
Book Review

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**Marketing for Tourism, Hospitality & Events:
A Global & Digital Approach**
by: Simon Hudson and Louise Hudson
Published 2017
by SAGE Publications
2455 Teller Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91320, USA, 384pp
ISBN: 978-1-47392-664-6

The marketing environment is constantly changing and is experiencing a shift from unidirectional push of information similar to broadcasting towards multidirectional and more participatory forms of communication (Yeoman, 2012). The growth of Web 2.0 and mobile technologies contribute to a democratisation of tourists who become active creators, innovators and influencers in delivering messages. Consumers engage in the different stages of the purchasing process and as their after purchase influence is increasing, they constantly gain in power (Bilgihan et al., 2016). This shift brings opportunities and challenges for businesses across industries and particularly influences the tourism, hospitality and events industry. Today's increasingly experienced tourists have the knowledge and power to consciously choose their circles of trust and gather information through various sources encompassing owned, paid and earned media. While tourists aim for more informed decisions to ensure that their desires and wants are satisfied, pressure is added on the tourism, hospitality and events industry. Marketers need to ensure that their messages are engaging and individualised. At the same time, they need to guarantee that their promises are kept. Thus, marketing strategies become more human-centric, which affect not only marketing planning, but also the overall business concept.

The book *Marketing for Tourism, Hospitality & Events: A Global & Digital Approach* by Simon Hudson and Louise Hudson comprehensively addresses these changes in today's dynamic marketing environment. The book impressively manages to provide an excellent balance between well-established models and theories based on academic research and relevant practical examples from contemporary real-life experiences related to the global tourism, hospitality and events industry. Each of the 12 chapters begins with a case study that takes on the lens from an established marketer. These 'Lessons from a marketing guru' provide, in most cases, an excellent entry point to the chapter as the examples demonstrate how theories are implemented in practice. Despite the noteworthy intention to integrate these very interesting global case studies and establish a real-life context, some examples are not clearly enough linked to the respective chapter and it remains vague what lessons are to be taken home. While the

case studies celebrate success stories, some of them lack a critical lens and do not sufficiently discuss challenges and problems.

Against the background of the global and digital approach of the book, each chapter incorporates a *digital spotlight* which draws attention to a case where technology has successfully influenced marketing communication. At the end of each chapter, readers are invited to critically reflect on the content and are offered a *marketing in action* case study, which provides evidence how international organisations are responding to the discussed changes. Alongside questions that are directly related to the respective case studies, readers are offered reflective questions that are partly linked to their own experiences, partly ask readers to do additional research, or refer to in-text examples and cases. The authors have successfully integrated visualisations and tables that summarise key messages and facts and therewith meet the consumption and reading habits of younger generations as the major audience of this book. Although most graphs and figures are engagingly designed, the readability of some figures is restricted due to small font size (e.g., Figure 1.3, p.6). However, the authors achieve an ideal combination of self-directed learning and delivery of facts and theory. Although not being part of this review, the companion website offers valuable additional material and resource to support the learning experience for students.

In Chapter 1, Hudson and Hudson introduce today's marketing environment, describe key players in the global tourism industry and discuss influences of and on marketing. Throughout the chapter, the authors draw attention to the decisive and influential role of customers in marketing. While discussing the subtleties of marketing in the tourism, hospitality and events industry, the authors emphasise the vital positive relationship between supply and demand to remain competitive. Putting customers in the spotlight in the second chapter of the book, Hudson and Hudson highlight the importance of understanding today's consumers and global trends in consumer behaviour in order to develop effective marketing strategies. The authors provide a good overview of well-established theories related to motivation and behaviour and in discussing the factors that influence consumer behaviour, they draw attention to the dynamic changes in the consumer environment. The authors provide several examples why stereotypical assumptions of tourists, such as the perception that backpackers are young people, are no longer appropriate. Instead, tourism marketers need more holistic approaches to understand and target today's hybrid tourists who are seeking an "open-ended relationships with the destination" (p.54). In addition, while the emphasis of the book seems to be on leisure travellers, Hudson and Hudson provide several examples related to business travel and the blurring between leisure and business (summarised as 'bleisure') which also ask for more integrative marketing approaches in the future.

Overall, the book aims at taking a digital approach and the authors dedicate a separate chapter on digital marketing. Hudson and Hudson thoroughly describe the new consumer decision journey, highlight the growing significance and disruptive nature of technological influences on both the consumer and tourism marketers, and provide several specific examples that demonstrate the influential power of consumers. While these specific technologies and media channels were trending at the time the book was written, considering the dynamic changes in the digital environment, it might mean that the examples will be outdated comparably quickly. Although the integration of a separate chapter on digital marketing seems logical considering the aim of the book, it might lead to confusion for inexperienced readers as it seems to separate digital marketing from marketing.

The authors then move on to introduce the eight systematic steps of a marketing plan, highlight its importance in the overall business strategy and draw special attention to the analytical step as the heart of the marketing plan. Although not directly labelled as such, Chapter 5 to Chapter 10 address the traditional seven P's of marketing and provide insights into contemporary tourism, hospitality and events case studies that go beyond the often dominantly used examples from the hotel and airline sectors. The authors provide depth in discussing current trends, for instances collaborative consumption which provides evidence for the disruptive nature of new trends related to the sharing economy. While these examples offer the reader a current perspective and clearly demonstrate the growing role of the consumer in marketing, the difficulty in delivering insights into evolving trends lies in its rapid development. For instance, Hudson and Hudson argue that studies that empirically estimate the impacts of the sharing economy are missing. Due to the rising importance of the topic and the growing number of academic output, statements like this are no longer supportable as studies on such matters have been published in the meantime (e.g., Koh and King, 2017; Zervas et al., 2017). This further underpins the concern that the carefully crafted and comprehensive textbook might be outdated quickly. Considering the central role of customer service, provision of servicescapes and establishment of strong service culture in the tourism, hospitality and events industry, it was great to see that the authors have discussed these in such depth. Particularly, the detailed explanations of the service recovery process and the consequences of an effective recovery process are extremely valuable.

In Chapter 11, Hudson and Hudson provide an overview of marketing research instruments and processes commonly applied in tourism, hospitality and events businesses. The authors briefly explain research methodologies, provide a helpful list of academic journals in the field and address issues related to the implementation of marketing research in the industry as well as the interpretation of the results. Hudson and Hudson acknowledge the role of new technology in marketing research, such as virtual focus groups and neuromarketing, and therewith clearly stress the digital direction of the book.

By focussing on marketing ethics and drawing attention to the growing trend of ethical consumerism, the authors achieve to provide a closed circle and reiterate the core message of the book, namely the central role of consumers in marketing. Hudson and Hudson offer several meaningful examples of how marketing ethics are progressively growing in importance and emphasise how this trend is mostly triggered by changes in consumer behaviour and demand. The authors also mention cases where paradoxes arise or ethics are neglected, such as the trend for last chance tourism. Although the discussion on cause-related marketing is suitable and addressed a very timely trend towards corporate philanthropy, it is unclear why the acronym CRM is used. CRM is more commonly used for customer relationship management and might confuse inexperienced readers. With the case study on war tourism in Vietnam, Hudson and Hudson achieve a very strong closure to the book. The case study demonstrates the balancing act between commodification, tribalisation and education and leaves the reader to think about the controversies and challenges in today's fast changing marketing environment.

Overall, the book achieves to deliver refreshing insights into marketing for today's tourism, hospitality and events industry. It has to be highlighted that special attention is given to the event industry and the interconnectedness between sectors that are often overlooked in marketing textbooks. Through the integration of contemporary case studies

from around the globe, the authors take the reader on a journey through different countries and provide insights from a variety of tourism, hospitality and events businesses. Integrating reflective questions at the end of each chapter to encourage the development of critical thinking skills is an applaudable and extremely valuable attempt to ensure that readers of the book take ownership of their own learning and become more aware of their own role in the ever-changing consumer and marketing environment.

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