing in-depth interviews with managers and clients by Trujillo and Vera. The final paper in this issue Liu and Hsu have presented research on public leisure services in reference to improving customer satisfaction and service quality.

We hope the collection of research papers presented in this issue of the journal would deliver desired academic insights and motivate future research. This anthology of research work represents studies from India, Korea, Thailand, Australia, Mexico and Euro-Pacific rim. We are confident that scholars in the field of leisure and tourism marketing will benefit from these research studies.

References

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