
Book Review

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Tourism

by: P. Robinson, M. Lück and S. Smith

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It is well-known that tourism is a contributor to the world GDP and a key socio-economic driver for regional and national developments. With the escalation of tourism as a major sector and its growing universal importance, great expectations have been raised for the potential role of tourism to address global challenges such as poverty reduction and sustainable development. Tourism has been and is still regarded as the answer to many issues and problems. The work *Tourism* is a titanic attempt to provide professionals, policy-makers, students and scholars with the essential information to fully understand the nature and operations of the tourism sector. As the authors state: "Tourism is a fascinating and challenging phenomenon to study". This viewpoint is confidently addressed by the diversity of professional interests, intellectual talents and background experiences of the authors which compliment the rich content and the global perspective of the book.

Tourism, an all-encompassing book provides the reader with a historical overview of tourism, looking at how tourism has evolved over the decades as well as new insights into current developments and trends. Therefore, the authors consolidate existing knowledge along with new and refreshing insights. Consequently, the reader is fruitfully guided to a complete introduction to tourism. The chapters of the book are well written and interlinked and connected. Explanations of how tourism fits into society and links in with other sectors such as hospitality and events, destination management organisations and host communities are also well presented. A number of case studies are also included in each chapter to provide practical examples of the concepts being discussed. The case studies are not country specific which provides the reader with insight into the global phenomenon of tourism. This will also be particularly beneficial to students who are new to tourism studies as it provides them with a holistic overview of how tourism works in different areas and places all over the world.

This text is organised into six parts that consist of 18 chapters. Part 1 deals with the study of tourism and introduces concepts of tourism, different definitions of tourism and how tourism has evolved in different nations. It challenges the reader to think about whether the tourism industry is a correct theoretical concept. Economics is also discussed from a social science point of view to further the understanding of tourism.

Part 2 studies the role of people within the tourism industry from an employment perspective. The authors note that tourism has a reputation to be one of the largest global employers but due to the nature of the long working hours and low wages it has not been a choice of permanent employment, but rather just a short-term option for employees. This has changed as management roles are more visible and there is more focus on the delivery of quality tourism experiences. The tourism industry however provides employees with the skills that will help them in other industries such as the abilities to work with customers, accepting responsibility and learning how to follow procedures and directions. This section is dually written to provide information from both a managerial (employer) and employee perspective.

Consuming tourism is the title of Part 3, primarily offering a demand side perspective. This part of the book focuses on the connection of tourism with the various transport sectors (air, road, rail and waterborne), the accommodation sector, food and beverage services and visitor attractions. These chapters individually are part of the different sectors of tourism, however the chapters are not written only to provide an overview; they also provide practical information to deepen the understanding of these sectors. Aspects such as key aviation terminology, forms of airline cooperation, planning for accommodation demand and restaurant menu planning enriches the textbook *Tourism*. This part concludes with a summary of different types of tourism and the authors address aspects revolving around consumer behaviour such as travel philosophies, styles of travel and the purpose of travelling.

The next part of the book deals with tourism management. The sustainability of any tourism operation is highly dependent on experienced management. Issues of operations management, destination management and tourism strategies are discussed in this section. Although operations management has its origin in the manufacturing industries, the chapter provides a useful services approach. The transformation process which is vital to the understanding of the day to day tasks of tourism organisations is refreshingly explained by the transformation model. Queue management which is 'one of the most recognised challenges of managing tourism capacity' is also deliberated. Tourism destinations are specifically highlighted as vital that need management attention as it is made up of hundreds of individual tourism agencies and business. Organising and marketing these large number of agencies and businesses is regarded as a special challenge for destination communities. Lastly, marketing is investigated from a business and consumer perspective as marketing is seen as the responsibility of both parties. Since tourism is regarded as the marketing of a service rather than a product, the exploration of the special physiognomies of tourism and destination marketing necessitates a deeper understanding. The characteristics of tourism consumers are also discussed here which highlights the importance of understanding the nature of the decision-making process in buying tourism products and also the determinants and motivators. 'Effective demand can assist in measuring the actual penetration of tourism activities of a population' and consequently the calculation of tourism demand is explained by the authors.

The book concludes with two sections focussing on tourism development and tourism features. Tourism policy and planning is explored from different perspectives such as marketing, management and planning. To ensure the future validity of tourism destinations and experiences it is vital to expand on issues of sustainable tourism which are discussed subsequently. This topic which has gained much scholarly attention in recent years provides insights into the impacts of tourism and the importance of

managing various tourism resources. To close, the nature and importance of tourism research is discussed. As this book is aimed at scholars, practitioners and students alike, the nature of tourism research as well as the diverse forms and purposes of tourism research from pure academic projects to applied research in support of business decisions, is described. This last section is significant since effective tourism development, planning and marketing is dependent on valuable information and data. Introducing students from an early stage to the nature of tourism research will enhance their understanding of the sector.

This book provides an all-encompassing guide to the exhilarating business of tourism. The combination of historical facts together with current trends makes tourism a stunning success, capturing the attention of the reader. Although the content of the book could fall into the mainstream of tourism literature, the book is exceptional, contributing to the body of knowledge not only for scholars but also for industry practitioners.