



INTERNATIONAL  
HELLENIC  
UNIVERSITY

School of Economics & Business  
Department of Organisation Management,  
Marketing and Tourism

Volume 5, Issue 1, 2019

## Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing

Editor-in-Chief:  
Evangelos Christou

Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing (JTHSM) is an international, open-access, multi-disciplinary, refereed (double blind peer-reviewed) journal aiming to promote and enhance research in tourism, heritage and services marketing, both at macro-economic and at micro-economic level.

ISSN: 2529-1947

**Terms of use:**

*This document may be saved and copied for your personal and scholarly purposes.*

*This work is protected by intellectual rights license Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).*

*Free public access to this work is allowed. Any interested party can freely copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format, provided appropriate credit is given to the original work and its creator. This material cannot be remixed, transformed, build upon, or used for commercial purposes.*

*<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>*



[www.jthsm.gr](http://www.jthsm.gr)

# Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing

## Volume 5, Issue 1, 2019

© 2019 Authors

Published by International Hellenic University

ISSN: 2529-1947

UDC: 658.8+338.48+339.1+640(05)

Published online: 15 April 2019

Free full-text access available at: [www.jthsm.gr](http://www.jthsm.gr)



Some rights reserved.  
Except otherwise noted, this work is licensed under  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing is an open access, international, multi-disciplinary, refereed (double blind peer-reviewed) journal aiming to promote and enhance research at both macro-economic and micro-economic levels of tourism, heritage and services marketing.

### *Contact details:*

Panagiotis Papageorgiou, Journal Manager

Address: International Hellenic University, JTHSM Editorial Office, Program of Postgraduate Studies in Tourism Management, School of Economics & Business, P.O. Box 141, GR-57400, Thessaloniki, Greece.

Phone: +30-2310-013450

E-mail: [editorial-office@jthsm.gr](mailto:editorial-office@jthsm.gr)

## Editorial Board

### Editorial Team

*Editor-in-Chief:* Evangelos Christou, *International Hellenic University, Greece*

*Associate Editor:* Anestis Fotiadis, *Zayed University, United Arab Emirates*

*Book Reviews Editor:* Kostas Alexandris, *Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece*

*Journal Manager & Secretariat:* Panagiotis Papageorgiou, *JTHSM Editorial Office, Greece*

### Senior Advisory Board

Irena Ateljevic, *Institute for Tourism, Croatia*

Bill Bramwell, *Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom*

Dimitrios Buhalis, *Bournemouth University, United Kingdom*

Chryssoula Chatzigeorgiou, *International Hellenic University, Greece*

Kaye Chon, *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong*

Eli Cohen, *Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel*

Chris Cooper, *Oxford Brookes University, United Kingdom*

Nimit Chowdhary, *Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management, India*

Giacomo Del Chiappa, *University of Sassari, Italy*

Mehmet Erdem, *University of Nevada at Las Vegas, USA*

Isabelle Frochot, *Université de Savoie – Mont Blanc, France*

Alan Fyall, *University of Central Florida, USA*

Sandra Jankovic, *University of Rijeka, Croatia*

Werner Gronau, *University Stralsund, Germany*

Tzung-Cheng Huan, *National Chung Hsing University, Taiwan*

Jay Kandampully, *Ohio State University, USA*

Peter BeomCheol Kim, *Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand*

Maximiliano E. Korstanje, *University of Palermo, Argentina*

Oswin Maurer, *Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy*

Andreas Papatheodorou, *University of the Aegean, Greece*

Alexandros Paraskevas, *University of West London, United Kingdom*

Harald Pechlaner, *Katholische Universität Eichstatt-Ingolstadt, Germany*

Agustín Santana Talavera, *Universidad de La Laguna, Spain*

Alexis Saveriades, *Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus*

Noam Shoval, *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel*

Anders Steene, *Södertörn University, Sweden*

Dallen Timothy, *Arizona State University, USA*

WooMi Jo, *University of Guelph, Canada*

Cleopatra Veloutsou, *University of Glasgow, United Kingdom*

Michael Volgger, *Curtin University, Australia*

### Editorial Board

Akin Aksu, *Akdeniz University, Turkey*

Volkan Altintas, *Kâtip Çelebi University Turkey*

Thomas Baum, *University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom*

Graham Busby, *Plymouth University, United Kingdom*

Nevenka Cavlek, *University of Zagreb, Croatia*

Prakash Chathoth, *American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates*

Rachel Chen, *University of Tennessee, USA*  
Damir Demonja, *Institute for Development and International Relations, Croatia*  
Juan Ignacio Pulido Fernández, *University of Jaén, Spain*  
Babu George, *Forth Hays State University, USA*  
Hugo Goetch, *Free University of Bozen-Bolzano, Italy*  
Sotiris Hji-Avgoustis, *Ball State University, USA*  
Svetlana Hristova, *University Neofit Rilski, Bulgaria*  
Aviad Israeli, *Kent State University, USA*  
Stanislav Ivanov, *Varna University of Management, Bulgaria*  
Miyoung Jeong, *University of South Carolina, USA*  
Hanan Kattara, *Alexandria University, Egypt*  
Fotis Kilipiris, *International Hellenic University, Greece*  
Jithendran J. Kokkranikal, *University of Greenwich, United Kingdom*  
Blanca Kraljevic-Mujic, *Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Spain*  
Emily (Jintao) Ma, *University of Massachusetts, USA*  
Alexandru-Mircea Nedelea, *Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Romania*  
Ige Pirnar, *Yasar University, Turkey*  
Mukesh Ranga, *CSJM University Kanpur, India*  
Dora Smolic, *University of Rijeka, Croatia*  
Marco Valeri, *University Niccolo Cusano, Italy*  
Jean-Pierre van der Rest, *Leiden University, The Netherlands*  
Christos Vassiliadis, *University of Macedonia, Greece*  
Margarida Vaz, *University of Beira Interior, Portugal*  
Maria Vodenska, *University of Sofia, Bulgaria*  
Vasiliki Vrana, *International Hellenic University, Greece*  
Arun Upneja, *Boston University, USA*  
Maja Uran, *University of Primorska, Slovenia*  
Kostas Zafiroopoulos, *University of Macedonia, Greece*

## **Indexing, Abstracting & Citation Coverage**

### **Digital Archiving Policy & Inclusion in Permanent Repositories**

EconStor  
 EKT (National Documentation Centre of Greece)  
 HAL (Hyper Articles en Ligne)  
 RePEc (Research Papers in Economics)  
 SSOAR (Social Science Open Access Repository)  
 Zenodo (CERN)

### **Evaluated & Ranked by:**

BFI (Danish Bibliometriske Forskningsindikator – Danish Bibliometric Research Indicator)  
 ERIH PLUS (European Reference Index for the Humanities & Social Sciences)  
 JUFO (Julkaisufoorumi – Finnish Classification of Scientific Journals)  
 h5-index (Google Scholar)  
 ICDS (University of Barcelona, MIAR – Information Matrix for the Analysis of Journals)  
 NSD (Norwegian Register for Scientific Journals)

### **Indexing & Abstracting:**

Academic Resource Index – ResearchBib  
 BASE (Bielefeld Academic Search Engine)  
 BSZ (Library Service Centre Baden-Wuerttemberg)  
 CAB Abstracts (CAB International)  
 CitEc Citations in Economics  
 CORE  
 DOAJ (Directory of Open Access Journals)  
 EconAcademics  
 EconBiz  
 EconPapers  
 ESJI (Eurasian Scientific Journal Index)  
 EZB (University Library of Regensburg)  
 Global Health Database (CABI)  
 Google Scholar  
 GVK Union Catalogue & Foundation of Prussian Cultural Heritage  
 HBZ (Hochschulbibliothekszenrum des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen)  
 Index Copernicus (ICI World of Journals)  
 Inomics  
 IDEAS (Internet Documents in Economics Access Service)  
 Microsoft Academic  
 NEP (New Economic Papers)  
 NPI (Norwegian Publication Indicator)  
 NSD (Norwegian Centre for Research Data)  
 OAIster  
 OCLC WorldCat  
 OpenAIRE  
 Princeton University Library  
 ScholarSteer

Science Library Index

Semantic Scholar

SHERPA/RoMEO

Socionet

WorldWideScience (US Department of Energy)

ZBW (German National Library of Economics)

ZDB (German Union Catalogue of Serials)

## Table of Contents

<b>Editorial</b>	1
<i>Evangelos Christou &amp; Anestis Fotiadis</i>	
<b>FULL PAPERS</b>	
<b>The competitive pricing in marina business: Exploring relative price position and price fluctuation</b>	3
<i>Dubravka Vlasic, Katarina Poldrugovac &amp; Sandra Jankovic</i>	
<b>Festivals and destination marketing: An application from Izmir city</b>	9
<i>Ige Pirnar, Sinem Kurtural &amp; Melih Tutuncuoglu</i>	
<b>Traveler segmentation through social media for intercultural marketing purposes: The case of Halkidiki</b>	15
<i>Eleni Mavragani, Paraskevi Nikolaidou &amp; Efi Theodoraki</i>	
<b>Increasing clicks through advanced targeting: Applying the third-party seal model to airline advertising</b>	24
<i>Daniel Murphy</i>	
<b>RESEARCH CASE STUDY</b>	
<b>Closed House of Wonders museum: Implications to the tourism of Zanzibar Stone Town, UNESCO World Heritage Site</b>	31
<i>Maximilian Chami &amp; Gabriel Kaminyoge</i>	
<b>JOURNAL INFORMATION</b>	
Aims and scope	37
About JTHSM	38
Journal sections	41
Notes for authors	43
Publication ethics & malpractice policy	47



# Editorial

**Evangelos Christou**, Editor-in-Chief  
Alexander Technological Institute of Thessaloniki, Greece

**Anestis Fotiadis**, Associate Editor  
Zayed University, United Arab Emirates

**JEL Classification:** L83, M1, O1

**Biographical note:** Evangelos Christou is professor of tourism marketing and Dean of the School of Business & Economics, Alexander Technological Institute of Thessaloniki, Greece (e.christou@tour.teithe.gr). Anestis Fotiadis is associate professor of tourism, at the College of Communication & Media Sciences, Zayed University, United Arab Emirates (anestis.fotiadis@zu.ac.ae)

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This is the eighth publication of JTHSM (volume 5, issue 1), starting its fifth year of publication. In previous issues, this journal presented original refereed papers, both conceptual and research-based, focused on various topics of tourism, heritage and services with emphasis in marketing and management. In volume 5, issue 1, we focus on furthering our scope and consolidating our position in both conceptual developments and practical applications in tourism, heritage and services through publication of another five quality manuscripts.

## 2 PRESENTATION OF THE SECOND ISSUE OF 2018

The present issue of JTHSM contains five manuscripts written by twelve authors located in six different countries and affiliated with nine different universities and research institutions.

In the first paper, Dubravka Vlastic, Katarina Poldrugovac and Sandra Jankovic, all from the University of Rijeka in Croatia, explore competitive pricing strategies in marina business. Competitive pricing is considered to be a very important part of revenue management, a management instrument that enables selling right products and services to the customers at the prices that will produce highest revenues. Marina business is supposed to be a business whose products or services are perishable (similar to hotels, airlines, campsites, hostels etc.) and tracking prices of competitors is very important part of managing its business. The purpose of this paper is to address the problem of relative price position and relative price fluctuation performance in marina business and seeks to complement existing research in the domain of strategic price positioning. The research results reveal that marinas who set their prices higher than their competition achieve lower level of berth occupancy and at the same time succeed higher RevPAB. Marinas with lower prices than

their competitors achieve higher level of berth occupancy and lower RevPAB.

The second paper focuses on festivals and destination marketing. The paper is written by Ige Pirnar, Sinem Kurtural and Melih Tutuncuoglu from Yasar University in Turkey. Festivals are among the growing global city and destination attraction factors and they are very trendy. Studies indicate that there is a direct relationship between the successful organizations of festivals and the number of visitors and tourism income of a city destination. Thus, festival marketing efforts usually have a direct impact on city marketing efforts. Due to this fact, the study tries to figure out the festival marketing potential of Izmir city that seems to lag behind the general tourism development pattern of Turkey contrary to the great potential it has. The study comprises of two main sections, first one being a literature review on festival marketing, followed by the second section on a qualitative research on Izmir's festivals and their marketing potential. It tries to determine the positive impacts of Izmir's festivals on destination marketing and by grouping and categorizing them under similar characteristics figuring out the most promising ones. The research consists of four open-ended interview questions on festivals held in Izmir city. As practical implications, Destination Management Organizations, Destination Marketing Organizations, destination and city marketers, festival managers and destination tourism developers may benefit from the findings of this study.

Traveler segmentation through Social Media for intercultural marketing purposes is examined in the third paper of this issue. Eleni Mavragani, Paraskevi Nikolaidou and Efi Theodoraki, all from International Hellenic University in Greece conducted a study to present a methodology for the segmentation of travelers by studying social media profiles and extracting information on their preferences and demographic traits. Through the study of the sample's social media profiles (Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter), information about travelers' demographics and preferences are combined for the segmentation of the tourists visiting a



Greek region. From the analysis of the data, 10 preference-based segments occur, while the cultural-based division corresponds to the main national groups visiting the region.

The fourth paper comes from an author in Australia: Daniel Murphy, from Murphy College, and focus on online airline advertising. From five-star hotels and Michelin Star restaurants, few industries signal their quality and unique selling points through the use of third-party seals like tourism. However, despite using seals and certifications in advertising being widespread, little academic research has been conducted into their effectiveness. Through the running of campaigns on Facebook's Ad Manager for Indian airline Jet Airways, this study applies the Third-Party Seal Model to optimise campaign audiences to target the right prospects with the most effective message. Findings and a practical framework for optimal campaign delivery for the airline industry are presented.

The fifth paper is a case study and comes from two authors: Maximilian Chami from Brandenburg University of Technology in Germany, and Gabriel Kaminyoge from University of Dodoma in Tanzania. This paper examines the impact of the closed House of Wonders Museum in the tourism industry of Stone Town, Zanzibar. The paper aims to propose the best practices taken into account due to the impact raised by the closure of the Museum. There has been no clear information on the overall situation which faces the site since 2012 when the Museum closed. Data collected through mixed methods, including the sample size of 105 tourists who visited the House of Wonders Museum, 8 Government Official, 6 Tour Guides and 8 Tour Operators. The findings show that the closed museum has affected the level of tourists' satisfaction, tour operators, community and tour guides economically. The paper recommends quick rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Museum to save the integrity and authenticity of this World Heritage Site.

Based on the above, we trust that you will enjoy reading this new issue of the Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing and we look forward to presenting you the next issue in autumn-winter of 2019!

Evangelos Christou  
Editor-in-Chief, JTHSM

Anestis Fotiadis  
Associate Editor, JTHSM



# The competitive pricing in marina business: Exploring relative price position and price fluctuation

**Dubravka Vlastic**  
University of Rijeka, Croatia

**Katarina Poldrugovac**  
University of Rijeka, Croatia

**Sandra Jankovic**  
University of Rijeka, Croatia

## Abstract

**Purpose:** Competitive pricing is an important part of revenue management, an instrument that enables selling products and services to customers at prices that will produce highest revenues. The purpose of this paper is to address the problem of relative price position and relative price fluctuation performance in marina business and seeks to complement existing research in the domain of strategic price positioning.

**Methods:** The methodology was adopted from research conducted by Enz, Canina and Van der Rest (2015) for hotels. Variables used were average berth rate (ABR), berth occupancy and revenue per available berth (RevPAB) percentage differences. Sample consisted of 32 Croatian marinas for a period of 36 months – for years 2015, 2016 and 2017, resulting to 848 observations.

**Results:** The research results reveal that marinas who set their prices higher than their competition achieve lower level of berth occupancy and at the same time succeed higher RevPAB. Marinas with lower prices than their competitors achieve higher level of berth occupancy and lower RevPAB.

**Implications:** Future research on shifting prices should be conducted in order to follow the actual effects of this change on occupancy and revenue per available berth. It is also suggested that total revenue per available berth (TrevPAB) needs to be considered because it will bring clearer picture on managers' ability to be successful.

**Keywords:** marina performance, revenue management, revenue per available berth (RevPAB), competitive pricing, price position of berth, price fluctuation of berth, berth occupancy

**JEL Classification:** D4, G1

**Biographical note:** Dubravka Vlastic received her PhD in Economics from the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, University of Rijeka, Croatia. She is an associate professor in accounting and auditing courses at the same institution. Her research interests are: financial accounting, environmental management accounting, environmental auditing and internal auditing in hospitality industry. Katarina Poldrugovac received her PhD in Economics from Ljubljana University of Economics, Slovenia. She is assistant professor at the Department of Accounting, University of Rijeka, Croatia. Her research interests are: managerial accounting, sustainability accounting and revenue management in hospitality industry. Sandra Janković received her PhD in Economics from the Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria. She is the assistant Dean for International Studies, and leader of the project Benchmarking in the Hospitality Industry, at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management, University of Rijeka, Croatia. Corresponding author: Sandra Janković (sandrai@fthm.hr)

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Marinas are commercially the most important ports of nautical tourism, and together with charter and cruise industries, within the last 30 years, have continuously been showing high growing rates. It has been estimated that in Europe there are 4,500 marinas with 1,75 million berths

(European Boating Industry, 2016) while Marina industry of association states that in Australia there are 347 marinas, that have 32000 employees and create revenues of 1.4 billion AU\$ per year (Marina industries associations, 2018). Marinas can be classified according to (Luković 2012:405):

1. the level of equipment – standard, luxury, recreational
2. types of construction – American, Atlantic or



Mediterranean type

3. position of maritime zone – open, semi-enclosed or enclosed
4. marina ownership – private, municipal or public
5. location – sea, lake, river or canal.

Since marinas are a part of almost every national economy, they influence the destination itself as well as general development of a country.

Successful marina business requires quick adaptation to changing market conditions and technological innovations. Developing and accepting new and creative ways of decision making is necessary in order to achieve greater business results and stay ahead of the competition (Korol and Fotiadis, 2016). Reacting to the changes in competitors' pricing is no longer acceptable solution and it should be replaced with leading and acting in order to challenge the elasticity of pricing. Managers should implement consistent pricing strategies in their businesses in order to improve the quality of their decisions and this will lead to higher RevPAB (Revenue Per Available Berth) relative to their competitive set.

Setting optimal price for ones' product or service is not an easy task, and in order to maximize their business results, managers need to introduce in their business revenue management. Revenue management is a management tool whose main objective is to increase sales revenues by manipulating prices of products or services (HOSPA, 2013). Revenue management is particularly useful in industries whose fixed costs are high in comparison to variable costs as hotels, airlines, car rentals, cinemas, stadiums, conventions, cruise liners etc. The hospitality industry recognised the benefits of adopting RM in order to maximize their business results and several research was conducted in order to explore the degree to which strategic price positioning and price fluctuations affect relative revenue per available room (Enz and Canina, 2005, Enz, Canina and Lomanno, 2009, Noone, Canina and Enz, 2013, Enz, Canina and van der Rest, 2015). Marina business characteristics have similarities with hotel business regarding perishability of their product (selling berth vs. room) and high fixed costs of a business. The methodology for research conducted on hotels was adjusted for marinas in order to explore the effects of price positioning in marina business. In this research we seek to extend the literature by examining how relative price position and relative price fluctuation has an impact on performance in marina business.

## 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Despite a well-developed practical and scientific approach in the field of pricing, managers in many industries still rely on the rules of thumb, including cost-based pricing. Recent research shows that they also react to competitor's pricing performance (Enz, Canina, van der Rest, 2015). Setting prices should not be merely a tactical matter, even though there's no doubt that competitors are an important factor to consider in pricing. Absolutely, price setting should be a part of companies' overall strategy, and pricing should expose the position in providing customer value at a given cost, as well as enable actions and reactions of market players. Pricing is considered to be a strategic capability that is integral to a

company's overall strategy, indicated by revenue management analysis and economic conditions (Enz, Canina, van der Rest, p.6). Revenue managers need to know how to contribute to firm performance via pricing to drive higher revenue and optimise GOP. The pricing strategy could be one of price stability or one of changing price category relative to competitors (Noone, 2012). More importantly, it's crucial for strategic pricing in marina business to define whether raising or lowering prices relative to their competition contributes additionally to RevPAB growth.

Authors Enz and Canina with several colleagues, in their research about hotel pricing concluded that consistent pricing strategy is essential and that pricing strategy should not rely on neoclassical theories of perfect competition (Enz, Canina, van der Rest, p.7). Their research investigates whether a clear strategic path to avoid tactical price fluctuations to steal market share in the short run by price positioning below competitors actually pays off (Enz, Canina, van der Rest, p.7). They found that hotels that consistently maintained an ADR somewhat higher than that of their competitive set also enjoyed a relatively higher RevPAR.

Studies also indicate that revenues are more strongly influenced by ADR than by occupancy.

Research results also suggest that hotels should not follow an overall strategy of price reduction, since it results in RevPAR losses. Offering average prices higher than those of competitor is the best way to get desired returns (Enz, Canina, and Noone, 2012).

Singh et al. explore the influence of changes in ADR on financial result measured by GOPAR and NOIPAR. They prove that changes in ADR have a significantly stronger correlation with changes in GOPAR and NOIPAR compared with changes in occupancy. These results indicate that ADR appears to be the key driver of RevPAR and bottom-line profitability since 1 percent change in ADR yields a 1.9 percent change in NOI, and an estimated 1.6 percent change in GOP (Singh, Dev and Mandelbaum, 2014). Although it is commonly known that tactical pricing decision must bring into line with strategic price positioning and contribute to the fulfilment of strategic goals, the literature provides little guidance in the domain of strategic price positioning. Noon, Canina and Enz have been identified two key dimensions of strategic pricing: relative price position and relative price fluctuation (Noone, Canina, & Enz, 2013:4). While relative price position represents a measure of the mean ADR attained by a given hotel relative to the competitive set and can be higher or lower, or on par with the competition, relative price fluctuation is a measure of relative variability in ADR over time and represents the degree of variation in price relative to the competition over time. (Noone, Canina, & Enz, 2013).

There is no doubt that competitor prices should be considered in managing revenue and maximizing profitability. For this purpose, competitive set reports can be used. They allow revenue manager to track their own performance against that of their comp set(s). It usually consists of main revenue management KPIs and compares the subject's indicators to the compset's aggregates. It is employed to assess the effectiveness of short-term decisions as well as effectiveness of long-term decisions and policies. These comparative reports are also used extensively by regional and corporate units to assess property-level performance, and by owners

and investment companies to evaluate the performance of a contracted management company, the usefulness of a brand affiliation and the performance of the industry (Webb, Schwartz, 2016).

In order to keep up-to-date with ever changing environment in which marinas operate, the following KPIs are recommended in compset reports for marinas, to assess their own performance and keep track to their competitors: (Jankovic & Vlasic, 2018)

- total occupancy rate (total number of occupied berths divided by total number of available berths),
- occupancy rate for wet berths (number of occupied wet berths by contract and in transit divided by total number of available wet berths)
- occupancy rate for dry berths (number of occupied dry berths by contract and in transit divided by total number of available dry berths).
- occupancy rate by contract (number of occupied wet and dry berths by contract divided by total number of available berths),
- occupancy rate by contract for wet berths (number of occupied wet berths by contract divided by total number of available wet berths)
- occupancy rate by contract for dry berths (number of occupied dry berths divided by total number of available dry berths),
- marina revenue per occupied berth - Average Berth Rate – ABR (revenue from renting dry and wet berths divided by total number of occupied berths),
- total marina revenue per occupied berth (revenues from renting berths, revenues from marina services, revenues from renting spaces, sub-concessions, permits and licenses and other marina revenues divided by total number of occupied berths)
- marina revenue per available berth – RevPAB (marina revenue from renting dry and wet berths by contracts and in transit divided by total number of available berths),
- total marina revenue per available berth – TRevPAB (revenues from renting berths, revenues from marina services, revenues from renting spaces, sub-concessions, permits and licenses and other marina revenues divided by total number of available berths),

In order to measure the mentioned KPIs, a uniform methodology of measuring marina revenues and costs should be clearly defined. Although Uniform System of Accounts for Marinas and Boatyards (USAMB) was published by International Marina Institute in 1996 to improve financial reporting for marina business, nowadays, this standard does not enable the framework for performance measurement in marinas. More comprehensive measurement of revenues, costs and capacity, traced by profit and cost centres is required. To enable marina benchmarking, minimum business data for its measurement on monthly basis is provided below (Jankovic & Vlasic, 2018):

- revenues from renting dry and wet berths by contracts and in transit,
- revenues from marina services,
- revenues from renting spaces, sub-concessions, permits and licenses, and
- other marina revenues,
- the number of available wet berths and dry berths

(on monthly basis)

- the number of occupied wet berths and dry berths by contracts and in transit (boat per day)

Marina business can be considered as lodging business (berth is the lodging for the guests' boat/yacht) and the competitors are most commonly defined by size, location, proximity and published price, with location and price used as dimensions of similarity since it is strongly believed that location and price have significant impact on a business success (Kim & Canina, 2011). The marina business can create its competitive sets using several parameters: size, region, type of marina, marina categorization, marina occupancy rate and marina revenues.

Renting berths or berth revenues is considered to be the main profit centre of marina business, which is similar to a hotel business, where renting rooms (or lodging) is the main profit centre. Marina berth rates can be calculated for transit (daily, weekly) or by contract (seasonal or annual basis). They are normally calculated by length of the boat (per ft) and basically a boat slip is like a hotel room with the exception that marinas accommodate guest's boat and hotels accommodate guests in a time period. Marina business requires high investment in property plant and equipment and therefore have high fixed costs so high berth occupancy is necessary for financial success.

---

### 3 METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

---

Based on the idea that good revenue management exists when rates and occupancies show positive correlation this research examines the relationship between pricing strategy and marinas position in RevPAB and berth occupancy in relation to their competitive sets. The methodology for this research was taken over from the research conducted by Enz, Canina and Van der Rest (2015) for hotels. Variables that were used are average berth rate (ABR), berth occupancy and revenue per available berth (RevPAB) percentage differences. The percentage differences were calculated for each indicator by dividing each individual marina indicator to the average indicator of its competitive set. Relative price position for each marina in the sample was computed as the average of monthly ABR percentage difference from the competitive set over 36 months and relative price fluctuation for each marina in the sample was computed as the standard deviation of the monthly ABR percentage difference from the competitive set over the 36 months period. The methodology applied in this research excluded marinas who were unable to achieve a percentage difference in RevPAB with one standard deviation of zero from their competitors considering them non-competitive.

The sample consisted of 32 Croatian marinas whose data were collected through the project Croatian Benchmarking for the period of 36 months – for years 2015, 2016 and 2017. The number of observations made was 848. As the sample contained four seasonal marinas, it has to be kept in mind that they have operated only during the summer months (April till October) and therefore have no data during off-seasonal months. Also, there are marinas whose prices were not considered because their value of ABR, RevPAB and berth occupancy were too low or too high in comparison to other marinas due to errors made in providing data. The reason for

that stands in their information system limitations that do not provide separation of revenues from cash received for the time period that the transaction occurred in. For example: Annual contracts for berths are usually signed and the invoice for the entire year delivered in April. The invoice is then paid in the same or next month (April or May), and the system records this transaction in that month disregarding the fact that according to the accounting principle the (annual) revenue should be divided and recorded for each month separately. The above mentioned values were excluded from the final calculations in order to avoid misinterpretation in the conclusions for this research.

In choosing competitive sets, it is essential to emphasize the fact that Croatia is substantially a small market for nautical tourism and that the differences in prices are connected to the heterogeneity of locations and brand reputation and quality of services which is not connected to the classification of marinas. There is a problem of the classification of marinas not only in Croatia but also at the international level because there is no uniform classification of marinas prescribed internationally. Marinas in Croatia carry different classifications containing letters (A, B, C), roman numbers (I., II., III. Etc.) or anchors (1 – 5) and therefore it was not used for the separation of the results as it was used in the research for hotels. Because of the small sample of marinas, there was no separation of the individual and chain ones or the size of marinas regarding number of berths.

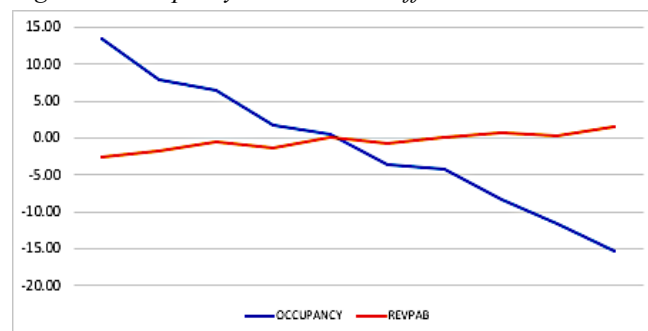
In order to uniform the existing criteria for evaluation of marinas, for calculating the berth occupancy, only the occupancy of sea (wet) berths was considered for this research. It is because not all marinas in the sample contain sea and dry (land) berths, and there is a great difference when calculating berth occupancy for total berths or just sea berths – the dry berth occupancy is lower than the occupancy of sea berth and the total berth occupancy is lower in those marinas with dry berths. In some marinas the berth occupancy exceeds 100%, due to the fact that marinas some berths sell twice, once through the annual contract and second time, when during the high season the yacht/boat leaves the marina for cruising, sell the same berth as the transient one. The marinas have chosen their competitive sets on the basis of the closest ABR in the sample, regardless its location or size.

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the information on marina business for descriptive statistics, the sample showed relatively wide disparities for average in occupancy ranging from 8,10 to 149,27 with mean 78,09 of value. The range for ABR is 22,06 to 461,22 with mean value of 106,78. The sample also showed great disparities for average in RevPAB that range from 15,28 to 326,47 with mean value of 79,06.

Ten different pricing categories ranging from 0 to 30% were used for Marinas. Five of the pricing categories were set for the marinas with higher price position in comparison to their competitors and five categories for the marinas that achieved price position lower than their competitors (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Occupancy and RevPAB differences



The research results conducted on marinas show that when marinas positioned their prices below the prices of their competitors, they have achieved better berth occupancy of marina and their RevPAB was slightly lower. With the marinas that positioned their prices substantially lower (15-30%) the occupancy was much higher (13,5) with RevPAB being only slightly lower (-2,55).

Table 1: Percentage difference in average berth rated (ABR)

	15-30% lower	10-14% lower	6-9% lower	3-5% lower	0-2% lower	0-2% higher	3-5% higher	6-9% higher	10-14% higher	15-30% higher
OCCUPANCY	13,50	7,98	6,42	1,71	0,50	-3,64	-4,31	-8,31	-11,60	-15,40
RevPAB	-2,55	-1,83	-0,43	-1,42	0,02	-0,77	0,17	0,78	0,35	1,43

For those marinas that positioned their prices above then their competition, the research results show that their berth occupancy experienced lower values, with their RevPAB being slightly higher, so for much higher prices (15-30%), the occupancy was much lower (-15,40) and RevPAB only slightly higher (1,43).

In order to reveal the effect of price position, price fluctuation and occupancy performance of marina on its RevPAB, regression analysis is performed (Table 2):

Table 2: Regression analysis results

Dependent variable	RevPAB performance
Constant	-1.039 (0.234)
Price position	0.773*** (0.019)
Occupancy performance	0.815*** (0.019)
Price fluctuation	0.165*** (0.008)
Observations	848
R2	0.334
R2 (adj)	0.332
F	141.005***

\*\*\* significance at 0,001 level respectively. Standard error is given in parenthesis.

Dependent variable: Revenue performance

Variables selection method: Enter

Table 2 shows the results of regression analysis used to test the effects of relative price position and fluctuation on RevPAB performance in marinas. RevPAB was entered as dependent variable, while relative price position and relative price fluctuation were entered as the independent variables. The model is statistically significant ( $F = 141.005$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ) with 33,7% of variation in RevPAB accounted for the model ( $R^2 = 0.332$ ). The effect of price position, price fluctuation and berth occupancy performance shows that there is a significant relationship between dependent and independent variable. Berth occupancy performance has higher influence ( $\beta = 0.815$ ) on RevPAB performance than price position ( $\beta = 0.773$ ), but still price position was highly significant in explaining RevPAB performance. The price fluctuation has also been significant in explaining RevPAB performance ( $\beta = 0.165$ ) but less than the price position and occupancy performance.

Our research results show that marinas who set their prices below their competitors achieve higher berth occupancy but still achieve lower RevPAB, and marinas that set their prices above their competitors manage to achieve lower level of occupancy but at the same time those marinas achieve higher RevPAB. These results emphasize the importance of setting strategic price positions based on presenting different marina products and marina services. Marina managers should consider more strategic and consistent price positioning, particularly if their marinas offer unique, recognized, high quality services and valued products (Fotiadis and Vassiliadis, 2017). Although price fluctuation shows lower significance on influencing RevPAB, it should be noted that price variability is connected to customer risk and perceptions of brand and that lowering prices can be seen as lowering quality of services in marinas and should be avoided. Because of the small sample, the individual marinas were not separated from the chain affiliated ones.

Therefore, we suggest to upgrade this project on surrounding countries (eg. Mediterranean) or at international level. In this case different approach should be introduced – starting from prices that should be collected in equal (not different) currencies, different types of marinas regarding areas, locations, sea/river, inland/coastal, wet/dry etc). We suggest that the criteria for defining marina categorisation should be set at national as well as international level and we suggest that gold anchor categorisation could be used. We also suggest to repeat the research for longer period of time (5 or 10 years), because three years is considered to be small amount of time. We also suggest that in order to get better basis for the comparison nationally and internationally length and width of the boat or yacht should be taken into consideration. For length of the boat meter/day value should be introduced, and for the boat width equivalent numbers should be used. Until now, only the managerial accounting information were collected and financial indicators calculated. In order to further develop and improve project benchmarking marinas there is a need for additional information on costs /expenses and sustainability to be introduced and costs and sustainability indicators calculated. To position itself in the long term, marina needs to gain clear understanding of its current market position and the direction it wants to take in the future. As competitors pricing creates a part of short-term and long-term strategies marina managers should consider those prices in order to facilitate responsive

positioning and to avoid conflicts. Regarding price positioning in short and long term marina managers are suggested to be very careful when setting the prices above their competitors in marinas in order to prevent lowering their marinas occupancy by having unsatisfied customers. If they plan to set higher prices than their competitors, than in order to keep the customers satisfaction, the prices should be risen gradually and they should offer higher quality of their services or include additional bonus services. When setting higher prices than their competitors for annual contract berths, the additional services should be included in the price and higher quality of services should be offered in order to keep the customers satisfied. Managers should have in mind that this berth will be sold and revenues gained for the entire year which will increase their occupancy, but will also enable selling the same berth in the summer months when the boat/yacht owner decides to take the boat out of marina for a few days. Although setting prices for transient berths seem slightly easier, it is definitely not so. For the seasonal months it is not difficult to sell the berth because regardless the price their marina will reach maximum in occupancy. However, in that period managers should maximize their business results but they should be careful with pricing policy because if they set the prices too high, they risk losing their revenues in long term.

---

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

---

In Europe there are 4500 marinas with 1,75 million berths ([www.europeanboatingindustry.eu](http://www.europeanboatingindustry.eu)). They are very attractive for boat owners/yachtsmen, and considering this fact they should not have problems with raising the prices of their berths, but they still need to do it very carefully thinking about long-term effects of this increase. Therefore, future research on shifting prices should be conducted in order to follow the actual effects of this change on occupancy and revenue per available berth. It is also suggested that total revenue per available berth (TrevPAB) needs to be considered because it will bring clearer picture on managers' ability to be successful. TrevPAB apart from the price of berth includes other marina revenues e.g. from parking, maintenance of the boat, transfers, lodging if available, revenues from renting, sub-concessions, permits and approvals and other marina revenues excluding financial and extraordinary revenues and shows actual results of managing marina business. As this is the first research regarding the price positioning and price fluctuation of marina business it should be noted that the research in this area should be further developed. We also suggest for further research that marinas should be divided by chain affiliated or by size or even by region, and that for long-term price positioning the period of observation should be extended to at least 5 to 10 years.

---

## REFERENCES

- Canina, L., & Enz, C. A. (2008). Pricing for Revenue Enhancement in Asian and Pacific Region Hotels: A Study of Relative Pricing Strategies [Electronic article]. *Cornell Hospitality Report*, 8(3): 6-16.
- Enz, C. A. (2013). Strategic price positioning for revenue management: The effects of relative price position and

- fluctuation on performance [Electronic version]. Retrieved [25.05.2018.] from Cornell University, School of Hotel Administration site: <http://scholarship.sha.cornell.edu/articles/611>
- Enz, C. A., & Canina, L. (2005). An examination of revenue management in relation to hotels' pricing strategies. *Cornell Hospitality Report*, 5(6): 6-13.
- Enz, C. A., Canina, L., & Lomanno, M. (2009). Competitive Pricing Decisions in Uncertain Times. [Electronic version]. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 50(3), 325-341. Retrieved [May 30, 2018], from Cornell University, School of Hospitality Administration site: <http://scholarship.sha.cornell.edu/articles/201/>
- Enz, C. A., Canina, L., & Lomanno, M. (2010). Strategic pricing in European hotels: 2006-2009 [Electronic article]. *Cornell Hospitality Report*, 10(5): 6-22.
- Enz, C. A., Canina, L., & Noone, B. (2012). Strategic revenue management and the role of competitive price shifting. *Cornell Hospitality Report*, 12(6), 6-11.
- Enz, C. A., Canina, L., & van der Rest J.P. (2015). Competitive hotel pricing in Europe: An exploration of Strategic Positioning. *Cornell Hospitality Report*, 15 (2), 6-16.
- European Boating Industry, (2016), EU Affairs Tourism, Nautical tourism in Europe, retrieved May, 20 2018 from <http://www.europeanboatingindustry.eu/eaaffairs/tourism>
- Fotiadis, A. K., & Vassiliadis, C. (2017). Being customer-centric through CRM metrics in the B2B market: the case of maritime shipping. *Journal of Business & Industrial Marketing*. doi:10.1108/JBIM-11-2014-0226
- Ivanov, S. (2014). *Hotel revenue management: From theory to practice*. Varna: Zangador.
- Janković S. & Vlašić, D. (2018). Developing a benchmarking methodology for marina business, *Tourism in marine environment*, vol 13, no. 2, DOI:10.3727/154427318X15276699095970
- Kimes, S. E. (2016). The evolution of hotel revenue management. *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 15(3-4): 247-251.
- Kimes, S. E., & Wirtz, J. (2003). Has revenue management become acceptable? Findings from an international study on the perceived fairness of rate fences. *Journal of Service Research*, 6(2): 125-135.
- Korol, T., & Fotiadis, A. (2016). Applying Fuzzy Logic of Expert Knowledge for Accurate Predictive Algorithms of Customer Traffic Flows in Theme Parks. *International Journal of Information Technology & Decision Making*, 15(06), 1451-1468. doi:10.1142/S0219622016500425
- Luković, T., (2012). *Nautical Tourism and Its Function in the Economic Development of Europe, Visions for Global Tourism Industry - Creating and Sustaining Competitive Strategies*, Dr. Murat Kasimoglu (Ed.), ISBN: 978-953-51-0520-6, InTech, Available from: <http://www.intechopen.com/books/visions-for-global-tourismindustry-creating-and-sustaining-competitive-strategies/nautical-tourism-in-the-function-of-the-economicdevelopment-of-europe>
- Landman, P. (2011). *Leadership in Revenue Management*. Retrieved January 15, 2018, from <https://www.xotels.com/images/Revenue-Management-Manual-Xotels.pdf>
- Marina industries association (2018), *Developing the marina industries through education, accreditation and research*, retrieved May, 28 2018 from <https://www.marinas.net.au/>
- Noone, B.M., Canina, L., & Enz, C.A., (2013). Strategic Price Positioning for Revenue Management: The Effects of Relative Price Position and Fluctuation on Performance, *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, 12(3): 207-220. Doi:10.2057/rpm.2012.48
- Revenue management HOSPA Practitioner Series (2013) *Hospitality finance, revenue and IT professionals Education and Training*, Hospitality professional Association, Wentworth John Limited, Bournemouth, from [http://hospa.org/static/cms\\_page\\_media/5712/HOSPA%20RM%20eBook\\_1.pdf](http://hospa.org/static/cms_page_media/5712/HOSPA%20RM%20eBook_1.pdf)
- Singh, A., Dev, C. Mandelbaum, R. (2014). A flow-through analysis of the US lodging industry during the great recession, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 26 Issue: 2, pp.205-224, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-12-2012-0260>
- Webb, T., Schwartz, Z., (2016). Revenue management analysis with competitive sets: vulnerability and a challenge to strategic co-opetition among hotels. *Tourism Economics* vol 23, 1206-1219. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816616671473>

---

*SUBMITTED: JUNE 2018*

*REVISION SUBMITTED: NOVEMBER 2018*

*ACCEPTED: FEBRUARY 2019*

*REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY*

*PUBLISHED ONLINE: 15 APRIL 2019*



# Festivals and destination marketing: An application from Izmir city

 **Ige Pirnar**  
Yasar University, Turkey

 **Sinem Kurtural**  
Guzel Izmir Hotel, Turkey

 **Melih Tutuncuoglu**  
Yasar University, Turkey

## Abstract

**Purpose:** Studies indicate that there is a direct relationship between the successful organizations of festivals and the number of visitors and tourism income of a city destination. Thus, festival marketing efforts have a direct impact on city marketing efforts. This study aims to explore the festival marketing potential of Izmir city, that seems to lag behind the general tourism development of Turkey.

**Methods:** The study comprises of two main sections, first a literature review on festival marketing, followed by a qualitative research at Izmir's festivals. It tries to determine the positive impacts of Izmir's festivals on destination marketing and by grouping and categorizing them under similar characteristics figuring out the most promising ones. Research consists of in-depth interviews during festivals at Izmir.

**Results:** The results of the study indicate that among the all festivals held in Izmir, culture and gastronomy themed ones are more memorable than sports themed ones, therefore more effective for destination branding applications.

**Implications:** As practical implications, Destination Management Organizations, Destination Marketing Organizations, destination and city marketers, festival managers and destination tourism developers may benefit from the findings of this study. As an overall implication, it may be advisory for destination festival and event planners to group the destination's festivals and invest in the most promising and appropriate category for effective branding practices.

**Keywords:** festival marketing, destination marketing, Izmir, festivals, city marketing

**JEL Classification:** G14, M31, Z33

**Biographical note:** Ige Pirnar (ige.pirnar@yasar.edu.tr) is chair of Department of Business Administration, Yasar University, Turkey. Held job postings at: Bilkent University as assistant director of School of Tourism & Hotel Management and Dokuz Eylul University as the chair of Department of Tourism Management. Sinem Kurtural (snmkurtural@gmail.com) is GM of Guzel Izmir Hotel in Izmir, holding an M.B.A from Ege University, Turkey. Melih Tutuncuoglu works as administrative affairs specialist at Petkim, Izmir and is also a PhD candidate at Yasar University. Corresponding author: Ige Pirnar (ige.pirnar@yasar.edu.tr)

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Izmir is the third biggest city of Turkey, has a 7.7% share of the total GDP of the country. It has many resources and tourist attractions with being a city dating beyond 8500 years. It is named as "The Aegean Pearl" and has a huge potential for alternative tourism types like culture tourism, gastronomy tourism, active and passive cultural tourism, education tourism, yacht and cruise tourism, health and medical tourism, sustainable tourism and such. The city holds

important cultural events, conventions and expositions, national and global fairs like the marble fair. It is a global brand in surf tourism with Alacati destination and ciltaslow with Seferihisar region. It also has a great potential for national and global festivals and has a huge potential with its' universities, specific cuisine, boutique museums, modern concert halls, libraries, culture and art associations, rich alternative media and already present annual national and international festivals and (Izmir Chamber of Commerce, 2010). Therefore, Izmir is found to be a suitable destination



for improvement in festival marketing and is chosen as a research subject for this study.

## 2 FESTIVALS IN DESTINATION MARKETING

A festival is an event that has become a traditional symbol of a region usually has been built up by local people that is held on the same day and the same month each year (Revilla-Hernández, 2016; Priporas et al., 2018). "Festivals, special events, and exhibitions are the cultural resources of an area that make possible the successful hosting of visitors (Backman, et al., 1995:15). The etymology of the term is based on the Latin roots "festum" in the meaning of "general fun and festivity". But originally Latin had two terms for festive events: 'festum', for public joy, merriment, revelry and 'feria', meaning abstinence from work in honor of the gods." (Falassi, 1987:1-2). The root of the word festival comes from "feast" ("fiesta"), standing for celebration (Skoutsos, 2014). Indeed, "festivals provide a space and time away from everyday life in which intense extraordinary experiences can be created and share" (Morgan, 2008:90).

Festivals are activities that, when combined with other attractions in almost every community create a real tourist attraction and totally affect the image of the destination (Viktoria, 2013). They are becoming very common, globally popular and destinations are severely competing with each other in festival offerings due to many benefits it brings to the destinations. Therefore, "event marketing, corporate sponsorship of events and festivals for the purpose of accomplishing strategic marketing objectives, has evolved rapidly" (Cunningham & Taylor, 1995:123). Festivals are promoted with each city, country or destination in general, associated with a region or city specific product or culture and art product. A festival reflects the city in which it is done and the audience in that city, but it is the quality of the product offered at the place creating visitor demand for a festival (Li, & Petrick, 2006; Chenini & Touaiti, 2018). A festival is also a very useful and effective source used in city branding (Rizzi & Dioli, 2010; Christou, 2015).

Festivals have many economic and other benefits for the destinations that they are held in and "they have become a strong demand generating factor in recent years". They not only contribute to tourism, travel, leisure and hospitality industries but also act as an important tool to attain social, economic, environmental objectives of communities (Deniz & Aktas, 2015:44). "Like events in general, festivals have been recognized as an increasingly important element of destination marketing. Not only do they add to the critical mass of attractions available at the destination, but also, they provide promotional opportunities through the exposure they receive in various forms of the media" (Faulkner, 1999). In addition, festival marketing related studies indicate that festival and culture-oriented tourists have a tendency to spend more and have a higher education than mass tourists (Kim, Cheng & O'Leary, 2007; Volgger et al, 2017).

Festivals have positive and negative impacts to the destinations (Fotiadis, Xie, Li, & Huan, 2016). In order to promote the festival organizations for destination development, the positive impacts may be optimized which may be summarized as; economic and social benefits,

feelings of becoming part of the community and marketing, competitive and promotional benefits (Prentice & Andersen, 2003; Derrett, 2004; Lee & Arcodia, 2011; Van Niekerk, 2017; Llopis-Amorós, et.al, 2018; Chen, King & Lee, 2018; Brownnett, 2018). Festival are important attractions for destinations, since they increase the competitiveness of the destinations, improve creativeness, innovativeness and image of the destinations while assisting the destination branding efforts by creating unique tourist experiences for differentiation (Nella & Christou, 2016; George, 2017; Sotiriadis & Shen, 2017). Furthermore, festival organizations increase the demand for the destination by attracting the tourists within the alternative tourism segment and when they are sustainable, they have a positive contribution to local quality of life and population well-being (Gunlu Kucukaltan & Pirnar, 2016; Mombeuil, 2018; Okumus & Cetin, 2018).

The main components of festivals are place, visitors and residents and their relationship effects on the positive impacts of festivals. The relationship of place and visitors leads to destination and city marketing whereas the interaction area of visitors and residents of the local region leads to culture tourism. The relationship between the place and residents take the form of sense of community and place (Derrett, 2004; Almeyda-Ibáñez & George, 2017). Studies indicate that community-based cultural festivals grow over time to reflect the values, interests and aspirations of residents (Derrett, 2003).

There are many different types of festivals and events, but many authors mention that five types of events that may be categorized according to the number of attendees, the destination characteristics and the type of the visitors. (Culha, 2008; Ma & Lew, 2012; Dalgıç & Birdir, 2016).

- Local festivals and events: Many trade and industrial fairs, special local exhibitions and specific industry fairs, local heritage festivals, local contemporary festivals, many music concerts, theatre shows and art exhibitions and other local festivals like the cherry festival and grape festival fall into this category
- Important regional festivals and events: National heritage festivals, national contemporary festivals fall into this category. Istanbul music festival may be an example to this type of event
- National festivals and events: Rio Carnival and Cannes film festival may be examples for this type of festivals.
- Global giant festivals and events: These festivals are huge, have attendees all over the world and very popular globally. FIFA World Cup and Olympic Games are examples.

Hence, a simpler "festival typology is created that broadly identifies three festival types termed 'home-grown', 'tourist-tempter' and 'big-bang'" (O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002:325)

According to their content and theme the events may be classified as festivals, concerts and theatre shows, sport events, meeting, incentive, convention, exhibition (MICE) organizations and business events (Celik & Cetinkaya, 2013). Though the type of the festivals are categorized in five groups, there also exists different classifications. The different categorization of festival according to the different customer segments they attract, and their markets are as follows (Dalgıç & Birdir, 2016; Sari, 2016; <http://www.festivaldunyasi.net>):

- Local festivals, for example; Malatya apricot festival, Finike festival
- Regional and urban festivals, e.g.; Antalya Golden Orange Film Festival, Southeast food festival, Balkan music festival, Adana Golden Cocoon Culture and Art Festival
- Mobile festivals such as the European Films Festival
- National festivals, like; Turkish Universities Folklore Festival
- International festivals, like; International Ankara Music Festival, International Ankara Film Festival, International Istanbul Film Festival, International İzmir Film Festival, International Kas Likya Festival.
- Traditional-annual festivals, like; 27<sup>th</sup> traditional Kemalpaşa Cherry Festival
- Single-once-only festivals, for example; International Nemrut-Commagene Festival, 'Adıyaman Symposium on the Crossing of Eastern and Western Civilizations'
- Festivals relating to a single area / subject / arts field e.g.; Rock 'n Coke - Rock music, Mengen Turkish food festival, children's festivals, theatre festivals, film festivals
- Multidisciplinary festivals such as; Ayvalık art festival: painting, sculpture, film, literature, music, etc.

Also, globally famous cities and countries are very popular with their own festivals so that they are even characterized and identified by them. Some examples of these global destination brands associated with their worldwide famous festivals are as follows (Dimanche, 2008; Muñiz-Martínez & Cervantes-Blanco, 2009; Celik & Cetinkaya, 2013):

- Tomato Festival - Spain
- Cannes Film Festival - France
- Venice Carnival - Italy
- Fasnacht Festival - Switzerland
- Harbin Ice and Snow Festival - Harbin, China
- Rio Carnival - Brazil
- White Nights Festival - St. Petersburg, Russia
- Oktoberfest - Germany
- Las Fallas Festival (The Festival of Carpenters and Fire) - Valencia
- London Architecture Biennial / Architecture Festival - England
- San Fermin Festival - Spain
- Edinburgh International Festival – England
- Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta - New Mexico
- Toronto International Film Festival – Canada
- New Orleans Jazz Festival – Louisiana
- Berlin Film Festival – Germany
- Day of the Dead – Mexico
- Pingxi Lantern Festival - Taiwan
- Bordeaux Wine Festival – France
- Burning Man Festival – Nevada, USA
- Boryeong Mud Festival - South Korea

various art forms such as music, film, theatre and poetry (Polat, Polat & Halis, 2012). Thus, Izmir city with its provinces is one of the leading cities with holding 60-70 activities and agricultural, food, flower, film, music, poetry and art festivals annually (Karabag, Yavuz & Berggren, 2011; Gunlu & Lale, 2015). Table 1 below lists some popular festivals organized annually in Izmir city and its' provinces. With Izmir's potential that is promising to bring out new successful festivals in the coming years, the research tries to investigate the already known popular ones as well as the potential innovative ones.

*Table 1. List of Some Important Festivals of Izmir*

Name of the Festival	Place & Date
Karsiyaka Children Festival	Karsiyaka & 18 <sup>th</sup> -25 <sup>th</sup> of April
International Fishery Festival	Foca & 9 <sup>th</sup> to 11 <sup>th</sup> of September
Bird Paradise & Spring & Kite Festival	Sasali & May
Golden Cherry Culture & Art Festival	Kemalpaşa & May
Bergama Kermes Festival	Bergama & 1 <sup>st</sup> to 7 <sup>th</sup> of June
June Peninsula Games	Selçuk & 11 <sup>th</sup> to 15 <sup>th</sup> of June
International Izmir Festival	Izmir & 10 <sup>th</sup> June to 10 <sup>th</sup> of July
International Child & Youth Theaters Festival	Izmir & 17 <sup>th</sup> to 27 <sup>th</sup> of May
International Cesme Sea Festival	Cesme & July
International Music Festival	Izmir & 4 <sup>th</sup> to 9 <sup>th</sup> of July
Candarlı Culture & Art Festival	Candarlı & 30 <sup>th</sup> of August to 1 <sup>st</sup> of June
International Watermelon Festival	Bayındır & July
Camel Wrestling Festival	Selçuk & January
Alaçati Herb Festival	Alaçati & 7 <sup>th</sup> of April
Urla Artichoke Festival	Urla & 29 <sup>th</sup> to 30 <sup>th</sup> of April
Izmir Chocolate Fest	Izmir & 31 <sup>st</sup> of March to 2 <sup>nd</sup> of April
Cherry Festival	Buca & 21 <sup>st</sup> of May
Holifest	Izmir & 6 <sup>th</sup> of May
Flower Festival	Bayındır & 3 <sup>rd</sup> of May
Organic Life Festival	Izmir & 28 <sup>th</sup> of April to 30 <sup>th</sup> of April
Book Reading Festival	Izmir & 30 <sup>th</sup> of October
Izmir Coffee Festival	Izmir & 14 <sup>th</sup> of October
International Theatre Festival	Izmir & 2 <sup>nd</sup> of December
European Jazz Festival	Izmir & 1 <sup>st</sup> of April
Sports Fest	Izmir & 24 <sup>th</sup> of September
Grape Festival	Kavacık & 24 <sup>th</sup> September
Beer & Mussels Festival	Izmir & 28 <sup>th</sup> of May
Izmir International Puppets Day	Izmir & May
Electropol Festival	Izmir & April, May
International Homeros Festival	Bornova & May
Izmir Boyoz Festival	Izmir & May
Alaçati Country Life Kids Festival	Alaçati & July
Honey Festival	Kemalpaşa Dereköy Gökyaşa
Tangerine Festival	Seferihisar & November
Humor Festival	Izmir & April
Izmir Short Film Festival	Izmir & November
Izmir Street Food Festival	Izmir & October

Sources: Celik, S., & Cetinkaya, M. Y. (2013). *Festivals In Event Tourism: The Case Of International Izmir Art Festival*. *International Journal of Contemporary Economics & Administrative Sciences*, 3(1):1-21. *Izmirmag*, <http://www.izmirmag.net/search/label/festival>, *Izmir Culture & Tourism Directorate*, <http://www.izmirkulturturizm.gov.tr/>

As the list of Izmir festivals indicates, there are various national and international festivals organized in the city, yet it is vague if they have meaningful impact on the city's marketing efforts. Thus, the study tries to determine the positive impacts of Izmir's festivals on destination marketing and by grouping and categorizing them under similar characteristics figuring out the most promising ones.

### 3 FESTIVALS IN IZMIR

In Turkey, about 2000 festivals, memorial days, festivals and feast-like events are organized, themes and subjects ranging from food such as cherry, grape, rice, and watermelon, to flowers, to ethnic celebrations, to sports, to gastronomy, to

#### 4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the research is to determine the impact of Izmir's festivals on the destination marketing. In order to maximize the synergy and optimization benefits, it also tries to group the numerous types of different festivals held under specific categories. The research of the study is questioning; whether Izmir is optimizing the benefits of festival marketing and what are the innovative / suitable new types of festivals that it can apply. Suitable with the purpose exploratory research design is chosen to define the research problem more accurately. As a popular method of exploratory research design, qualitative research technique is used to get expert idea on the topic. For population selection, snowball sampling is used to identify experts which consist of general managers of chain hotels, high level managers of festival and event planning organizations and festival related travel agencies. Primary research data is used to obtain the necessary information and for primary data collection, four semi structured open-ended interview questions are used where the population of the study consisted of 25 people who are experts on the topic, namely, Izmir city's marketing, event and festival organizations. The interview questions are held face to face within the 3 months' time period. They are as follows:

1. Do you think the festivals have an impact on tourism destinations' promotion and popularity? If yes, how?
2. Please state the most important festivals that are organized in Izmir (please state the ones you are aware of).
3. Which other festivals should be organized in Izmir? Which ones do you recommend? Is it important to group the festivals and if so which category will have the highest positive impact on the city demand as an attraction?
4. Which of the already organized festivals contributes most to the Izmir's city branding efforts? Is this contribution enough? Why or why not? If not, please state your suggestions for contribution improvements.

#### 5 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The replies of the experts and related research analysis is as follows:

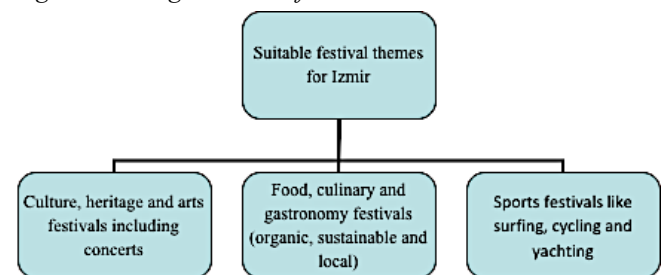
The first question is about the importance of festivals on destination's global popularity. All the respondents stated that they believe the festivals have a positive impact on tourism destination's global popularity and festivals are an effective way of promotion. The examples given are mainly: Oktoberfest, Tomato Festival, Burning Man Festival, Rio Carnival and Venice Carnival, as these globally known destinations are also identified with their annual festivals. One respondent mentioned that "these global festivals are upmost important for tourism destinations' promotion and branding and due to excessive demand for these global festivals tickets are reserved a year before the event". Another respondent stated, "the global festivals help locally known destinations to move towards internationally popular places". In addition, it was mentioned, "since festivals are promoted all year through, their promotion will aid the city's off-season marketing efforts".

The replies to the second questions indicated that the most known and popular festivals of Izmir are as follows; International Izmir Festival, International Music Festival, Camel Wrestling Festival, Alacati Herb Festival, Urla Artichoke Festival, Izmir Chocolate Fest, Flower Festival, Izmir Coffee Festival, Cherry festival, International Theatre Festival, European Jazz Festival, Izmir International Puppets Day, Izmir Boyoz Festival, Tangerine Festival, Izmir Gastronomy Festival and Izmir Short Film Festival. The results indicate that among the all festivals held in Izmir, culture and gastronomy themed ones are more memorable.

Third question of the study aims to figure out the respondents' choices on suitable festival types and themes for Izmir. Most of the respondents focused on a festival that is unique to Izmir, suitable to Izmir city's image which is related to its' culture, heritage and arts potential. In addition, some of the respondents preferred food and gastronomy festivals for Izmir, whereas the others preferred a theme on sea and marine sports. One of the respondents suggested "Izmir should organize an international surf and marine sports festival". Another recommended, "the theme should focus on International Homeros Festival". Thus, all the respondents recommended that the proposed festival should be internationally aimed and planned.

The replies indicated that the Izmir's optimal and suitable festival choices may be grouped under three groups as one being the arts and culture, namely on film and music, the other group on food and gastronomy and the third group on sports like yachting, surfing and cycling. Suggestion of grouping the Izmir festivals according to their homogeneous characteristics in three separate categories as culture, heritage and arts festivals, food and gastronomy festivals and sports festivals may lead to more effective and efficient organizations. Thus, with the help of grouping synergy and clustering benefits in some of the groups may also be achieved.

Figure 1. Categorization of Izmir's Festivals



Food, culinary and gastronomy seemed to be the most promising and suitable festival theme for Izmir as one respondent mentioned "Izmir was one of the three invited cities along with Montreal and Hong Kong, to the famous 3rd Street food festival held in Lyon a.k.a. capital of European gastronomy" on 13-16 September 2018. Another respondent mentioned that "since Izmir is a member of Délice which is an international network of good food cities, it is important that it organizes gastronomy and food related festivals more often".

The last question of the study tries to point out the festival with the most potential, in other terms the one which contributes most to Izmir's city branding efforts. The replies

indicate that the most contributing ones are found to be nature related festivals like Alacati Herb Festival, Urla Artichoke Festival and flower festival, coffee festival, marine festival, book reading festival and culture / arts related Puppets, Izmir Short film, Theatre and Jazz festivals. On the contrary, half of the replies stated that there is no such festival that has a great contribution to Izmir city's branding and marketing efforts and such a festival should be strategically planned, managed, marketed and organized by all the related parties, stakeholders and shareholders.

When the results are compared with other related studies in the field, it is found that according to the destination's unique characteristics and resources, the popular and successful ones are also choosing the focus on the three groups as culinary, culture and / or sports (Chen et. Al., 2018; Okumus & Cetin, 2018). For Izmir, culinary and culture festivals are found to be more effective for branding compared to sports related festivals.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

A festival is an event that has become a traditional symbol of a region usually has been built up by local people that is held on the same day and the same month each year. Festivals have a positive impact on tourism destination's global popularity and act as an effective way of destination promotion even during the off-season periods. Festivals are also effective tools for city branding and many global city brands like Venice, Rio de Janeiro and Munich are characterized and even associated with the festivals they organize annually. Since Izmir has been losing its market share of visitors and tourists recently, the study aims to investigate the Izmir's festivals' potential in increasing the visitor demand and the impact on city branding.

Izmir city organizes many festivals where popular ones are stated as; International Izmir Festival, International Music Festival, Camel Wrestling Festival, Alacati Herb Festival, Urla Artichoke Festival, Izmir Chocolate Fest, Flower Festival, Izmir Coffee Festival, Cherry festival, International Theatre Festival, European Jazz Festival, Izmir International Puppets Day, Izmir Boyoz Festival, Tangerine Festival, Izmir Gastronomy Festival and Izmir Short Film Festival. Taking into consideration all the organized Izmir festivals, it becomes apparent that they could be grouped under three main categories of food and gastronomy like cherry, artichoke, herbs, grape, chocolate, mussels, boyoz, coffee, art and culture like puppets, jazz, music, theatre and film and finally sports like yachting, jogging, marathons and cycling. Since Izmir becomes a member of Délice, which is an international network of good food cities, it is important that it organizes international food and gastronomy related festivals more often. As mentioned, grouping Izmir festivals in 3 separate categories as culture, heritage and arts festivals, food and gastronomy festivals and sports festivals is suggested for effective and efficient organization. With the help of grouping, synergy and clustering benefits in some of the groups may also be achieved. Thus, the results of the study indicate that among the all festivals held in Izmir, culture and gastronomy themed ones are more memorable than sports themed ones, therefore more effective for

destination branding applications. As a general implication, it may be advisory for destination festival and event planners to group the destination's festivals and invest in the most promising and appropriate category for effective branding practices.

Lastly, even though Izmir holds many annual national and international festivals, none of them alone was found to have a meaningful potential to positively influence the Izmir city's branding and have a sustainable contribution to the city's marketing efforts. Due to this fact, it is suggested that all the related shareholders, groups and stakeholders should plan and organize an international gastronomy / culture festival, which relates to Izmir's heritage, culture and culinary resources.

## REFERENCES

- Almeyda-Ibáñez, M. & George, B.P. (2017). The evolution of destination branding: A review of branding literature in tourism. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 3(1), 9–17. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.401370>
- Backman, K. F., Backman, S. J., Uysal, M., & Sunshine, K. M. (1995). Event tourism: An examination of motivations and activities. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 3(1), 15–24.
- Brownnett, T. (2018). Social capital and participation: The role of community arts festivals for generating well-being. *Journal of Applied Arts & Health*, 9(1), 71–84.
- Bucak T., & Arıcı U.,E., (2013). Türkiye'de Gastronomi Turizmi Uzerine Genel Bir Degerlendirme, Balikesir University The Journal of Social Sciences Institute, 16 (30):203-216.
- Chen, Y. C., King, B., & Lee, H. W. (2018). Experiencing the destination brand: Behavioral intentions of arts festival tourists. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 10, 61–67.
- Chenini, A. & Touaiti, M. (2018). Building Destination Loyalty Using Tourist Satisfaction and Destination Image: A Holistic Conceptual Framework. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 4(2), 37–43. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1490491>
- Christou, E. (2015). Branding social media in the travel industry. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 175, pp 607-614. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.12>
- Cunningham, M. H., & Taylor, S. F. (1995). Event marketing: State of the industry and research agenda. *Festival Management and Event Tourism*, 2(3-1), 123-137.
- Celik, S., & Cetinkaya, M. Y. (2013). Festivals In Event Tourism: The Case Of International Izmir Art Festival. *International Journal of Contemporary Economics & Administrative Sciences*, 3(1):1-21.
- Chen, Y. C., King, B., & Lee, H. W. (2018). Experiencing the destination brand: Behavioral intentions of arts festival tourists. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 10, 61–67.
- Culha, O., (2008). Kultur Turizmi Kapsamında Destekleyici Turistik Urun Olarak Deve Guresi Festivalleri Uzerine Bir Alan Calismasi. *Journal Of Yasar University*, 3(12), 1827-1852.
- Dalgic A., & Birdir K., (2016). Etkinliklerin Sınıflandırılması Uzerine Kavramsal Bir Calisma, I. Uluslararası Dogu Akdeniz Turizm Sempozyumu, Bildiriler Kitabı, 69-75.
- Deniz, Y. U., & Aktas, S. G., (2015). Examining The Spatial Distribution of Festivals in Turkey. *International Journal of Culture and tourism Research*, 8(1):44-49.

- Derrett, R. (2003). Festivals & regional destinations: How festivals demonstrate a sense of community & place. *Rural Society*, 13(1), 35-53.
- Derrett, R. (2004). Festivals, events and the destination. *Festival and events management*, 32-64.
- Dimanche, F. (2008). From attractions to experiential marketing: the contributions of events to new tourism. *Change management in tourism: from 'old' to 'new' tourism*, 173-184.
- Falassi, A. (1987). Festival: Definition and morphology. *Time out of Time: Essays on the Festival*, 1-10.
- Faulkner, B., Fredline, E., Larson, M., & Tomljenovic, R. (1999). A marketing analysis of Sweden's Storsjöyran musical festival. *Tourism Analysis*, 4(3-4), 157-171.
- George, B. P. (2017). The evolution of destination branding: A review of branding literature in tourism. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 3(1):9-17.
- Gunlu, E., & Lale, C. (2015). The Comparison Of The Demographic Characteristics Of The Participants In Terms Of Participation Motives To Different Events. *Journal of Yasar University*, 10(40): 6730-6751.
- Fotiadis, A., Xie, L., Li, Y., & Huan, T.-C. T. C. (2016). Attracting athletes to small-scale sports events using motivational decision-making factors. *Journal of Business Research*, 69(11), 5467-5472.
- Izmir Chamber of Commerce, (2010). Izmir Hakkinda Konusmalar, <http://www.izto.org.tr/izmir/izmir.html>
- Izmirmag, <http://www.izmirmag.net/search/label/festival>,
- Izmir Culture & Tourism Directorate, <http://www.izmirkulturturizm.gov.tr/>
- Karabag, S. F., Yavuz, M. C., & Berggren, C. (2011). The impact of festivals on city promotion: A comparative study of Turkish and Swedish festivals. *Turizam: znanstveno-stručni časopis*, 59(4), 447-464.
- Kim, H., Cheng, C. K., & O'Leary, J. T. (2007). Understanding participation patterns and trends in tourism cultural attractions. *Tourism management*, 28(5), 1366-1371.
- Küçükaltan, E. G., & Pirnar, I. (2016). Competitiveness factors of a tourism destination and impact on residents' quality of life: The case of Cittaslow-Seferihisar. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 2(1): 22-29.
- Lee, I., & Arcodia, C. (2011). The role of regional food festivals for destination branding. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 13(4), 355-367.
- Li, X., & Petrick, J. F. (2006). A review of festival and event motivation studies. *Event Management*, 9(4), 239-245.
- Llopis-Amorós, M. P., Gil-Saura, I., Ruiz-Molina, M. E., & Gallarza, M. G. (2018). Marketing destinations through events: Research on satisfaction and loyalty in festivals 1. In *The Routledge Handbook of Destination Marketing* (pp. 133-153). Routledge.
- Ma, L., & Lew, A. A. (2012). Historical and geographical context in festival tourism development. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 7(1), 13-31.
- Mombeuil, C. (2018). Interaction from tourism development in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 4(1), 8-14. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1247527>
- Muñiz-Martínez, N., & Cervantes-Blanco, M. (2009). Identity and marketing of cities. *Information Communication Technologies and City Marketing: Digital Opportunities for Cities Around the World: Digital Opportunities for Cities Around the World*.
- Morgan, M. (2008). What makes a good festival? Understanding the event experience. *Event Management*, 12(2), 81-93.
- Nella, A., & Christou, E. (2016). Extending tourism marketing: Implications for targeting the senior tourists' segment. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 2(1), 36-42. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.376336>
- Okumus, B., & Cetin, G. (2018). Marketing Istanbul as a culinary destination. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 9, 340-346.
- O'Sullivan, D., & Jackson, M. J. (2002). Festival tourism: a contributor to sustainable local economic development?. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 10(4), 325-342.
- Pirnar, I., Karakundakoglu Kurtural, S. & Tutuncuoglu M. (2017). Izmir's Festival and Event Marketing Applications, 5 th International Conference on Contemporary Marketing Issues ICCMI June 21-23, 2017 Thessaloniki, Greece
- Prentice, R., & Andersen, V. (2003). Festival as creative destination. *Annals of tourism research*, 30(1), 7-30.
- Polat, S., Polat, S. A., & Halis., M. , (2012). Kent Kimligi Kapsaminda Festivallerin Degerlendirilmesi: Uluslararası Altin Safran Film Festivali Ornegi, Degisen Duunyada Yerel Yonetimlerin Modernizasyonu Sempozyumu, Kirgizistan.
- Popescu, R. I., & Corbos, R. A. (2012). The role of festivals and cultural events in the strategic development of cities. Recommendations for urban areas in Romania. *Informatica Economica*, 16(4), 19-28.
- Priporas, C.-V., Vassiliadis, C. A., Stylos, N., & Fotiadis, A. K. (2018). The Effect of Sport Tourists' Travel Style, Destination and Event Choices, and Motivation on Their Involvement in Small-Scale Sports Events. *Event Management*, 22(5), 745-765.
- Revilla Hernández, M., Santana Talavera, A. & Parra López, E. (2016). Effects of co-creation in a tourism destination brand image through twitter. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 2(2), 3-10. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.376341>
- Rizzi, P., & Dioli, I. (2010). Strategic planning, place marketing and city branding: The Italian case. *Journal of Town & City Management*, 1(3).
- Sari, C., (2016). Antalya'da Fuarlar, Festivaller Ve Yayla Senliklerinin Alternatif Turizmin Gelismesindeki Rolu- The Role Of Fairs, Feasts And Plateau Fairs In The Development Of Alternative Tourism Choices. *Mehmet Akif Ersoy Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitusu Dergisi*, 8(15), 95-11
- Skoultos, S. (2014). The potential of festivals and their contribution to culture and tourism, Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316276474\\_The\\_potential\\_of\\_festivals\\_and\\_their\\_contribution\\_to\\_culture\\_and\\_tourism](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316276474_The_potential_of_festivals_and_their_contribution_to_culture_and_tourism) [accessed Oct 17 2018].
- Sotiriadis, M., & Shen, S. (2017). The contribution of partnership and branding to destination management in a globalized context: The case of the UNWTO Silk Road Programme, *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 3(2):8-16.
- Van Niekerk, M. (2017). Contemporary issues in events, festivals and destination management. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 29(3), 842-847.
- Viktória, K. (2015). International And National Models Used For Measuring Festivals' Economic Impacts. *Ege Stratejik Arastirmalar Dergisi*, 4(1), 31-47. DOI: 10.18354/esam.81728
- Volgger, M., Pechlaner, H., & Pichler, S. (2017). The practice of destination governance: A comparative analysis of key dimensions and underlying concepts. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 3(1), pp. 18-24.

SUBMITTED: OCTOBER 2018

REVISION SUBMITTED: JANUARY 2019

ACCEPTED: FEBRUARY 2019

REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

PUBLISHED ONLINE: 15 APRIL 2019



# Traveler segmentation through social media for intercultural marketing purposes: The case of Halkidiki

**Eleni Mavragani**

International Hellenic University, Greece

**Paraskevi Nikolaidou**

International Hellenic University, Greece

**Efi Theodoraki**

International Hellenic University, Greece

## Abstract

**Purpose:** This paper aims to present a methodology for the segmentation of travelers by studying social media profiles and extracting information on their preferences and demographic traits. In this context, the purpose of the research is to match the social media content posted by the visitors of Halkidiki with the cultural characteristics of the individual users who uploaded it onto their profiles.

**Methods:** Through the study of the sample's social media profiles (Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter), information about travelers' demographics and preferences are combined for the segmentation of the tourists visiting a specific Greek region. 272 social media profiles were studied; a number of hashtags were used as a search query for the identification of the user profiles.

**Results:** From the analysis of the data, 10 preference-based segments occur, while the cultural-based division corresponds to the main national groups visiting the region. Findings demonstrate how social media data can be utilized in a constructive way for consumer segmentation and the formulation of highly targeted marketing strategies.

**Implications:** The findings of this study demonstrate the way in which social media can be utilized for the segmentation of travelers based on behavioral and cultural traits. Through this process, firms can detect the preferences of various cultural groups and use this information for the application of distinct intercultural marketing activities to each separate segment.

**Keywords:** customer segmentation, customer profiling, digital marketing, social media, intercultural marketing

**JEL Classification:** M3, M31, Z33

**Biographical note:** Eleni Mavragani (mavraganie@gmail.com) is lecturer at the International Hellenic University. She has published in several journals and her interests include, services marketing and tourism. Evi Nikolaidou holds an MSc in Hospitality and Tourism Management. She is highly experienced in the fields of hotel management, international sales and working in multicultural environments. Efi Theodoraki holds an MSc in Hospitality and Tourism Management and an MA in Art, Law and Economy. Her working experience is specialized in the hotel industry in the fields of design and creation. Corresponding author: Eleni Mavragani (mavraganie@gmail.com)

## 1 INTRODUCTION

In the era of digital technology, communication and relationship building between businesses and consumers is becoming more and more vital. On the one hand, consumers are now able to actively generate content and share their preferences, wants and feedback directly with the firm, while, on the other, businesses can actively engage with consumers (Amaro, et al., 2016), address their needs based on the acquired information, and offer them customized experiences and personalization to almost the full extent. Especially with

the use of social media, key data for the identification of a firm's target audience is now available publicly (Mitrou, et al., 2017), thus facilitating not only accurate customer profiling, but also making it an essential process for businesses decision making (Xiang, et al., 2015) and creating opportunities to stand out from competitors. Among the plethora of industries affected by this digital revolution, the hospitality industry has been no exception. Through the use of websites, social media and mobile technologies, travelers have acquired new channels for the distribution of their tourism experiences and narratives (Munar & Jacobsen,



2014), along with the opportunity to actively participate in the development, rating and improvement of the tourism providers (Sotiriadis, 2017). For the utilization of such information, many customer profiling methods have been used from hospitality firms, in an attempt to segment their target audience mostly on the basis of demographic characteristics, such as age, gender, or country of origin. Such models, however, marginalize the importance of qualitative data, context and behavioral characteristics, all of which could offer firms a better understanding of the unexplored online tourist personality (Amaro, et al., 2016), as well as insights to more accurate traveler profiling. In this context, the purpose of the research is to match the social media content posted by the visitors of Halkidiki with the cultural characteristics of the individual users who uploaded it onto their profiles. The data derived from this process provides a set of criteria for audience segmentation, based on cultural characteristics, preferences and demographic traits. Through the analysis of content available on three main social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), a total of ten (10) segments are generated, all of which assist the division of the target audience into smaller preference-based groups. Additionally, the preference-based model was combined with a cultural-based division of the target group, a process which offers crucial information for the formulation of niche marketing strategies for each cultural sub-group. All in all, this study, which is one of the few that takes place in the region of Halkidiki, aims to suggest a segmentation methodology which focuses more on the sentiment of the target audience, utilizes social media as a tool for consumer segmentation, and attempts to link the cultural background of each national group with their holiday activity preferences.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The Importance of Segmentation in the Hospitality Industry

The hospitality industry has long relied on segmentation of consumers, in order to conduct efficient tourism market research (Paker & Vural, 2016), fully comprehend travelers' needs and offer each customer the experience that best suits their needs. The majority of tourism firms apply a series of fundamental criteria for customer profiling, the most common of which include demographic, geographical, socio-economic and psychographic characteristics (Dolnicar, 2007). As a result of segmentation, businesses can form detailed profiles of their customers, thus achieving personalization, increasing their effectiveness and brand value, and generating positive feedback or even recommendations by current to potential consumers (Majid, et al., 2013). Moreover, segmentation limits competition to the segment level, since firms focus only on the target groups of their interest rather than the whole market, and hence strive for the improvement of the hospitality products they offer (Birdir, 2015). Accurate customer profiling also benefits the marketing activities of firms, by allowing marketing teams to focus on the creation of innovative messages, as well as their effective distribution through the most appropriate channels.

Combined with the provision of high-quality services, segmentation allows for the generation of positive word-of-mouth and its circulation among the members of each particular segment.

### 2.2 Current Tourist Segmentation Methods

In the academic literature of hospitality studies, many attempts have been made for the effective categorization of consumers into specific target groups. With respect to methodology, "a priori" and "post-hoc" constitute the main approaches during the process of market segmentation. The former refers to the choice of variables at an initial stage, followed by the classification of the target market, while the latter operates through the collection of data, on the basis of interrelated variables, before the individuals are segmented into groups with high internal similarities (Paker & Vural, 2016). Regarding the segmentation variables, the first and most common type of consumer grouping is described by Dolnicar (Dolnicar, 2007) as that of "common-sense segmentation". The main characteristic of this model can be identified as the inclusion of strictly demographic criteria. Personal characteristics acquire the most important role, and the selection of attributes is based mainly on experience gained from relationships with the local market or from practical considerations (Dolnicar, 2007). For instance, age, gender, language and country of origin are often chosen by hospitality firms for the division of clients into groups of interest, thus leading to the formation of distinct strategies for each segment. In an attempt to move away from these basic attributes, contemporary hospitality businesses have gradually begun to include behavioral characteristics, such as purposes of travel (Sarin, 2015) or even psychographic parameters, such as their need for independence or security (Prince, 2017), or even the effect of destination popularity on their final holiday choice (Cruz-Milán, 2017).

Despite its contribution to the traveler segmentation process, the commonsensical approach has often been criticized as simplistic, arbitrary and descriptive (Dolnicar, 2007), thus surfacing the need for the utilization of sophisticated statistical techniques. This realization has led to the rise of data-driven segmentation based on the development of algorithms for more accurate final results. In the academic research of traveler segmentation, clustering appears to be the most common algorithm of choice. The use of this method is illustrated in Amaro's research for the identification of traveler segments based on their level of social media usage (Amaro, et al., 2016). Currently, data-driven segmentation is continuously expanding, especially through the assistance of information technologies such as web crawling, computational linguistics, machine learning and other statistical techniques for the collection and analysis of big data (Xiang, et al., 2017). In this direction, Majid proposed an innovative method for utilizing the content of geotagged social media images, in order to infer semantically meaningful tourism destination data and ultimately utilize this information for the recommendation of each destination to matching tourist profiles (Majid, et al., 2013). However, according to Wong, research in the field of geotagging still remains at an early stage, since it focuses mainly on the technical aspects of the development of new software and

data analysis methodologies (Wong, et al., 2017) rather than on the content itself.

Overall, on the one hand, data-driven segmentation can be combined with a common-sense approach for a more in-depth analysis of demographic segments. On the other hand, any data-driven segmentation research requires repetition of studies on a regular basis, in order to identify alterations among and within groups that may provide insights for tourism firms. A significant addition for the development of an even better-rounded traveler segmentation methodology can be the inclusion of the preference and cultural aspects in the analysis of the provided data. Such an approach is suggested in following sections of this paper.

### *2.3 Use of Social Media by Travelers*

Social media have become an integral part of consumers' everyday lives by allowing them to create and share content instantly online with fellow users. This constantly growing trend has also had a significant impact on the hospitality sector, especially through the emergence and growth of numerous tourism-dedicated social platforms (Mkono & Tribe, 2017). Due to the intangible nature of the tourism sector products (Ip, et al., 2010), where imagery and storytelling play an important role in destination branding, hospitality firms "are more susceptible to social media conversations and stories" (Lund, et al., 2018, p. 272). Moreover, with the exception of content generated by hospitality brands, the majority of user-generated content available on social media is perceived as "informal (or personal)" (Kourouthanassis, et al., 2017) and, thus, unbiased and trustworthy (Lai & To, 2015; Christou, 2015; Narangajavana, et al., 2017). Even before traveling to their destination, holidaymakers use social media as a source of information for effective decision making (Hays, et al., 2013), due to their accessibility, ease-of-use, and direct communication options for interconnecting with other users. This activity leads to the reduction of uncertainty and creates the perception of an improved decision-making process (Hwang, et al., 2013). It is characteristic that a vast amount of results during online tourism information searches derive from social media (Ho, et al., 2012). The effectiveness of social media on travelers decisions can be illustrated in Leung's study of Facebook and Twitter in the hotel industry (Leung, et al., 2013), according to which consumers' attitudes towards a firm's social media page has an impact on his/her disposition towards the brand, and, ultimately, affects booking decisions. Furthermore, while on holiday and after their departure, travelers remain active on social platforms by uploading images of their experiences, rating services or offering holiday recommendations to other online users (Mkono & Tribe, 2017). More specifically, during their vacation, travelers tend to replace information searching with content creation and sharing, while, after the end of their holiday, posting of comments, recommendations and reviews becomes also a popular activity. All of these activities can be utilized by firms, in order to create a two-way flow of communication with consumers and increase their engagement with the brand. This engagement is described by So (So, et al., 2012) through the five dimensions of enthusiasm, attention, absorption, interaction and

identification. These dimensions range from simple interest in a brand activity to the formation of a relationship with the brand on the basis of matching with the customer's self-image (Revilla-Hernández et al, 2016; Harrigan, et al., 2017).

### *2.4 Intercultural Marketing for Tourism through Social Media*

Intercultural marketing or multicultural marketing can be defined as the practice of a targeted marketing strategy, which focuses on one or more audiences of a specific nationality, usually different from the culture that is dominant in the firm's country of origin. The essence of intercultural marketing lies in the exploitation of the elements which characterize another culture, in order to facilitate the communication process and, ultimately, lead to the formation of a business relationship between the two parties. Due to the nature of the industry, tourism-based organizations and their clients are the main participants in the process of cross-cultural communication. Furthermore, effective communication, clear understanding and adaptation to the client's wants and preferences are vital for the creation of a unique holiday experience (Albu, 2015; Misirlis et al., 2018). For the application of intercultural marketing, firms require the possession of "culturally intelligent" personnel. These individuals must be able to adapt to the culture of the target country, and identify the differences in terms of perceptions, motives and beliefs of customers, and reflect these cultural traits in their marketing strategies (Samo, 2014; Chatzigeorgiou, 2017). This requires the expression of their genuine interest for the target culture, along with the ability to capitalize on common elements and existing similarities and ultimately achieve the optimal balance between cultural adaptation and product or service standardization. However, with the development of digital technology, social media platforms can assist firms in their attempt to apply intercultural marketing practices. Social media has permitted businesses to appeal to their customers on emotional grounds through innovative and highly targeted campaigns. In other words, "business can build such emotional relations with their customers based on the mutual interaction in the online community" (Copuš & Čarnogurský, 2017, p. 190). This, of course, requires in-depth knowledge of the target group's culture (Zafiropoulos, 2015; Samo, 2014), in order to appeal to its members in an effective way and arouse positive emotions. Firms can also gain important insights directly from their customers and help them comprehend their needs (Copuš & Čarnogurský, 2017). Finally, through the application of intercultural marketing principles, market research is easier to conduct, while information on the particularities of each national market can be derived directly from relative sources, so as to incorporate them in the firm's strategy for each cultural group. Hence, in the era of social media, marketing experts have a unique opportunity to experiment with intercultural communication principles to an even greater extent.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The collection of the data took place over a period of 4 months, from the beginning of July to the end of October 2017. This specific time frame was chosen based on the fact that these four months constitute the main holiday period for the region of Halkidiki, with July and August as the peak and September and October as the calmer months of the tourist season. The choice of the destination occurred due to the fact that, in the region of Northern Greece, Halkidiki is considered to be the most popular tourist destination, both for foreign visitors and residents of neighbouring metropolitan areas. Moreover, in contrast to more advertised touristic regions of Greece, such as the Aegean Islands or Crete, Halkidiki is an area which has not been included in many academic studies in the field of hospitality. Hence, this paper offered an opportunity for such a research to take place and lay the ground for its further expansion in the future.

For the collection and examination of the research data, 272 social media profiles were studied, so as to pinpoint the characteristics of the tourists visiting the area of interest. The sample was based on the selection of random profiles from the social media platforms of Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. These social media platforms were selected on the basis of popularity among users, rich imagery, as well as the inclusion of hashtags as tools for the categorization of uploaded content. More specifically, a number of hashtags were used as a search query for the identification of the user profiles that included these tags in their posts from the previous summer season. Due to the large diversity of activities and holiday options available in Halkidiki, a wide range of tourism-related keywords were applicable. Furthermore, the name of the region itself appeared in different spelling forms (#halkidiki, #chalkidiki, #khalkhidiki, and even #halhidiki in cases of misspelling). Another important methodological issue was the inclusion of all the sub-regions of Halkidiki, in order to collect additional content made publicly available by the participants included in the sample.

In terms of format, both images and video were taken into consideration and studied by the researches. In cases where multiple tourism preferences were presented within a single picture, only the most predominant one was taken into consideration, and, for users posting photographs with similar content, only one image out of each particular group was selected by the researchers, so as to avoid biases towards certain themes. Content created by tourism-based businesses was excluded from the research, so as to distinguish between original, user-generated content and promotional material which could alternate the final result of the study and lead to false conclusions. However, social media content posted by influencers was also included in the sample, due to the fact that such personalities create marketing trends within the industry. Moreover, apart from social media posts uploaded during the summer period, the “throwback” theme was also a part of the research material, based on the fact that many users present their positive memories, experiences and their nostalgia for their vacation by posting content created in the past.

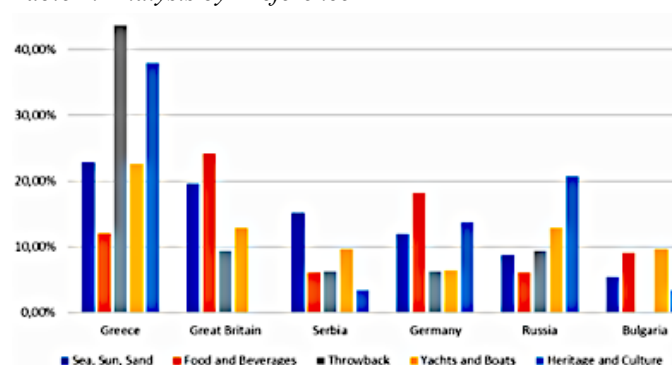
After the collection of the data, all of the 272 social media profiles selected were analyzed through the methodological

approach of content analysis. This type of analysis was selected due to the emphasis of the study on sentiment and culture on the one hand, and due to the lack of algorithm-based analytics tools on the other. Content analysis allowed the researches to carefully examine the imagery and linguistic terms used in the sample posts and extract the qualitative data that represents the culture and preferences of the users participating in the study. Regarding the content per se, the main sources of data included the photographs uploaded from these profiles on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, along with any existing text which accompanied these images. The combination of these two elements provided the researches with data regarding the cultural background of the user, the selected holiday destination, preferences, possible likes and dislikes, and any other information which could facilitate the formation of a future personalized social media marketing campaign. More specifically, image background, surroundings, items, food, clothing and other elements related to specific locations were taken into account, along with the language and expressions used by the participants in the images. Another important factor included in this particular content analysis was the attitude and dispositions expressed by the participants, to the degree of course that these could be comprehended through a single image.

### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before presenting the findings of this study, it is important to highlight the main national groups which visit the region of Halkidiki during the summer season. In contrast to Southern Greek resorts, the area is highly popular with visitors from the Balkan states, as well as Northern, Central and Eastern Europeans, while travelers from the Americas, Asia, Africa and Oceania are only beginning to become familiar with the region. The largest group of tourists derives from Germany, followed by Russians, British, Turks, Serbians, Romanians and Bulgarians. All of these ethnic groups appear in the findings of the study, after being segmented on the basis of their holiday preferences.

Table 1. Analysis by Preference



With the exception of the destination parameter, all other elements were taken into account and combined with the availability of data for the creation of distinct preference-based segments by the researchers. Based on the popularity of each theme, the content and the context of the available user-generated posts, the categories formed were the

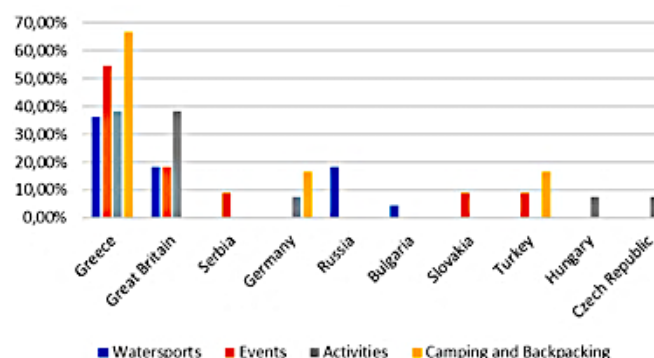
following ten (10): “Food and Beverages (F&B)”, “Heritage and Culture”, “Sea, Sun and Sand (3S)”, “Watersports”, “Activities”, “Events”, “Throwback”, “Yachts and Boats”, “Camping and Backpacking”, and “Experience”. Out of these categories, “Food and Beverages”, “Sea, Sun and Sand”, “Yachts and Boats” and “Watersports” included a variety of images, which often overlapped between two or more themes. However, the categorization took place based not only on the image itself, but also on the text which accompanied each one, thus facilitating the process of content segmentation. Furthermore, wedding ceremonies constituted the central theme of the “Events” category, while “Heritage and Culture” was also expanded to pilgrimage tourism, depending on the religious sentiment and motivation behind each traveler’s visit. The “Throwback” category included clubbing, live concerts or any kind of activity related to past experiences and happy, even nostalgic, memories. In contrast to the “Throwback” theme, “Experiences” concerned mostly images of special interests taken during the individual person’s travels. Also, since Halkidiki is considered to be primarily a summer destination, the “Activities” category was limited mainly to outdoor activities, including table tennis, golf, hiking, bicycle, horseback riding, and fishing. Finally, since the summer season of Halkidiki offers mostly leisure options, the concept of Business Tourism was excluded from this research. This can be attributed mainly due to the lack of data available in the summer months, as well as the increase of business or conference travelers during the autumn and winter months, a period which not included in this specific study’s timeframe. Out of the total number of segments formed during the study, “Sea, Sun and Sand” appears to include the majority of social profiles, since it has both the highest number of posts and the largest diversity among the nationality of participating users. Aside from the Greek posts, most content posted on social media which was relevant to this category derived from tourists from Great Britain (19,57%). Travelers from Serbia follow (15,22%), along with German visitors (11,96%) and Russians (8,70%). The rest of the results are made up of smaller groups of different nationalities, including Central and Eastern Europeans, Asians, as well as a small minority from the United States and Africa. The second largest segment is that of “Food and Beverages”, with the majority of culinary-related content uploaded by British tourists (24,2%) depicting mainly local delicacies and alcoholic beverages such as local wine. German tourists come in second (18,18%), while, apart from the Greeks (12,12%), Bulgarians, Serbians and Russians also share their food-related content on social media (9,09%, 6,06% and 6,06% respectively).

The “Throwback” theme constitutes the third largest preference-based segment. In this particular case, it is the Greek profiles which have the most relevant activity, since almost half of the content examined in the sample is produced by Greek travelers (43,75%). However, it is important to stress that these social media users are not exclusively national Greeks, since many of the posts derive from Greek diaspora. Russian and British tourists also post content related to the “Throwback” theme (9,38% respectively), followed by Germans and Serbians (6,25% respectively). The results are completed by other national groups, the majority

of which derive from Europe. The “Yachts and Boats” segment comes in fourth. Excluding the Greeks, this category is highly popular among Russians and British (12,9% respectively), followed the Serbians and Bulgarians (9,68%) and by members of Northern European states (6,45% each). Images of luxury cruises and tours around the region of Mount Athos are highly popular within the sample of this category, due mostly to the religious affinity of Russian tourists with this monastic area. Moreover, much of the content included in this category presents elements of other themes of the research, such as watersports or unique experiences.

Furthermore, the “Heritage and Culture” segment appears to be popular among the nationalities which show an interest in historical monuments and participate in sightseeing activities. From the non-Greek national groups, the largest number of posts derives from users of Russian origin (20,69%). For this particular group, the content of this category can also be expanded to the pilgrimage concept, since many of the travelers visit the area in order to pay their religious respect to the monasteries of their choice. The second group exhibiting high interest for cultural tourism is that of German tourists (13,79%). On the contrary, tourists from the Balkan region and Central Europe show limited or no interest at all, since many countries did not provide any data related to this category. Moreover, like “Yachts and Boats”, “Watersports” is another segment directly related to the concept of sea, sun and sand tourism. Again, with the exception of Greek tourists, Russians and British visitors exhibit the most interest in activities of this nature (18,18% each). These two groups make up one third of the sample, while the remaining ethnicities include travelers mainly from the Balkan region, as well as the Mediterranean. The preference of both Russian and British tourists towards watersports could be explained by the high cost of such activities, since they require an increased budget in comparison to more relaxing options such as sunbathing or swimming.

Table 2. Analysis by Preference

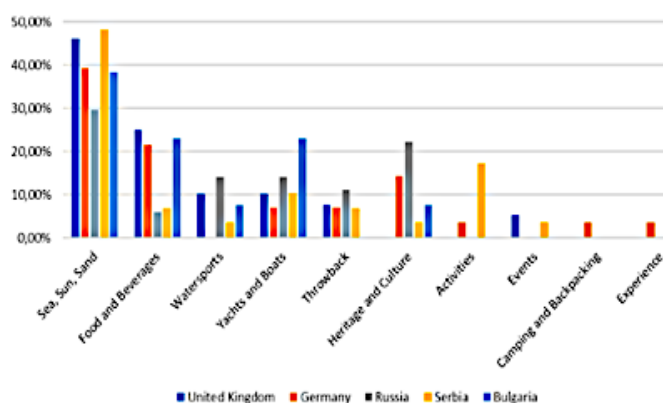


With respect to “Events”, it appears that Greek tourists generate the majority of online content related to this category (54,55%). Nevertheless, just like the “Throwback” theme, a large amount of profiles belongs to Greeks of the diaspora or even foreign nationals married to Greeks, the events of which take place in the region of Halkidiki. British visitors come in second (18,18%), followed by Serbian, Slovak and Turkish tourists (9,09% each). For all

nationalities, the main theme of their uploaded content concerns weddings, since many travelers choose to perform their wedding ceremony in the peninsula of Halkidiki. Also, many visitors combine their wedding reception with their honeymoon trip, thus posting them both online during their visit to the area.

In contrast to the previous content categories, “Activities” is the only one where the majority of non-Greek surveyed profiles derives from Serbia (38,46%). The percentage of profiles is equal to those of Greek travelers, and the remaining content is generated by tourists from Central Europe (Germany, Czech Republic and Hungary, with 7,69% each). Furthermore, regarding the “Camping and Backpacking” segment, the majority of content is uploaded by Greeks (66,67%), followed by travelers from Turkey and Germany (16,67% each). These results could be attributed to the lack of content related directly to camping and its equipment, the non-participation of camping enthusiasts on social media or even the unavailability of public content. Finally, the lowest number of uploads are related to the “Experience” category. Only a limited number of profiles generated such content, mainly from the countries of France, Germany and Greece. Unfortunately, the amount of data does not provide a clear image of the preferences of foreign travelers with respect to these unique experiences. Nevertheless, they could be better utilized in the future for marketing purposes, especially for tourists from Western Europe, which are the only national group participating in the category

Table 3. Analysis by Nationality



In the second stage of the analysis, the preference-based model was combined with a cultural-based approach, in order to match social media content to attributes of national groups and extract insightful information for the formation of separate intercultural marketing strategies. A wide variety of ethnicities were involved in process, mainly from the target markets of Halkidiki's tourism industry. These include Greece, the United Kingdom, Germany, Bulgaria, Serbia, Russia, the U.S., Switzerland, Italy, France, China, Slovakia, Poland, Romania, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Sweden and many more. However, due to the small number of representatives from certain states, only the most predominant nationalities are presented in the results, followed by trends that appear among a number of groups with common cultural backgrounds, such as Northern Europe

or the Eastern European states. The selection of the categories and the target-market tourism groups were decided based on two main factors. The first was the availability of tourism-related activities combined with the main national groups visiting the region. Details on both were provided by publicly available information from destination management organizations (DMOs) of Halkidiki, as well as from interviews with key officials of the region's industry. The second factor was the data provided by previous similar studies, which aimed to identify the profile of the area's visitor's and improve Halkidiki in ways that meet their individual needs (Marits, 2013).

For tourists from the United Kingdom, the majority of uploaded content (46,15%) refers to the model of “Sea, Sun and Sand” tourism. Food and beverages are also an important aspect of their holiday (20,51%), followed by sports that take place in the sea, such as various watersports and sailing (10,26% each), while only a small amount of the content belongs to the “Throwback” category (7,69%). Finally, the interest of British tourists towards events seems to be rather limited (5,13%), while the variation of the content is also low, since it mainly refers to wedding receptions and honeymoon trips. In contrast to the British, German tourists present a higher variety in terms of social media content and holiday activity preferences. Although both the “Sea, Sun and Sand” and the “Food and Beverage” segments remain in the top two (39,29% and 21,43% respectively), visitors from Germany also appear to enjoy more outdoor activities and sports. More specifically, the “Heritage and Culture” theme (14,29%) is the third most popular among German travelers, followed by “Yachts and Boats” and “Throwback” (7,14% each). Finally, camping, hiking, cycling, golfing, horseback riding and many more activities (3,57%) also attract their interest, along with their desire for unique experiences (3,57%).

With respect to visitors from Russia, the themes included in their social media content appear to be more normally distributed, since there is not a single category that represents more than 30% of the sample. Again, the “Sea, Sun and Sand” theme comes in first (29,63%), while “Heritage and Culture” is the second most popular type of tourism (22,22%). Furthermore, Russian tourists appear to enjoy their vacation by the sea, engaging in watersport and sailing activities (14,81%). Members of this cultural group also share their holiday memories online through “Throwback” content (11,11%), while the low amount of content relevant to the “Food and Beverage” category is not considered a surprise, taking into account their increased budget spending for other goods, rather than food and beverages.

In turn, Serbian tourists exhibit a clear preference towards the “Sea, Sun and Sand” model, since the majority of the content belongs to this category (48,28%). Affordable activities such as walking tours or swimming, are the second most popular option (17,24%), followed by “Yachts and Boats” (10,34%). “Food and Beverages” are not a priority for visitors from this national group (6,90%), while only a small amount posts content related to past holiday experiences (6,90%). Finally, “Heritage and Culture”, “Watersports” and “Events” (3,45% respectively) constitute a small percentage of online content, due to the fact that Serbian travelers would rather enjoy a relaxing holiday than engage in such activities. Finally, despite the small amount of data gathered, the preferences of

Bulgarian visitors can be depicted rather clearly from the research. Once more, “Sea, Sun and Sand” dominates this national group’s online content (38,46%), while “Food and Beverages” and “Yachts and Boats” follow (23,08% each). The presence of the “Heritage and Culture” theme can be attributed to the religious affinity towards the monasteries of Mount Athos (7,69%). Nevertheless, this does not apply to the same extent as it does to the case of the Russian tourists. “Watersports” are also a holiday activity selected by Bulgarian visitors (7,69%), due to their link to both the “Sea, Sun and Sand” tourism and the “Yachts and Boats” category.

## 5 DISCUSSION

The analysis above shows how social media data can be utilized in a constructive way for consumer segmentation and the formulation of highly targeted marketing strategies. In the case of this research, cultural attributes and personal preferences took on a more active role, since they became the main focus point for the creation of the 10 preference-based segments. Apart from its methodological contribution, this research also offers valuable insight into the preferences of the tourist groups visiting Halkidiki, and, hence, this information could be effectively used by both the academic and the business liaisons affiliated with the region. Based on the data from the research, without exception, all tourist groups select Halkidiki as their holiday destination, due to the combination of sea, sand and sun. Western Europeans allocate a significant amount of their budget on entertainment activities, food and local experiences. Outdoor activities are important for German visitors and Central Europeans, while travelers from the Balkans prefer more relaxing options. The majority of such tourists also prefer to spend their budget on their accommodation or inexpensive outdoor activities. Russia and the Balkan states also express their religious affinity towards Mount Athos by visiting the monasteries either by land or via cruises around the peninsula. Finally, with respect to non-European tourists, the combination of sea, sand and sun appears to be their main motivation for their travels to Halkidiki, although more data is required for the full analysis of their traveler profiles.

In terms of value, this study adds resourceful insight to previous studies on tourism segmentation in Greece. So far, much attention has been given to specific sentimental factors involving decision-making processes, such as the impact of motivation on choosing a travel destination or preparing for a holiday (Assiouras, et al., 2015). However, just like most qualitative characteristics, motivation lacks a widely accepted conceptualization, and the segmentation following the research can be modeled arbitrarily (Alexandris, et al., 2009). Another similar qualitative characteristic is that of satisfaction, which has also been used in the academic literature for the study of tourist segmentation in different Greek resorts. Tsiotsou and Vasioti (Tsiotsou & Vasioti, 2006) use factor analysis and clustering for the study of “short-term” visitors of Greek winter resorts, thus attempting to quantify the level of satisfaction among visitors and segment them on this basis. Despite these fruitful efforts, the concept of social media as a segmentation tool is only starting to be explored in the Greek academic literature. Hence, the

research conducted in this paper aims to incorporate the digital tools of social media and combine the cultural attributes of the participants in the sample, thus providing the academic field of traveler segmentation in Greece with new elements for further research.

### Implications

The findings of this study demonstrate the way in which social media can be utilized for the segmentation of travelers based on behavioral and cultural traits. Through this process, firms can detect the preferences of various cultural groups and use this information for the application of distinct intercultural marketing activities to each separate segment. Hence, hospitality firms can develop highly structured buyer personas, devise complex targeted strategies and facilitate the process of meaningful engagement with online communities (Mkono & Tribe, 2017). However, segmentation cannot just occur once. The engagement and study of user profiles, the collection of data and the utilization of this new information for the update of existing segments is a necessary procedure, so as to not only improve the personalization process but also the digital presence of the firm in a user-centered manner (Ho, et al., 2012), along with the products and services offered. This procedure is necessary to be combined with a cultural and behavioral analysis of each firm’s current customers, so as to gather data for segmentation purposes from both offline and online sources. Furthermore, by applying the suggested model, customer service techniques can be upgraded to a new level, since any disputes or complaints can be resolved through the prism of intercultural communication and respect towards the user. A “culturally intelligent” firm with an accurately segmented audience will have the ability to offer suitable assistance to its online customers, learn more about them (Rosman & Stuhura, 2013), understand their wants and needs through the analysis of their social profiles and overall enhance the digital reputation of the company.

The adoption of this type of segmentation can be improved in a number of ways, so as to increase its effectiveness and offer new tourist profiling options to more hospitality businesses across the world. First, since no data analysis software was utilized for this research, future studies could include the use of data mining software on the one hand, in order to collect data faster, more accurately and more efficiently. On the other hand, sophisticated data analysis and statistical software could be utilized. For instance, the processing of complex data sets derived from social media posts could be implemented with the technique of visual analytics (Cheng & Edwards, 2015). Also, sentiment analysis software could be adopted, thus allowing researchers to acquire a better comprehension of travelers’ behavior, based on the plethora of information and ease of access offered by social media (Ibrahim, et al., 2017). Furthermore, hospitality industries could combine the data extracted from travelers social media accounts with the analytics from their own organic posts and paid advertising campaigns. This method could provide firms with a more well-rounded understanding of their current audience and similar ones that can be targeted. In every case, detailed checks for fake profiles or other harmful social media content are necessary to be made by hospitality firms, so as to engage with the proper audience and lead to the development of market intelligence (Xiang, et

al., 2017). Apart from the technological improvement of the method, firms can apply this mentality to their overall digital marketing strategy. For instance, collaborations with influencers which appeal to various segments could facilitate the promotion of the region to the markets of each target audience. Finally, businesses can always rely on feedback from customer satisfaction surveys along with social media content posted before, during and after the completion of their customer's visit, so as to continuously adapt their services to their customers.

## 6 CONCLUSION & RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Overall, this research attempts to present a methodological tool which combines the elements of culture and personal preferences with the digital tools of social media platforms. By collecting information from user profiles on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, and by examining the content available, valuable segmentation data is extracted and used for the division of the visitors of Halkidiki into 10 distinct groups.

Despite the useful information presented in this paper, a series of limitations created restrictions to the research process. First, due to the small market size of Halkidiki and its limited holiday season, the sample of the research was restricted to only 272 profiles, which were studied and analyzed under certain time constraints. Second, due to personal data policies that currently govern social media, only publicly available content was taken into consideration. Nevertheless, this process could have been conducted in a more precise fashion with the use of data mining software or other technological tools

## REFERENCES

- Albu, C., 2015. Intercultural Communication in Tourism. *Cross-Cultural Management Journal*, 18(1), pp. 7-14.
- Alexandris, K., Kouthouris, C., Funk, D. & Giovani, C., 2009. Segmenting Winter Sport Tourists by Motivation: The Case of Recreational Skiers. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 18(5), pp. 480-499.
- Amaro, S., Duarte, P. & Henriques, C., 2016. Travelers' use of social media: A clustering approach. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Volume 59, pp. 1-15.
- Anastasiou, M. & Bakali, M., 2014. Comparative Study of the Tourism Sector of the Prefectures of Pella and Halkidiki [Original Title: Συγκριτική Μελέτη στον Τουριστικό Τομέα των Ν. Πέλλας και Ν. Χαλκιδικής], Kavala: Technical Institute of Eastern Macedonia and Thrace.
- Assiouras, I., Skourtis, G., Koniordos, M. & A., A., 2015. Segmenting East Asian Tourists to Greece by Travel Motivation. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 20(12), pp. 1389-1410.
- Avdimiotis, S. & Tilikidou, I., 2017. Smart Tourism Development: The Case of Halkidiki. In: *Handbook of Research on Entrepreneurial Development and Innovation Within Smart Cities*. Hershey: IGI Global, pp. 491-513.
- Birdir, S., 2015. Segmentation of Tourist Using Demographic and Travel Characteristics: The Case of Istanbul. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 5(4), pp. 221-229.
- Chatzigeorgiou, C. (2017). Modelling the impact of social media influencers on behavioural intentions of millennials: The case of tourism in rural areas in Greece. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 3(2), 25-29. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1209125>
- Cheng, M. & Edwards, D., 2015. Social media in tourism: a visual analytic approach. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 18(11), pp. 1080-1087.
- Christou, E. (2015). Branding social media in the travel industry. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 175, pp. 607-614. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.12>
- Cohen, E., 1972. Toward a Sociology of International Tourism. *Social Research*, 39(1), pp. 164-182.
- Copuš, L. & Čarnogurský, K., 2017. Intercultural marketing: Culture and its influence on the efficiency of Facebook marketing. *Management & Marketing: Challenges for the Knowledge Society*, 12(2), pp. 189-207.
- Cruz-Milán, O., 2017. Plog's Model of Typologies of Tourists. In: L. Lowry, ed. *The SAGE International Encyclopedia of Travel and Tourism*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., pp. 954-956.
- Dolnicar, S., 2007. Market Segmentation in Tourism. In: *Tourism Management, Analysis, Behaviour and Strategy*. Cambridge: CABI, pp. 151-173.
- Fotis, J., B. D. & N., R., 2012. Social media use and impact during the holiday travel planning process. In: *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism*. Vienna: Springer-Verlag, pp. 13-24.
- Harrigan, P., Evers, U., Miles, M. & Daly, T., 2017. Customer engagement with tourism social media brands. *Tourism Management*, Volume 59, pp. 597-609.
- Hays, S., Page, S. & Buhalis, D., 2013. Social media as a destination marketing tool: its use by national tourism organisations. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 16(3), pp. 211-239.
- Ho, C., Lin, M. & Chen, H., 2012. Web users' behavioural patterns of tourism information search: From online to offline. *Tourism Management*, Volume 33, pp. 1468-1482.
- Hwang, Y., Jani, D. & Jeong, H., 2013. Analyzing international tourists' functional information needs: A comparative analysis of inquiries in an on-line travel forum. *Journal of Business Research*, Volume 66, pp. 700-705.
- Ibrahim, N., Wang, X. & Bourne, H., 2017. Exploring the effect of user engagement in online brand communities: Evidence from Twitter. *Computers in Human Behavior*, Volume 72, pp. 321-338.
- Ip, C., Lee, H. & Law, R., 2010. Profiling the Users of Travel Websites for Planning and Online Experience Sharing. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 36(3), pp. 418-426.
- Islam, J. & Rahman, Z., 2017. The impact of online brand community characteristics on customer engagement: An application of Stimulus-Organism-Response paradigm. *Telematics and Informatics*, Volume 34, pp. 96-109.
- Kamenidou, I. & Mamalis, S., 2015. Tourists' Destination Image of Halkidiki: A Segmentation Analysis. London, Kingston Business School.
- Kiráľová, A. & Pavličeka, A., 2015. Development of Social Media Strategies in Tourism Destination. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Volume 175, pp. 358-366.
- Kourouthanassis, P., Mikalef, P., Pappas, I. & Kostagiolas, P., 2017. Explaining travellers online information satisfaction: A complexity theory approach on information needs, barriers, sources and personal characteristics. *Information & Management*, Volume 54, pp. 814-824.
- Kritsiotakis, G., 2014. Intercultural Communication [Original title: Διαπολιτισμική Επικοινωνία]. Athens: Self-published.
- Lai, L. & To, W., 2015. Content analysis of social media: A grounded theory approach. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, Volume 16, pp. 138-152.

- Leung, D., Law, R., van Hoof, H. & Buhalis, D., 2013. Social Media in Tourism and Hospitality: A Literature Review. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(1-2), pp. 3-22.
- Leung, X., Bai, B. & Stahura, K., 2013. The Marketing Effectiveness of Social Media in the Hotel Industry: A Comparison of Facebook and Twitter. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 39(2), pp. 147-169.
- Lund, N., Cohen, S. & Scarles, C., 2018. The power of social media storytelling in destination branding. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, Volume 8, pp. 271-280.
- Majid, A. et al., 2013. A context-aware personalized travel recommendation system based on geotagged social media data mining. *International Journal of Geographical Information Science*, 27(4), pp. 662-684.
- Marits, J., 2013. How to Attract Tourists to Halkidiki: Destination Research, Helsinki: Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences.
- Misirlis, M., Lekakos, G. & Vlachopoulou, M. (2018). Associating Facebook Measurable Activities with Personality Traits: A Fuzzy Sets Approach. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 4(2), 10-16. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1490360>
- Mitrou, L., Kandias, M., Stavrou, V. & Gritzalis, D., 2017. Profiling online social networks users: an omniopicon. *International Journal of Social Network Mining*, 2(4), pp. 293-313.
- Mkono, M. & Tribe, J., 2017. Beyond Reviewing: Uncovering the Multiple Roles of Tourism Social Media Users. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56(3), pp. 287-298.
- Munar, A. & Jacobsen, J., 2014. Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media. *Tourism Management*, Volume 43, pp. 46-54.
- Narangajavana, Y., Fiol, L. & Tena, M., 2017. The influence of social media in creating expectations. An empirical study for a tourist destination. *Annals of Tourism Research*, Volume 65, pp. 60-70.
- Paker, N. & Vural, C., 2016. Customer segmentation for marinas: Evaluating marinas as destinations. *Tourism Management*, Volume 56, pp. 156-171.
- Papacharalambous, N., 2017. Marketing and Corporate Social Responsibility [Original Title: Μάρκετινγκ και Εταιρική Κοινωνική Ευθύνη]. [Online] Available at: <https://sites.google.com/site/corporatesocirespons88/diapolitismiko-marketin-nk> [Accessed 2 December 2017].
- Prince, S., 2017. Cohen's Model of Typologies of Tourists. In: L. Lowry, ed. *The SAGE International Encyclopedia of Travel and Tourism*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc, pp. 280-282.
- Revilla Hernández, M., Santana Talavera, A. & Parra López, E. (2016). Effects of co-creation in a tourism destination brand image through twitter. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 2(2), 3-10. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.376341>
- Rosman, R. & Stuhura, K., 2013. The Implications of Social Media on Customer Relationship Management and the Hospitality Industry. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, 14(3), pp. 18-26.
- Samo, O., 2014. *Intercultural Marketing: The Impact of Culture on the Marketing-Mix*, Wiesbaden: University of Applied Sciences Wiesbaden Rüsselsheim Geisenheim.
- Sarin, C., 2015. *Travelling the World: A Study on People's Travelling Habits*, Ylivieska: Centria University of Applied Sciences.
- So, K., King, C. & Sparks, B., 2012. Customer Engagement With Tourism Brands - Scale Development and Validation. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 38(3), pp. 304-329.
- Sotiriadis, M., 2017. Sharing tourism experiences in social media: A literature review. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality*, 29(1), pp. 179-225.
- Tasios, G., 2017. Interview with Gregory Tasios, President of the Hellenic Hotels Federation [Interview] (15 May 2017).
- Tsiotsou, R. & Vasioti, E., 2006. Satisfaction. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 20(1), pp. 61-73.
- Wong, E., Law, R. & Li, G., 2017. Reviewing Geotagging Research in Tourism. In: R. Schegg & B. Stangl, eds. *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2017 - Proceedings of the International Conference in Rome, Italy, January 24-26, 2017*. Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 43-58.
- Xianga, Z., Schwartzb, Z., Gerdes, J. & Uysala, M., 2015. What can big data and text analytics tell us about hotel guest experience and satisfaction? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Volume 44, pp. 120-130.
- Xiang, Z., Du, Q., Ma, Y. & Fan, W., 2017. A comparative analysis of major online review platforms: Implications for social media analytics in hospitality and tourism. *Tourism Management*, Volume 58, pp. 51-65.
- Zafiroopoulos, K., Vrana, V. & Antoniadis, K. (2015). Use of twitter and Facebook by top European museums. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 1(1), 16-24. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.376326>
- Zhang, J. & Marcussen, C., 2007. Tourist motivation, market segmentation and marketing strategies. *Nexø, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research*.

---

*SUBMITTED: JULY 2018*

*REVISION SUBMITTED: DECEMBER 2018*

*ACCEPTED: JANUARY 2019*

*REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY*

*PUBLISHED ONLINE: 15 APRIL 2019*



# Increasing clicks through advanced targeting: Applying the third-party seal model to airline advertising

**Daniel Murphy**  
Murphy College, Australia

## Abstract

**Purpose:** From five-star hotels and Michelin Star restaurants, few industries signal their quality and unique selling points through the use of third-party seals like tourism. However, despite using seals and certifications in advertising being widespread, little academic research has been conducted into their effectiveness. Through the running of campaigns on Facebook's Ad Manager for Indian airline Jet Airways, this study applies the Third-Party Seal Model to optimise campaign audiences to target the right prospects with the most effective message.

**Methods:** A Facebook ad campaign experiment was created for Indian private airline, Jet Airways. Five unique audiences were examined, utilising the ad targeting available through Facebook's Ads Manager; hypotheses regarding the impact of third-party seals on airline choice were developed and tested.

**Results:** Throughout the experiment, 115,781 impressions were delivered to 106,263 individuals across the five audiences. Based on findings, the validity of Third-Party Seal Model (TPSM) as a tool to predict the use of third-party seals as an approach likely to increase the probability of a purchase, has been confirmed through the online experiment.

**Implications:** The results of this experiment provide airline marketing and product managers with clear insights which can be directly applied to advertising campaigns. TPSM can be used by researchers to compare effectiveness of seals and to analyse existing online campaigns, providing recommendations for improvements at macro and micro levels

**Keywords:** third-party seal model, social media advertising, airline marketing, third-party seals, online advertising

**JEL Classification:** M37, L93

**Biographical note:** Daniel Murphy is the Founder of Murphy College and the Principal Marketing Automation Consultant at Australian technology firm Squiz. Corresponding author: Daniel Murphy (study@murphycollege.com)

## 1 INTRODUCTION

From five-star hotels and Michelin Star restaurants to airline of the year and world's best holiday destination, few industries signal their quality and unique selling points through the use of third-party seals like tourism. However, while the effectiveness of these seals and certifications has been debated for decades by academics, their use and ability to drive purchase intent has not been extensively studied within a tourism context.

This limited research has focused around three areas; providing trust to online purchasers, signalling minimum service quality, and indicating environmental impact, with experiments limited to travel websites, hotel ratings, and eco-tourism. Despite widespread industry use (for example Jet Airways, 2018; Rainforest Alliance, 2018; KLM, 2018), as

well as airline-specific seals available in market, to date there has been no research into the use of third-party seals and certifications by airlines in advertising and public relations communications.

To help bridge this gap and assist marketers effectively deploy marketing and advertising campaigns using third-party seals, this study seeks to apply the Third-Party Seal Model (Murphy, 2018), to a social media marketing campaign for Indian airline Jet Airways. The Third-Party Seal Model is the first academically published model which provides marketing managers with the ability to compare the effectiveness of third-party seals to each other and predict which are more likely to increase the probability of a purchase. While created through a review of past literature and the results of consumer surveys, this study will be the first field test of the Third-Party Seal Model in an advertising context.



Through the use of advanced targeting features available on Facebook's ad manager platform, a single creative message will be shown to five unique audiences representing the three stages of the Third-Party Seal Model. The results of this study will provide actionable insights for marketers and product managers within the airline and tourism industries including advanced targeting and messaging strategies which can be directly implemented within digital marketing campaigns.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Why Passengers Choose an Airline

Once heavily regulated and dominated by monopolies and oligopolies, the airline industry has seen significant change over the last half-a-century. Whereas once consumers were restricted in their options of where to fly and who to fly with, the industry has seen a move from value-added experience to pure commodity (Jarach, 2004), with it becoming increasingly difficult for airlines to differentiate in a competitive and saturated market (Pi and Huang, 2011). With this in mind, a number of researchers have sort to understand which factors most influence a traveller's choice of airline.

In their 2004 paper, Jarach suggested that traditional airline carriers develop a strategy around five key pillars. While not empirically researched, the pillars centre around a simple value proposition which predicts and meets customer needs through clear and consistent marketing communications. The best approach which airlines should take with their value proposition falls into three key categories according to research; price and perceived value (Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo, 2013; Park et al., 2006), service quality (Park et al., 2006), and customer loyalty and habit (Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo, 2013; Pi and Huang, 2011). Of these three, price and perceived value and service quality lend themselves most to the use of third-party seals in marketing and advertising messaging.

In their modelling of service quality and marketing variables on passenger intention to use an airline in the future, Park and colleagues (2006) reported that perceived price was found to have a negative effect on behavioural intentions and a positive effect on perceived value. Ultimately finding that passengers were more likely to fly with an airline and recommend it to others if the ticket price was low. Similarly, Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo (2013) found that price was the second highest predictor of online purchase intent for airline tickets behind habit.

Service quality has also been shown to be both a positive influence on perceived value, passenger satisfaction, and behavioural intentions (Park et al, 2006). Experienced service quality and the perceptions created by advertising messaging of these services also contributes to customer loyalty (Kim et al, 2016; Pi and Huang, 2011; Misirlis et al, 2018). In their survey of first-class passengers, Kim and colleagues (2016) reported that customer-centric innovativeness is a strong driver of brand loyalty for airlines, with perceived innovativeness derived from experiential dimensions of in-flight service designs including food, entertainment, physical

environment, and flight attendant performance/physical appearance.

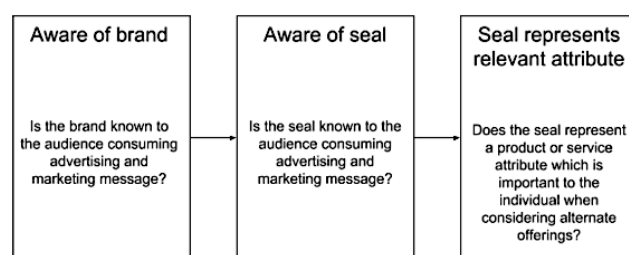
### 2.2 Third Party Seals and the Third-Party Seal Model

The granting of seals, certifications, and guarantees by organisations to products and services has been a longstanding practice since the start of the 20th century. The likes of the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval and Michelin Star are household names across the globe and considered by many consumers as indicators of quality. And since first being studied by Thomas Parkinson in 1975, many academics and researchers have sort to uncover whether this much-used marketing tactic is effective in driving purchase intent.

Results of this research has been mixed; from those finding seals to have a positive effect (for example Atkinson and Rosenthal, 2014; Bernard et al., 2015; Kamins and Marks, 1991), to those finding little or no impact (for example Hu et al., 2010; Kimery and McCord, 2006; McKnight et al., 2004; Chatzigeorgiou, 2017), and those finding results dependent on the circumstances (for example Caso et al., 2015; Orth and Krška, 2001; Viot, 2012; Christou, 2015).

In an attempt to increase the probability of third-party seals being an effective marketing tactic and product development strategy, the Third-Party Seal Model (TPSM) was developed as a guide for marketers and product managers (Murphy, 2018). Created using findings from past research and empirical results of two experiments, the TPSM (Fig. 1) recommends that third-party seals are most effective when the advertising brand is known to the consumer, the third-party seal is known to the consumer, and the seal represents an important consideration attribute for the product or service. For seals to be most effective and to influence purchase intent, the TPSM suggests that all three of these model stages must be passed by the message recipient (Murphy, 2018).

Figure 1. The Third-Party Seal Model



This study represents the first published test of the TPSM within a live advertising campaign. As such, the following hypothesis will be tested based on the model within an airline context to both validate the TPSM, and provide actionable advice for managers based on known key selling points:

*H1: Advertisements shown to an audience who knows the brand are more likely to be clicked than those who do not know the brand.*

*H2: Advertisements shown to an audience who knows the third-party seal are more likely to be clicked than those who do not know the third-party seal.*

*H3: Advertisements shown to an audience to whom the third-party seal represents an important decision-making attribute are more likely to be clicked than those for which it doesn't.*

*H4: Advertisements shown to an audience who knows the brand, the third-party seal, and to whom the third-party seal represents an important decision-making attribute are more likely to be clicked than those who don't and for which it doesn't.*

### 2.3 Research of Third-Party Seals in Airline and Tourism Marketing

While both price and service quality would seem to be ideal attributes which can be easily communicated through the use of third-party seals, little research has been conducted into their use specifically within the airline industry. Within the tourism industry as a whole, research into third-party seals generally focuses around three areas; providing trust to online purchasers, signalling minimum service quality, and indicating environmental impact.

In a 2015 study, Ponte et al investigated the use of trust seals such as TRUSTe, VeriSign, and BBBOnline as part of a wider model for online purchase intention for travel websites based on perceived value, trust, and the antecedents of perceived security and privacy. The team propose that consumers' perceived security of websites for shopping for travel depends on eight variables which include the display of third-party assurance seals on the website, the understanding of the seals, and the general disposition to trust the perception of third-party certification. These results are not dissimilar to other research results (see Murphy, 2018), or the Third-Party Seal Model. However, interestingly, in their similar study of consumer's trust toward online travel websites, Agag and El-Masry (2017) did not explicitly investigate the use of third-party seals.

The rating of hotels by third parties is a long-standing practice in the industry. However, according to Caso et al (2015), their impact may not be as significant as managers would hope. From their study of consumers through a questionnaire, they reported that although quality certifications help to decrease tourists' perceived risk, they suffer from an awareness problem. For involved decision-makers, quality certification is an important, but not determinant, selection criterion. Alternatively, when tourists have less time for travel planning, certifications suffer from awareness limitations and rely on more familiar signals such as brand name or price. These results are somewhat explained by Lockyer and Roberts (2009), who suggest that the longer a guest stays in a motel, the more important higher levels of comfort and "enhancers" are.

Like price and service quality, the environmental benefits and impact of travel providers and services can easily be communicated through the use of third-party seals. However, while eco-tourism and environmental considerations have been shown to be positive attributes for some consumers (Chia-Jung and Pei-Chun, 2014; Verma and Chandra, 2016; Verma and Chandra, 2018), like all other industries, the effect of signalling this through the use of third-party seals has been shown to be product and consumer depended (Esparon et al, 2014; Zafiroopoulos et al, 2015).

### 2.4 The Use of Third-Party Seals in Airline Marketing

While not previously studied in an academic context, the use of third-party seals and certifications in advertising and public relations communications by airlines is a widespread industry practice. From the self-awarded "Best Price Promise" from India's Jet Airways (Jet Airways, 2018) to Asiana Airline's use of Rainforest Alliance Certified coffee (Rainforest Alliance, 2018) and KLM's proud promotion of winning three 2018 TripAdvisor Traveller's Choice Awards (KLM, 2018), airlines the world over use third-party seals in a variety of applications.

A number of well-known organisations grant third-party seals specifically to the airline industry (see Appendix 1). In particular, these seals provide airlines with the ability to signal their service quality and value for money in comparison to other airlines; two of the three most important factors in driving purchase intent. Of the granting organisations, TripAdvisor seemingly has the greatest recognition among consumers, with 6,275,551 Facebook followers compared to the next highest, Air Help, with 643,662, and as the most-visited travel site in the world (TripAdvisor, 2018). The low following of industry and media recognised seals such as Skytrax (92,306 followers) is in line with past research which suggests that many third-party seals have a recognition problem (Dam and Reuvekamp, 1995; Norberg, 2000).

---

## 3 TESTING THE THIRD-PARTY SEAL MODEL

---

With well-followed third-party seals which signify important purchase intent factors, air travel is an ideal industry to test the effectiveness of the TPSM. Digital marketing platforms, specifically Facebook's Ad Manager also provide the opportunity to categorise with some certainty a consumer's fit as the ideal recipient for messages according to the TPSM. To test the effectiveness of the TPSM in an advertising context, social media display advertisements will be shown through Facebook's display network to unique audiences to test the aforementioned hypothesis.

### 3.1 Research Design and Method

As part of an affiliate marketing program, a Facebook ad campaign was created for Indian private airline, Jet Airways. Jet Airways was chosen for the experiment due to the engagement with the author for marketing activities, as well as its size, brand awareness, and receipt of third-party seals. With 14.2% market share of the Indian domestic air travel in the first half of 2018 (Directorate General of Civil Aviation, 2018), Jet Airways is the second largest domestic airline in India. Jet Airways was also the winner of the 2017 TripAdvisor Traveller's Choice Indian Airline of the Year, providing the opportunity to use the best-known airline-related third-party seal within the advertising creative.

Figure 2. Advertising creative used in campaign



Run between the 7th and 29th of August 2018, the same ad creative (Figure 2), was shown to five unique audiences. Utilising the ad targeting available through Facebook's Ads Manager, the audiences were created to be unique and not overlap, as well as match the stages of the TPSM as closely as possible (Table 1). While it is impossible to know with certainty whether an audience member is aware of the brand (Jet Airways), the third-party organisation and their seal (TripAdvisor Traveller's Choice) and whether it represents an important decision-making attribute, the audiences do reasonably increase the probability of this being, or not being the case where relevant.

Table 1. Audiences used in the experiment

Audience	Audience 1	Audience 2	Audience 3	Audience 4	Audience 5
Demographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located in India</li> <li>Aged 18 to 60</li> <li>English speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located in India</li> <li>Aged 18 to 60</li> <li>English speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located in India</li> <li>Aged 18 to 60</li> <li>English speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located in India</li> <li>Aged 18 to 60</li> <li>English speaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located in India</li> <li>Aged 18 to 60</li> <li>English speaking</li> </ul>
Included interests/likes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in travel</li> <li>Fan of Jet Airways</li> <li>Fan of TripAdvisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in travel</li> <li>Fan of Jet Airways</li> <li>Fan of TripAdvisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in travel</li> <li>Fan of Jet Airways</li> <li>Fan of TripAdvisor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in travel</li> <li>Fan of Jet Airways</li> <li>Fan of TripAdvisor</li> </ul>
Excluded interests/likes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interest in travel</li> <li>Fan of Jet Airways</li> <li>Fan of TripAdvisor</li> </ul>				
Assumptions about audience	Unlikely to be a regular traveller, does not know of Jet Airways or TripAdvisor	Regular traveller, may know of Jet Airways, may know of TripAdvisor, unlikely to use TripAdvisor or similar recommendation service when making purchase decision	Regular traveller, certainly knows Jet Airways, may know of TripAdvisor, unlikely to use TripAdvisor or similar recommendation service when making purchase decision	Regular traveller, may know of Jet Airways, certainly knows TripAdvisor, uses recommendation service when making purchase decision	Regular traveller, certainly knows Jet Airways, certainly knows TripAdvisor, uses recommendation service when making purchase decision

For the purposes of the experiment, Audience 1 will represent the control group by which all four hypotheses will be tested.

While this audience may be aware of the brand, third-party and seal, and see travel advice as an important decision-making factor, given they have not followed either Jet Airways or TripAdvisor, or indicated any interest in, or shown signs of travel, the risk of this being the case has been reduced as far as practically possible. To test whether the change in audience had an effect or not, a chi-square test will be completed for each hypothesis to find whether the p-value is significant (Biau et al., 2010; Kohavi and Longbotham, 2017).

#### 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Throughout the experiment, 115,781 impressions were delivered to 106,263 individuals across the five audiences, a valid sample size for an online experiment (Kohavi et al., 2014; Kohavi and Longbotham, 2017). Due to the size of the audiences and the auction-style bidding of the Facebook ad platform, each audience was served different numbers of ads with clicks varying from the most expensive cost of \$0.63 for Audience 5 to \$0.06 for Audience 4. Unsurprisingly given this result, Audience 4 received the most clicks of any audience with 176, despite having the lowest number of impressions.

Table 2. Results of experiment per audience

Audience	Audience 1	Audience 2	Audience 3	Audience 4	Audience 5
Impressions	20,427	35,988	41,096	7,379	10,206
Reach	20,303	35,200	40,504	6,526	4,088
Clicks	22	47	42	176	14
Click rate	0.0011	0.0013	0.0010	0.0238	0.0013
Cost per click	\$0.16	\$0.21	\$0.22	\$0.06	\$0.63

To test whether audience members who know the brand Jet Airways were more likely to click on the advertisement, the results of Audience 1 and the combination of Audience 3 and Audience 5 were compared. A chi-squared analysis did not show a significant difference between knowing the brand and not knowing the brand ( $\chi^2 = 0.026$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $P=0.8715$ ), therefore hypothesis one is rejected. While this may seem to also invalidate the TPSM, these results may be due to the importance of customer loyalty and habit in purchase intent (Escobar-Rodríguez and Carvajal-Trujillo, 2013; Pi and Huang, 2011). That is, those who are already aware of or are customers of Jet Airways will purchase tickets with the airline when needed and not when prompted by advertisements highlighting other drivers of purchase intent such as customer service and price.

To test whether audience members who know the third-party seal and to whom the third-party seal represents an important decision-making attribute were more likely to click on the advertisement, the results of Audience 1 and the combination of Audience 4 and Audience 5 were compared. A chi-squared analysis showed a significant difference between knowing the third-party seal and having it represent an important decision-making attribute and not knowing the third-party seal or having it represent an important decision-making attribute ( $\chi^2 = 163.281$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $P=0.0001$ ), therefore hypothesis two and three are accepted.

Finally, to test whether an audience who knows the brand, the third-party seal, and to whom the third-party seal represents an important decision-making attribute are more likely to be clicked than the control, the results of Audience 1 and Audience 5 were compared. A chi-squared analysis did not show a significant difference between knowing the brand, third-party seal and having it represent an important decision-making attribute and not knowing the brand, third-party seal or having it represent an important decision-making attribute ( $\chi^2 = 0.313$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $P=0.5761$ ), therefore hypothesis four is rejected. Like the test of hypothesis one, these results may be due to members of this audience already being customers, or aware of Jet Airways' price and service quality attributes, and therefore do not find the advertising messaging appealing. This theory can also be implied from the comparison of Audience 4 and Audience 5. Here, despite both audiences knowing the third-party seal and having it represent an important decision-making attribute, there was a significant difference between those who followed Jet Airways and those who didn't ( $\chi^2 = 202.488$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $P=0.0001$ ).

*Table 3. Results of hypothesis tests*

Hypothesis	Description	Result
H1	Advertisements shown to an audience who knows the brand are more likely to be clicked than those who do not know the brand.	Rejected
H2	Advertisements shown to an audience who knows the third-party seal are more likely to be clicked than those who do not know the third-party seal.	Accepted
H3	Advertisements shown to an audience to whom the third-party seal represents an important decision-making attribute are more likely to be clicked than those for which it doesn't.	Accepted
H4	Advertisements shown to an audience who knows the brand, the third-party seal, and to whom the third-party seal represents an important decision-making attribute are more likely to be clicked than those who don't and for which it doesn't.	Rejected

These results suggest that knowledge of a third-party seal, and having it represent an important decision-making attribute is the most influential component of the TSPM. However, to test this, further research would need to ensure that those in the control group have not heard of the brand prior to receiving marketing messages so therefore cannot be concluded from this study.

However, the significant results seen between those following TripAdvisor and those who don't has wide-ranging implications to the industry and may revolutionise the use of third-party seals in marketing and advertising materials. Indeed, if treated as a campaign promoted to 115,096 recipients, this study has shown that as little as 15% of the audience accounted for 63% of total clicks. By segmenting audiences and tailoring messages to only those who they will resonate with (see Conclusion and Managerial Implications for recommendations), significant budget can be saved while increasing campaign effectiveness.

## 5 CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of this experiment provide airline marketing and product managers with clear insights which can be directly

applied to advertising campaigns. While the rejection of hypothesis one and four would suggest that the TSPM is invalid, the sheer size and brand awareness of Jet Airways within the Indian domestic market means that potentially the application of the TSPM may be even easier for established brands. Having carried more 11m passengers in the first half of 2018 alone (Directorate General of Civil Aviation, 2018), and as one of three airlines listed in among India's most valuable brands in 2017 (Brand Finance, 2017), there is little doubt that most Indians would pass the first stage of the TSPM (Murphy, 2018).

For established airlines, this makes the use of third-party seals a viable advertising tactic, especially through the use of digital advertising with advanced segmentation. Combining the information available to marketers, as well as the known drivers of purchase intent for airline passengers, it is possible to apply the TSPM to reach an audience with messages that will increase purchase intent. Table 4 provides a practical framework by which marketers can segment and target customers using the TSPM based on whether they have previously flown with the airline.

For past and current customers, seals should represent relationship-orientated promotion to increase customer loyalty (Pi and Huang, 2011). These can include value-add services such as shuttle buses and priority access, charitable and environmental benefits and programs, referral programs, and discounts and bonuses available with other brands. For prospective customers, seals should represent price and value for money or service quality compared to alternate offerings; for example, the winning of awards.

*Table 4. Recommendation of application of TSPM for airline marketing*

Audience	Brand targeting	Seal targeting	Key attribute seal should highlight
Past & current customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows brand on social media</li> <li>Subscriber to EDMs</li> <li>A known customer from CRM</li> <li>Retargeting from purchase confirmation page</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows seal on social media</li> <li>Completes search for relevant keywords</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value-add services</li> <li>Charity and environmental benefits</li> <li>Referral programs</li> <li>Discounts for other brands</li> </ul>
Prospective customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Categorised as a regular traveller</li> <li>Completes search for relevant keywords</li> <li>Follower of competitor airline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows seal on social media</li> <li>Completes search for relevant keywords</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Price</li> <li>Service quality</li> </ul>

The results of this study provide marketers with a unique framework to deploy bespoke and personalised campaigns through the use of the TSPM to past, current, and prospective customers through digital marketing channels. Not only does this framework allow marketers to reach audiences with the correct messaging, but also reduce advertising costs through wasted impressions to audience members where messages will not resonate. The study also highlights the importance of prioritising certain third-party seals over others, particularly those which are recognised and understood by the target audience.

### 5.1 Theoretical Implications

This study represents the first time that third-party seals have been tested in relation to the airline industry and contributes to the small body of literature related to the third-party seals in the wider tourism context. The validation of the TPSM as a tool to predict the use of third-party seals are more likely to increase the probability of a purchase is also an important contribution to the disparate streams of third-party seal research. Now validated, the TPSM can be used by researchers to not only compare the effectiveness of seals in other industries, but also analyse existing campaigns to measure their effectiveness and provide recommendations for improvement at macro and micro levels.

### 5.2. Limitations and Future Research

As with all research, this study was not without limitations and does provide further avenues for research in the future. The use of Facebook advertising and a limited budget provides opportunities for research to be conducted using other marketing and communication channels and to a larger audience. However, the author cautions that through other channels, particularly those offline, it may be difficult to define audiences with certainty as was the case in this experiment. Similarly, the use of a well-known and single-market based airline provides the opportunity for future experiments to use less well known or start-up airlines, or application of the TPSM to airlines similar to Jet Airways in markets other than India.

## REFERENCES

- Agag, G.M. and El-Masry, A.A., 2017. Why do consumers trust online travel websites? Drivers and outcomes of consumer trust toward online travel websites. *Journal of Travel Research*, 56(3), pp.347-369
- AirHelp. 2018. Top Airline Rankings Worldwide + Airline Ratings. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.airhelp.com/en/airhelp-score/airline-ranking/>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- Airline Ratings. 2018. Awards - Airline Ratings. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.airlineratings.com/awards/>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- Atkinson, L. and Rosenthal, S., 2014. Signaling the green sell: the influence of eco-label source, argument specificity, and product involvement on consumer trust. *Journal of Advertising*, 43(1), pp.33-45.
- Bernard, Y., Bertrandias, L. and Elgaied-Gambier, L., 2015. Shoppers' grocery choices in the presence of generalized eco-labelling. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 43(4/5), pp.448-468.
- Biau, D.J., Jolles, B.M. and Porcher, R., 2010. P value and the theory of hypothesis testing: an explanation for new researchers. *Clinical Orthopaedics and Related Research*, 468(3), pp.885-892.
- Brand Finance, 2017. India 100 2017 The annual report on the most valuable Indian brands - May 2017. (2017). [ebook] Brand Finance, p.12. Available at: [http://brandfinance.com/images/upload/india\\_100\\_locked.pdf](http://brandfinance.com/images/upload/india_100_locked.pdf) [Accessed 30 Aug. 2018].
- Caso, L., Iglesias, V. and De La Ballina, F.J., 2015. Quality certifications as hotel selection criteria. In *Achieving competitive advantage through quality management* (pp. 95-110). Springer, Cham.
- Canstar Blue. 2018. Domestic Airlines 2018 Reviews & Ratings – Canstar Blue. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.canstarblue.com.au/domestic-airlines/>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- Chatzigeorgiou, C. (2017). Modelling the impact of social media influencers on behavioural intentions of millennials: The case of tourism in rural areas in Greece. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 3(2), 25–29. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1209125>
- Chia-Jung, C. and Pei-Chun, C., 2014. Preferences and willingness to pay for green hotel attributes in tourist choice behavior: The case of Taiwan. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 31(8), pp.937-957.
- Christou, E. (2015). Branding social media in the travel industry. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 175, pp 607-614. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.12>
- Dam, Y.K.V. and Reuvekamp, M., 1995. Consumer knowledge and understanding of environmental seals in the Netherlands. *ACR European Advances*.
- Directorate General of Civil Aviation (2018). Performance of domestic airlines for the year 2018. [online] Directorate General of Civil Aviation, p.20. Available at: <http://dgca.nic.in/reports/Traffic-ind.htm> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2018].
- Escobar-Rodríguez, T. and Carvajal-Trujillo, E., 2013. Online drivers of consumer purchase of website airline tickets. *Journal of Air Transport Management*, 32, pp.58-64.
- Esparon, M., Gyuris, E. and Stoeckl, N., 2014. Does ECO certification deliver benefits? An empirical investigation of visitors' perceptions of the importance of ECO certification's attributes and of operators' performance. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(1), pp.148-169.
- Hu, X., Wu, G., Wu, Y. and Zhang, H., 2010. The effects of Web assurance seals on consumers' initial trust in an online vendor: A functional perspective. *Decision support systems*, 48(2), pp.407-418.
- Jarach, D., 2004. Future Scenarios For The European Airline Industry: A Marketing-based Perspective. *Journal of Air Transportation*, 9(2).
- Jet Airways. 2018. Best Price Promise - Jet Airways. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.jetairways.com/en/om/planyourtravel/best-price-promise.aspx>. [Accessed 28 August 2018]
- Kamins, M.A. and Marks, L.J., 1991. The perception of kosher as a third party certification claim in advertising for familiar and unfamiliar brands. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 19(3), pp.177-185.
- Kim, S., Kim, I. and Hyun, S.S., 2016. First-Class in-Flight Services and Advertising Effectiveness: Antecedents of Customer-Centric Innovativeness and Brand Loyalty in the United States (US) Airline Industry. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 33(1), pp.118-140.
- Kimery, K.M. and McCord, M., 2006. Signals of trustworthiness in e-commerce: consumer understanding of third-party assurance seals. *Journal of Electronic Commerce in Organizations (JECO)*, 4(4), pp.52-74.
- KLM. 2018. KLM globally rewarded by travelers with TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://news.klm.com/klm-globally-rewarded-by-travelers-with-tripadvisor-travelers-choice-awards/>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- Kohavi, R., Deng, A., Longbotham, R. and Xu, Y., 2014, August. Seven rules of thumb for web site experimenters. In *Proceedings of the 20th ACM SIGKDD international conference on Knowledge discovery and data mining* (pp. 1857-1866). ACM

- Kohavi, R. and Longbotham, R., 2017. Online controlled experiments and a/b testing. In Encyclopedia of machine learning and data mining (pp. 922-929). Springer US.
- Lockyer, T. and Roberts, L., 2009. Motel accommodation: trigger points to guest accommodation selection. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 21(1), pp.24-37.
- McKnight, D.H., C.J. and Choudhury, V., 2004. Shifting Factors and the Ineffectiveness of Third-Party Assurance Seals: A two-stage model of initial trust in a web business. *Electronic Markets*, 14(3), pp.252-266.
- Misirlis, M., Lekakos, G. & Vlachopoulou, M. (2018). Associating Facebook Measurable Activities with Personality Traits: A Fuzzy Sets Approach. *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing*, 4(2), 10–16. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1490360>
- Murphy, D., 2018. The Seal of Approval. Introducing the Third-Party Seal Model. *Expert Journal of Marketing*, 6(2), pp. 33-44.
- Norberg, H.M., 2000. The Certification Mark as a Brand Support? An Evaluation by Consumers. *Proceedings of The Food Sector in Transition-Nordic Research*, pp.14-15.
- Orth, U.R. and Krška, P., 2001. Quality signals in wine marketing: the role of exhibition awards. *The International Food and Agribusiness Management Review*, 4(4), pp.385-397.
- Park, J.W., Robertson, R. and Wu, C.L., 2006. Modelling the impact of airline service quality and marketing variables on passengers' future behavioural intentions. *Transportation Planning and Technology*, 29(5), pp.359-381.
- Parkinson, T.L., 1975. The Role of Seals and Certifications of Approval in Consumer Decision-Making. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 9(1), pp.1-14.
- Pi, W.P. and Huang, H.H., 2011. Effects of promotion on relationship quality and customer loyalty in the airline industry: The relationship marketing approach. *African Journal of Business Management*, 5(11), pp.4403-4414.
- Ponte, E.B., Carvajal-Trujillo, E. and Escobar-Rodríguez, T., 2015. Influence of trust and perceived value on the intention to purchase travel online: Integrating the effects of assurance on trust antecedents. *Tourism Management*, 47, pp.286-302.
- Rainforest Alliance. 2018. Asiana Airlines | Rainforest Alliance. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/find-certified/asiana>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- Skytrax. 2018. World Airline Award Winners 2018 [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.worldairlineawards.com/award-winners-for-2018/>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- TripAdvisor. 2018. AU Press Center | About TripAdvisor. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://tripadvisor.mediaroom.com/AU-about-us>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards . 2018. Top 10 Airlines in the World 2018 - TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards . [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/TravelersChoice-Airlines>. [Accessed 28 August 2018].
- Viot, C., 2012. Subjective knowledge, product attributes and consideration set: a wine application. *International Journal of Wine Business Research*, 24(3), pp.219-248.
- Verma, V.K. and Chandra, B., 2016. Hotel guest's perception and choice dynamics for green hotel attribute: A mix method approach. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, 9(5).
- Verma, V.K. and Chandra, B., 2018. Sustainability and customers' hotel choice behaviour: a choice-based conjoint analysis approach. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 20(3), pp.1347-1363.
- Zafiroopoulos, K., Vrana, V. & Antoniadis, K. (2015). Use of twitter and Facebook by top European museums. *Journal of Tourism,*

*Heritage & Services Marketing*, 1(1), 16–24. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.376326>

## APPENDIX

### *Appendix 1. Organisations granting airline-related third-party seals*

Organisation	Seals granted	Location	Facebook followers
TripAdvisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Top 10 airlines - world</li> <li>Top 10 airlines - region</li> <li>Top airline- country</li> <li>Best first class - world/region</li> <li>Best business class - world/region</li> <li>Best premium economy - world/region</li> <li>Best economy class - world/region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> <li>North America</li> <li>Latin America</li> <li>Asia</li> <li>South Pacific and Oceania</li> <li>Europe</li> <li>Middle East</li> <li>Africa and India Ocean</li> </ul>	6,275,551
Skytrax	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>World's best airline</li> <li>World's best low-cost airline</li> <li>World's best airline cabin crew</li> <li>World's best regional airline</li> <li>World's most improved airline</li> <li>World's best leisure airline</li> <li>World's best inflight entertainment</li> <li>World's best cabin cleanliness</li> <li>World's best airline staff</li> <li>World's best first-class airline</li> <li>World's best business class airline</li> <li>World's best premium economy airline</li> <li>World's best economy airline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> <li>Africa</li> <li>Asia</li> <li>Australia/Pacific</li> <li>China</li> <li>Central Asia/India</li> <li>Europe</li> <li>Middle East</li> <li>North America</li> <li>Central America/Caribbean</li> <li>South America</li> <li>Western Europe</li> <li>Eastern Europe</li> <li>Northern Europe</li> <li>Southern Europe</li> <li>Brazil</li> <li>India</li> </ul>	92,306
Airline Ratings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Airline of the year</li> <li>Best first class</li> <li>Best business class</li> <li>Best premium economy</li> <li>Best economy class</li> <li>Best low fare carrier - region</li> <li>Best regional airline</li> <li>Most improved airline</li> <li>Inflight catering award</li> <li>Long haul - region</li> <li>In flight entertainment award</li> <li>Best cabin crew</li> <li>Best domestic service</li> <li>Best lounges</li> <li>Best ultra low cost airline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> <li>Americas</li> <li>Middle East/Africa</li> <li>Asia/Pacific</li> <li>Europe</li> </ul>	60,024
Canstar Blue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Domestic airlines</li> <li>Domestic airlines for small business</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Australia</li> </ul>	6,979
Air Help	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Top airlines worldwide rankings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worldwide</li> </ul>	643,662

*SUBMITTED: AUGUST 2018*

*REVISION SUBMITTED: JANUARY 2019*

*ACCEPTED: MARCH 2019*

*REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY*

*PUBLISHED ONLINE: 15 APRIL 2019*



# Closed House of Wonders museum: Implications to the tourism of Zanzibar Stone Town, UNESCO World Heritage Site

 **Maximilian Chami**  
Brandenburg University of Technology, Germany

 **Gabriel Kaminyoge**  
University of Dodoma, Tanzania

## Abstract

**Purpose:** This paper examines the impact of the closed House of Wonders Museum in the tourism industry of Stone Town, Zanzibar. The paper aims to propose the best practices taken into account due to the impact raised by the closure of the Museum. There has been no clear information on the overall situation which faces the site since 2012 when the Museum closed.

**Methods:** Data were collected through mixed methods: a quantitative questionnaire survey using a sample size of the 105 tourists who visited the House of Wonders Museum; qualitative in-depth interviews and focus groups, consisting of 8 Government Officials, 6 Tour Guides and 8 Tour Operators.

**Results:** The findings show that the closed museum has affected the level of tourists' satisfaction, tour operators, community and tour guides economically. The closed museum also might cause the Stone Town World Heritage Site to lose its authenticity hence being in danger of being removed from the UNESCO World Heritage Site if the conservation and rehabilitation activities won't be finished as soon as possible

**Implications:** Based on findings, a quick rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Museum is strongly recommended to save the integrity and authenticity of this World Heritage Site and to enhance local tourism development; the closed House of Wonders Museum has badly affected the economic situation of the many tour operators and tour guides and the local community.

**Keywords:** House of Wonders, heritage tourism, Zanzibar Stone Town, museum

**JEL Classification:** G14, M31, Z33

**Biographical note:** Maximilian F. Chami (maximilian.chami@b-tu.de) is a PhD Candidate (Heritage Studies) with the Brandenburg University of Technology-Cottbus, German. He currently works at UNESCO National Commission of the United Republic of Tanzania as the Culture and Heritage officer. He obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Tourism and Culture Heritage from University of Dodoma (2012) and Master of Arts in Heritage Management from the University of Dar es Salaam in 2015. Gabriel I. Kaminyoge (86kaminyoge@gmail.com) is an assistant lecturer at the University of Dodoma. He graduated with his Master of Arts in Heritage Management and Bachelor of Arts in Archaeology at the University of Dar es Salaam. His research interests focused on environmental and heritage impact assessment, tourism, heritage, policy studies and the environment.

## 1 INTRODUCTION: HOUSE OF WONDERS MUSEUM

This paper reports a piece of research undertaken in Zanzibar Island on the impact of closed House of Wonders Museum since December 2012 to the tourism cycle of Zanzibar Stone Town, UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Museum was closed down by the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar for maintenance and repair after a large corner of the Museum collapsed, taking with it several essential iron pillars and threatening the structural integrity of the building and its façade. Furthermore, the roof of buildings is in a precarious

state, especially after heavy rainfall of November 2015 caused the partial collapse of the roof (WMF 2017). The House of Wonders (in Arabic: Beit-al-Ajaib) is a landmark building in Stone Town, Zanzibar Island. It is the largest and tallest building of Stone Town facing the Forodhani Gardens on the old town's seafront, in Mizingani Road. It is located between the Old Fort and the Palace Museum as one of six palaces built by Barghash bin Said, the second Sultan of Zanzibar (ibid.).

The building was constructed in 1883 with the intention to act as a ceremonial or stately palace to the Sultan's visitors.



It was named "House of Wonders" because it was believed as the first building in Zanzibar Island and Africa to have electricity and elevators. The design of the palace attributed to a British marine engineer and after Sultan Barghash bin Said inspired by its visit to Paris and London in 1875, where he enthusiastically took the idea to modernise Zanzibar Island by installing a piped drinking water system, amongst other infrastructure projects (Folkers 2013; Meffert 2009). The building has the wide external verandas supported by cast-iron columns, which allowed for uniquely high ceilings while construction materials consisted of an original combination of coral rag, concrete slabs, mangrove shoots and steel beams (Folkers 2013). In August 1896, the building suffered damage due to Anglo-Zanzibar War and reconstructed in 1897. After the bombardment and reconstruction, in 1911 the building was transformed into government offices and as the central secretariat for the British governing authorities in Zanzibar Island and later in 1964 converted into a school and a museum for the ruling Afro-Shirazi Party. Since the 2000s, the House of Wonders became the Museum of History and Culture of Zanzibar and the Swahili Civilization along the Coast of Indian Ocean (Sheriff et al. 2007).

*Figure 1. The front façade of the House of Wonders, now a Museum of Swahili culture in Zanzibar Island (WFM, 2017)*



In this paper, we examine the implication of the closed House of Wonders Museum to the tourism cycles in Zanzibar Stone Town. While we try to discuss the impact of closed Museum on the tourism cycle in Stone Town; it should be well-known that many studies in Zanzibar Island (e.g. Stone Town) have concentrated more on the tourism satisfaction (Salim and Mwaipopo 2016; Chami 2018a; Chami 2018b), heritage management and archaeological excavations (Chami 2011; Chami 2013; Chami 2017; Juma 2004; Juma et al. 2005). Unfortunately, many of the studies or researchers in Zanzibar Island have ignored the impact of closed of House of Museum on the tourism cycle in Stone Town of Zanzibar. As such, before this study, there was no precise information on whether or not the closed museum has affected the tourism cycle in Zanzibar stone Town UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is essential to find out and determine whether or not the closed House of Wonders Museum has affected the tourism cycle and activities in Stone Town of Zanzibar. This idea is vital to government bodies especially Zanzibar Commission for Tourism, Stone Town Conservation Development Authority, Department of Antiquities and Museum on how to

solve the tourism challenges and opportunities which might raise in Zanzibar Stone Town due to the House of Wonders closed for reconstruction.

Therefore, it is fundamentally essential to investigate whether or not the closed House of Wonders Museum has affected the tourism activities in Zanzibar Stone Town. We further argue that there is a significant need for Zanzibar Commission for Tourism (ZCT), Department of Museum, Antiquities and Stone Town Conservation Development Authority (STCDA) to work together in developing an alternative means to the tourists who want to visit and explore the closed Museum.

## 2 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data presented in this study drawn from various interviews with the Zanzibar Commission for Tourism, Department of Antiquities staffs. A non-structured with open-ended questions were prepared to acquire relevant information from the informed respondents. Also, closed-ended questionnaires were designed and distributed to 120 tourists, but only 105 were returned. To complement the above two methods, non-participation observation employed in assessing the state of the building. All of these activities conducted between July-October 2018 in Zanzibar Stone Town. These questionnaires were used to catch up on the opinion and views of tourists on the level of satisfaction with House of Wonders as one of the attributes in Zanzibar Stone Town. Personal observations on tourism activities going on in and around the House of Wonders Museum also included in this data. One of us (MC) has frequently visited the site for his research activities since 2013 (Chami and Lyaya 2015; Chami 2018a; Chami 2018b). During all these visits, both of us experienced that tourists were demoralised due to the failure to get inside the Museum. This situation might have a significant adverse impact on the tourism cycle of Zanzibar Stone Town in Zanzibar Island.

*Figure 2. A corner section of the House of Wonders that collapsed in November 2012 (WMF, 2017)*



## 3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### *3.1 Tourist Satisfaction in Zanzibar Stone Town: House of Wonders Museum*

In this regard, tourists were requested to give a score to the closed House of Wonders Museum in each of the

questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale that is ranging from 1. Very Satisfied 2. Satisfied 3. Moderate 4. Dissatisfied 5. Very Dissatisfied. Here, the respondents provided a score to the closed Museum on the level of satisfaction to this attribute. Tourists (respondents) selected in a random way whereby 120 questionnaires distributed to tourists, but only 105 questionnaires returned. It revealed that 38 respondents equivalent to 36.2% and 18 (17.1%) were both dissatisfied and very dissatisfied with the House of Wonders museum. Also, the study found out that 2 (1.9%) respondents did not visit, the Museum. However, 15 (14.3%) and 6 (5.7%) were satisfied and very satisfied with the attribute respectively, but 26 (24.8%) felt that they were moderately satisfied with this closed Museum. These results summarised in Table 1 below. Generally, the results indicate that 56 (53.3%) respondents were not satisfied with the closed House of Wonders Museum in Zanzibar Stone Town.

*Table 1. Respondents Satisfaction with Zanzibar Stone Town Attributes (N=105, P=100%)*

Variables	Frequency	Percent %
<b>House of Wonders Museum</b>		
Very Satisfied	6	5.7
Satisfied	15	14.3
Moderate	26	24.8
Dissatisfied	38	36.2
Very Dissatisfied	18	17.1
Not Visited	2	1.9

*Source: Field Data (see also Chami 2018a)*

These results perfectly accord with previous studies (Chaudhary and Aggarwal 2012; Huh 2002; Hou 2009; Mensah 2013) which found out similar results on the variation in the level of attribute satisfaction in different tourism attributes. These results further suggest that the difference in the level of tourists' satisfaction with the House of Wonders Museum might have a significant adverse impact on the tourism cycle in Zanzibar Stone Town. The higher number of tourists (53.3%) who revealed not satisfied with House of Wonders which closed for reconstruction can have the significant negative influence to the tourist touching loyalty to the Zanzibar Stone Town UNESCO World (Chami 2018b; Alsaqre 2011). The closed House of Wonders Museum can influence the tourists to lack the sense of willingness to revisit the site or even not to recommend Zanzibar Stone Town to their relatives in the future (Ijeomah and Esaen 2011; Nowack 2013). For example, Nowack (2013) argued that revisit intention can be subjective or somewhat influenced by a specific site or attribute in any heritage site. We can further discuss that intention to the tourist revisit, and loyalty with the Zanzibar Stone Town can be severely affected by the closed House of Wonders museum as one of the attributes in this site if government bodies will take no action.

### *3.2 Opinions of Government Staff Regarding the Closed House of Wonders Museum: Department of Antiquities and ZCT*

Focusing on the importance of the House of Wonder museum holds for the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, the study interviewed eight (8) employees from the Department

of Antiquities (5) and Zanzibar Commission for Tourism (3) respectively. The respondents provided their views and opinion on the importance of the closed Museum to the people of Zanzibar Island. Regarding the position that the House of Wonders depicts to the tourism of Zanzibar and Stone Town, in particular, all eight (8) respondents revealed that, the House of Wonders regarded as a symbol and one of the prominent structures in Zanzibar Island and the World of Architecture (Garlake 1966; Sheriff and Jafferji 1998). To show the value of this building, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar uses the building in their passport and currency. It is the most famous building in the area of Stone Town. This building used as a museum that showed the history and Swahili culture of Zanzibar and the Coast of East Africa. In other words, the House of Wonders complements another tourism attribute available in Zanzibar (Chami 2018a). It is even said the visit to Zanzibar Island without getting into the House of Wonder, such tour considered as incomplete. Therefore, the House of Wonder is considered as a benchmark of Zanzibar's tourism as it attracted more visitors than any other building in the Zanzibar Stone Town. It further revealed by one respondent that the building by itself is a museum apart from what is housed inside as artefacts. The tourism of Zanzibar Stone Town embedded in this building. The building as a museum houses different artefact belonging to the Swahili culture (Steyn and Holm 2001). They also added that the building attracts many visitors from different parts of the world just because of its name and uniqueness. One staff further added, to show the value and uniqueness of this building the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has even enacted a law that regulates the size of buildings within Stone Town not to transcend the House of Wonder. On this fact, the collapse and close of the building have brought a significant loss to the government regarding the economy and tourism activities at large.

Furthermore, the closed museum led to the government to lose an authentic and sustainable source of income from visitor and thus helping with the funding of conservation activities and other projects. For the visitors have missed an opportunity to learn and experience the sense of the architectural, historical and the collection housed inside the house. During the interview one antiquities staff said:

*"the closure of this museum has not only demised the rights of publicity and visitors to access the collection, but also the artefacts impacted due to storage spacing, and others were affected by moisture and dust due to leakage".*

Regarding tourism, the closure of the museum might have led to the decline in the number of visitors, particularly those interested in the museum staffs though no precise statistical data obtained from these government bodies. But, as it stands the number of visitors to Zanzibar is increasing year after year; however, with the closure of the House of Wonder visitor have shifted to other tourism activities. This tendency if allowed to prevail for an extended period may lead to mass tourism and the destruction of the facility and surrounding vicinity like in Greece (Schouten 1998). Also, we can argue that this situation may result in the reduction of the number of nights that visitors stay in Zanzibar destinations due to the decrease in tourism activities. The decline in the number of visitors' nights has serious implication for the expenditure

and government revenues. Other respondents showed that the closure of the museum contributes to the loss of memories about the collection, which is the strongest tool for visitor's orientation to the museum. Secondly, the closure of this museum had affected the workers economically as they used to receiving tips when the museum was operating but now no longer receiving it. As a department of antiquities, this building uses to generate more than 75% of the total fund created from all buildings governed by the antiquities. Lastly, the study observed severe input to the budget and conservation activities of the department of antiquities. We can further discuss that; this downfall has perhaps contributed to weak conservation efforts. As a result, the government end up relies on the funding from donors which is not sufficient. Additionally, the closure of this building jeopardises the position of Zanzibar Stone Town as a UNESCO World Heritage Site which could end up being positioned on the list of World Heritage Site in Danger. It should well know that tourism is the backbone of the economy of Zanzibar Island; hence a huge effort is needed to retain this status and the authenticity of House of Wonders Museum. The closure of the House of Wonder has demoralised the attitude of workers as they are not exercising their areas of specialisation and do not benefit anymore ending up allocated to the different working stations. As a result, this perhaps suggests that House of Wonders has a significance value not only to the antiquities government officers but also to the Stone Town of Zanzibar in general. The building might cause the Stone Town World Heritage Site to lose its authenticity hence being in danger of removed from the UNESCO World Heritage Site if the conservation and rehabilitation activities won't be finished as soon as possible.

### *3.3 Opinions of Private Sector Regarding the Closed House of Wonders Museum: Tour Operators and Tour Guides*

In different parts of the World, researchers have been conducting studies on the impact of tour guides, tour operators and their role in the overall development of the tourism industry (Sandaruwani and Gnanapala 2016; Blyablina 2015; Nkonoki 2012). Some of the researchers have moved even further and tried to show how tour guides and tour operators can provide tourism satisfaction and experience within the heritage site (Hsu et al. 2009; Weiler and Walker 2014). Hence, following up from this review, the is no clear information on the impact of the closed museum to the tour guide and tour operators in Tanzania. This situation even made the need to include the opinions of these two stakeholders in this study.

Therefore, the views from private sectors on the closed House of Wonders Museum of Zanzibar Stone Town is of paramount. The study also consulted at least Eight (8) tour operators and Six (6) tour guides around the site. These two categories of stakeholders considered because of their duties and position in the tourism activities of Zanzibar Stone Town World Heritage Site in particular. At this end, at least all respondents cohere that, the House of Wonder is important evidence of the unique architecture of Zanzibar and mirror / iconic building of Zanzibar Stone Town. Also, information on this building was the first to be published on the internet before any facility found in the Zanzibar Stone Town. The

name wonder attracted many visitors both domestic and foreign who have been motivated to visit and see what does the building embrace. This status, therefore, was used as an attracting force to the visitor to come to Zanzibar. As for this case, every visitor who sets foot in the land of Zanzibar wished to visit the building and experience the sense of wonder of the building as the name suggests (Weiler and Walker 2014).

Therefore, three tour operators and two tour guides shared that before the closure of the Museum, the building received nearly 90% of the total visit to Zanzibar Stone Town. The estimated figure from both operators and guides rounded to 200 to 300 hundred visitors per day. They further said the government received a lot of foreign currency as a direct entrance fee that was standing at 2\$ per visitor. After the closure of the Museum, the respondent 's showed a sudden drop in visitors and activities around the building. Regarding the revenues, three tour guides suggested that nowadays the government has lost the very sustainable source of income from the tourists who were coming to this building. One tour guide added that the closure of the building has increased troubles resulting from frustrations and dissatisfaction from visitors who always insist there need to go to the building even if closed (Sandaruwani and Gnanapala 2016). For instance, in 2017 one royal family travelled from Saud Arabia to Zanzibar to see the building, when I told them that it's not open to the public due to leakages they were very disappointed, he added. In addition to this, the tour guide explained that we had lost some tips from visitors following the closure of the museum as this was helping to support themselves and our families.

As the issue of concern for tour operators, two operators revealed that the closure of the famous building of House of Wonders has led to the shutdown and the collapse of some tour operators/ organisers who were specialised in the Stone Town World Heritage Site walking tours especially those dealing with visitors from Italy. And some others have shifted to other forms of tourism activities and destinations, for example, organising tours to Prisoners Island, Beach Safaris, Dolphin tours and spice tours to mention a few (Nkonoki 2012). Additionally, one tour operator added that the time when House of Wonder was active, even our school children used to benefit from tourists who used to give them with books, pen and other school materials during recession hours. Often time these were visitors from Italy who were having an undivided interest in the architecture and the content of the museum. Today our kids have not received this stuff anymore. At one point this was helping to inform our kids about the importance of tourism to them and thus valuing and respecting their culture and its immediate attributes which attract visitors.

These results further suggest that not only the government of Zanzibar losing a lot of revenue but also tour guides and tour operators due to the closure of the building. On top of this, we can argue that there is a big possibility that the closure of the museum has increased mass flow of visitors to other attributes that might increase chances to mass tourism which have a devastating impact on the same. We further argue that the closure of the building might have discouraged some of tour guides and operators who many of them opted to work on other economic activities or the different working

environment. Similarly, the closure of this building had altered some entrepreneurial activities which operated greenly when the House of Wonders was in operation. For instance, tax drivers complained about the decline of business as many visitors from peripheral areas (Shamba) are no more flowing to the museum and other small business owners like Machingas selling “batiks” “spices” and other products to visitors have either closed their business or shifted to less lucrative business. This situation has increased competition among taxi drivers and business people to areas that still invite visitors. As a result, whatever the reasons one could provide, it suffices to note that the closed House of Wonders Museum has severely affected the economic situation not only for the revolutionary government of Zanzibar but also to many tour operators and tour guides around Stone Town World Heritage site.

#### 4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results and discussion above, we conclude that the closed House of Wonders Museum has clear negative implications on tourist satisfaction and the tourism cycle of Zanzibar Stone Town at present. The closed museum also might cause the Stone Town World Heritage Site to lose its authenticity hence being in danger of being removed from the UNESCO World Heritage Site if the conservation and rehabilitation activities won't be finished as soon as possible. Lastly, we conclude that the closed House of Wonders Museum has badly affected the economic situation of the many tour operators and tour guides and the community around Stone Town World Heritage site which threatening the tourism business around the area.

It's acknowledged that tourism is the backbone of the economy of Zanzibar Island (Rotarou, 2014). It is from this fact that the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar and the community at large should embrace this vital sector important in the economy, employment and linkage with other sectors. This study proposes five recommendations identified as follows;

1. The STDCA as the caretaker of the Stone Town buildings including House of Wonders Museum should continue to identify and rehabilitate buildings requiring to be repaired immediately once spotted. The authority should not wait until the buildings collapse like House of Wonders Museum to react. For this, prevention is better than cure. Also, tour guides, tour operators and other people in business who by one way or another depend on House of Wonders museum should be encouraged to work on other activities which will help to solve their economic problems at present.
2. The government should continue to raise awareness among the public on the value of repairing their building while obeying to their originality, authenticity and available guideline, especially from UNESCO and ICOMOS. They should not use modern materials that alter the originality and authenticity of their historic city that can lead to the lose its value and popularity among tourists and as a World Heritage Town. For instance, today there so many buildings with protruding air conditioners, grills, grass windows which are against the guideline of the STDCA, UNESCO and ICOMOS.
3. The government should allocate more funding to enable the STDCA to implement their duties of rehabilitating and maintaining the Stone Town World Heritage Site especially House of Wonders Museum. There is a continuing complains from this authority that the amount of money returned by the government from those generated by tourism does not tally with reality. A very small percentage is given back for the management of the buildings. Instead, the STDCA continues to rely on donors and the UNESCO to fund for rehabilitation and maintenance of the buildings. The lack of a reliable internal source of fund to run STDCA activities is the threat to the survival of the House of Wonders Museum and Stone Town World Heritage site as the external sources are neither reliable nor sustainable.
4. Immediate efforts are required from the STDCA and Antiquities department to find an alternative modality to continue showing cases of the artefacts and other materials that were displayed (exhibitions) in the House of Wonder to the visitors and the public elsewhere. The essence will help to make a tour to Zanzibar Island most fascinating and complete as tourists will learn more about the history, culture and leadership regime of Zanzibar through material remains hence tourist satisfaction.

#### 5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work was supported and funded by Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst – DAAD through Graduate School Scholarship Programme 2017/2018.

#### REFERENCES

- Alsaqre, O. Z. (2011). Investigating the Effects of Tangible and Intangible Factors on Customers' Perceived Service Quality and Loyalty in Hotel Industry in AL-LADHIQIYAH, Syria. Syria.
- Blyablina, A. (2015). The Contribution of Guides in Developing Tourist Experiences During Historical Theatrical Tours: The Case Of Stockholm Ghost Walk. A Master Thesis, Mid-Sweden University, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:824624/FULLTEXT01.pdf>.
- Chami, F. (2011). The Excavation of Mapangani Cave, Pemba Island, Zanzibar. *Studies in the African Past*, Volume 9: 74-79.
- Chami, F. (2013). Excavation of Kiwengwa Cave, Zanzibar. *Studies in the African Past*, 220-224.
- Chami, M. F. & Lyaya, E. (2015). Assessment of Tourist Satisfaction in Cultural Heritage Tourism Destination in Tanzania: The Case of Zanzibar Stone Town Tourism. *Studies in the African Past*, 12:259-276, [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elizabeth\\_Kyazike/publication/295100740\\_Reexcavation\\_of\\_Kansyore\\_Island/links/56c773b208ae1106370357d8/Re-excavation-of-Kansyore-Island.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Elizabeth_Kyazike/publication/295100740_Reexcavation_of_Kansyore_Island/links/56c773b208ae1106370357d8/Re-excavation-of-Kansyore-Island.pdf).
- Chami, M. F. (2018a). Impact of Cultural Heritage Site Attributes to the Tourist Satisfaction in Zanzibar Stone Town, UNESCO World Heritage Site, Tanzania. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*, Volume 7 (3), 1-13, [https://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article\\_40\\_vol\\_7\\_3\\_2018.pdf](https://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_40_vol_7_3_2018.pdf).
- Chami, M. F. (2018b). Tourist Touching Loyalty in Cultural Heritage Sites in Tanzania: A Case of Zanzibar Stone Town,

- Zanzibar Island. *International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Research*, Volume 2 (4), 306-316, [http://ijebmr.com/uploads2018/IJEBMR\\_02\\_246.pdf](http://ijebmr.com/uploads2018/IJEBMR_02_246.pdf).
- Chami, M. F. (2018c). Assessment of Tourist Willingness to Re-Visit in Cultural Heritage Sites in Tanzania: A Case of Zanzibar Stone Town, UNESCO World Heritage Site. *Journal of Advanced Research in Social Science and Humanities* (ISSN: 2208-2387), 4(6), 19-29, <https://jiaats.com/ojs31/index.php/ssh/article/view/757/569>.
- Chami, M. F. (2018d). Tourist Touching Loyalty in Cultural Heritage Sites in Tanzania: A Case of Zanzibar Stone Town, Zanzibar Island, *International Journal of Economics, Business and Management Research*, Vol. 2 (4): 306-316, [http://ijebmr.com/uploads2018/IJEBMR\\_02\\_246.pdf](http://ijebmr.com/uploads2018/IJEBMR_02_246.pdf).
- Chaudhary, M. & Aggarwal, A. (2012). Tourist Satisfaction and Management of Heritage Sites in Amritsar. *SAJTH*, 5 (2): 47-61.
- Culley, S. (2010). *Museums and Tourists: A Quantitative Look at Curator Perceptions of Tourism*, Published Masters Thesis, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada.
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.
- Folkers, A. (2013). Early Modern African Architecture. *The House of Wonders Revisited*, Docomomo Volume 48: 21-29, <http://www.fbwarchitecten.nl/files/5414/8068/2649/docomomo48.pdf>.
- Garlake, P.S. (1966). *The Early Islamic Architecture of the East African Coast*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Herreman, Y. (1998). Museums and Tourism: Culture and Consumption. *Museum International*, 50(3): 4-12. doi: 10.1111/1468-0033.00155.
- Hsu, C., Chan, A. and Huang, S. (2009). Tour Guide Performance and Tourist Satisfaction: a Study of the Package Tours in Shanghai. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*. 34. 3-33. doi: 10.1177/1096348009349815. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235640219\\_Tour\\_Guide\\_Performance\\_and\\_Tourist\\_Satisfaction\\_a\\_Study\\_of\\_the\\_Package\\_Tours\\_in\\_Shanghai](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/235640219_Tour_Guide_Performance_and_Tourist_Satisfaction_a_Study_of_the_Package_Tours_in_Shanghai).
- Hou, Y. (2009). *An Investigation into Visitors' Satisfaction with Port Elizabeth's Heritage Museum*. Port Elizabeth: Master Thesis, Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, South Africa.
- Huh, J. (2002). *Tourist Satisfaction with Cultural/Heritage*. Virginia, USA: Master Thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
- Ijeomah, H. M., & Esaen, N. (2011). Tourism Management in Selected Ecotourism Destinations in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. *ARNP Journal of Agricultural and Biological Science*, 6 (10): 1-13.
- Juma, A. (2004). *Unguja Ukuu on Zanzibar, Archaeological Study of Early Urbanism*. Uppsala: University of Uppsala.
- Juma, A., Ali, K and Khamis, A. (2005). Management of Zanzibar Cultural Heritage. In B. B. Mapunda and P. Msemwa (eds.), *Salvaging Tanzania's Cultural Heritage*, 317-323. Dar es Salaam: Dar es Salaam University Press.
- Meffert, E. (2009). *Where to, Fair Beauty? Zanzibar Guide*. The Attempt of an Inventory, Zanzibar, Von Heute auf Morgen Verlag 65.
- Mensah, C. (2013). Residents' Satisfaction and Behavioural Intentions with Asogli Yam Festival in Ghana. *International Journal of Asian Social Science*, 3 (3): 682-702.
- Nkonoki, S. (2012). *Challenges of Tour Operators: Case: Dar es Salaam, Tanzania*. BA Thesis Tourism Programme, HAAGA HELIA University of Applied Science, <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/49071/CHALLENGES%20OF%20TOUR%20OPERATORS-SYMON%20NKNOKI.pdf>.
- Nowacki, M. (2013). *The Determinants of Satisfaction of Tourist Attractions' Visitors*. Poznan, Poland: Active, Zdzislawy 11a.
- Rashid, M. & Shateh, H. (2012). The Dialectics of Functional and Historical Morphology in the Evolution of a City: The Case of the Stone Town of Zanzibar. *Journal of Architecture*, 5: 1-26, <https://kuscholarworks.ku.edu/handle/1808/16434>.
- Rotarou, E. (2014). Tourism in Zanzibar: Challenges for Pro-Poor growth. *Caderno Virtual de turismo*. Rio de Janeiro, Volume 14(3): 250-265, <http://www.ivt.coppe.ufrj.br/caderno/index.php/caderno/article/viewFile/858/415>.
- Salim, I. S and Mwaipopo, L. J. (2016). What Satisfies Tourists in Cultural Heritage Sites? Evidence of Zanzibar Stone Town, *Journal of Research in Hospitality, Tourism and Culture*, Vol. 3(1) pp. 1-10.
- Sandaruwani, R., C and Gnanapala, A., C. (2016). The Role of Tourist Guides and their Impacts on Sustainable Tourism Development: A Critique on Sri Lanka, *Tourism, Leisure and Global Change*, Vol. 3:1-12, <https://www2.nau.edu/nabej-p/ojs/index.php/igtourism/.../159>.
- Schouten, F. (1998). Professionals and Visitors: Closing the Gap. *Museum International*, 50(4): 27-30. doi: 10.1111/1468-0044.00173.
- Sheriff, A., Voogt, P and Luhila, M. (2007). *The Zanzibar House of Wonders Museum. Self-reliance and Partnership. A Case Study in Culture and Development*, Amsterdam, Koninklijk Instituut Voor De Tropen.
- Steyn, G and Holm, D. (2001). *An Analysis of an Omani House in Stone Town, Zanzibar*, Department of Architecture, Technikon Pretoria, University of Pretoria. [https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/15408/Steyn\\_Analysis\(2001\).pdf?sequence=1](https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/15408/Steyn_Analysis(2001).pdf?sequence=1).
- Sheriff, A. and Jafferji, J. (1998). *Zanzibar Stone Town: An Architectural Exploration*. Zanzibar: Gallery.
- Tu, J. I. January 13, (2010). *Bellevue Arts Museum Appoints New Artistic Director*. The Seattle Times. [http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2010787424\\_bam14m.html](http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2010787424_bam14m.html).
- UNESCO (2018). *Zanzibar Stone Town: UNESCO World Heritage Center*, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/173>, Accessed on 14/7/2018.
- Vander S, G. And Harmon, L. (2000). Museums and cultural institutions in Michigan: Can they be viable tourism attractions and tourism industry partners? *Proceedings of the 1999 Northeast Recreation Research Symposium*. USDA Forest Service, Gen. Tech. Rep. NE-269: 205-211.
- Weiler, B. and Walker, K. (2014). Enhancing the Visitor Experience: Reconceptualising the Tour Guide's Communicative Role. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Management*. DOI: 10.1016/j.jhtm.2014.08.001, [https://epubs.scu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4143&context=tourism\\_pubs](https://epubs.scu.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=4143&context=tourism_pubs).
- WMF. (2017). *House of Wonders and Palace Museum, Stone Town of Zanzibar, Tanzania*. World Monuments Fund, New York, <https://www.wmf.org/project/house-wonders-and-palace-museum>, Accessed on 23 August 2018.
- Wuyts, A. (2009). *The Replica Valley of the Kings - King Tut Gets Another Tomb*. <http://heritage-key.com/blogs/ann/replica-valley-kings-king-tut-gets-another-tomb>.

---

SUBMITTED: JULY 2018

REVISION SUBMITTED: NOVEMBER 2018

ACCEPTED: FEBRUARY 2019

REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

PUBLISHED ONLINE: 15 APRIL 2019

# Aims & Scope

---

## AIMS

The *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing* is an open-access, international, multi-disciplinary, refereed (double blind peer-reviewed) journal aiming to promote and enhance research in all fields of marketing in tourism, heritage and services management. The journal is intended for readers in the scholarly community who deal with different marketing sectors, both at macro and at micro level, as well as professionals in the industry. The *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing* provides a platform for debate and dissemination of research findings, new research areas and techniques, conceptual developments, and articles with practical application to any tourism, heritage, and services marketing segment. Besides research papers, the journal welcomes book reviews, conference reports, case studies, research notes and commentaries. The *Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing* aims at:

- Disseminating and promoting research, good practice and innovation in all aspects of marketing in tourism, heritage and services to its prime audience including educators, researchers, post-graduate students, policy makers, and industry practitioners.
- Encouraging international scientific cooperation and understanding, and enhancing multi-disciplinary research across various marketing sectors.

---

## SCOPE AND PEER-REVIEW POLICY

The scope of the journal is international and all papers submitted are subject to an initial screening by a member of the journal's Senior Advisory Board, and subsequently by strict blind peer review by 3 anonymous international reviewers. The journal features conceptual and empirical papers, and editorial policy is to invite the submission of manuscripts from academics, researchers, post-graduate students, policy-makers and industry practitioners. The Editorial Board will be looking particularly for articles about new trends and developments within different sectors of marketing and the application of new ideas and developments that are likely to affect tourism, heritage and services in the future. Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing also welcomes submission of manuscripts in areas that may not be directly tourism or heritage-related but cover a topic that is of interest to researchers, educators, policy-makers and practitioners in various fields of services marketing.

Manuscripts published in Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing should not have been published previously in any copyright form (print or electronic/online), unless the author(s) explicitly hold the copywrite under a [CC-BY Licence](#). The general criteria for the acceptance of articles are:

- Contribution to the promotion of scientific knowledge in the greater multi-disciplinary field of marketing.
- Adequate and relevant literature review.
- Scientifically valid and reliable methodology.
- Clarity of writing.
- Acceptable quality of English language.

Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing is published twice per year (in Spring and in Autumn). Each issue includes the following sections: editorial, full papers, research notes, case studies, book reviews, conference reports, industry viewpoints, and forthcoming events.

---

## OPEN ACCESS POLICY

Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing is an Open Access journal, conforming fully to the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI). Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing has adopted the BOAI policy of "free availability on the public internet, permitting its users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of its articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, is to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited".

# About JTHSM

---

## ABOUT JTHSM

Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing is an open access, international, multi-disciplinary, refereed (double blind peer-reviewed) journal aiming to promote and enhance research at both macro-economic and micro-economic levels of tourism, heritage and services marketing. The journal's ISSN is: 2529-1947.

The journal is published twice per year (in Winter and in Summer) and is owned and co-managed by two academic units of the School of Economics & Business of the International Hellenic University: the Program of Postgraduate Studies in Tourism Management & Organisation and the Research Laboratory in Tourism "Tourlab". The International Hellenic University is the third largest public (state-owned) university in Greece.

For more information and for any editorial enquiries, please contact with the Journal manager at: Mr. Panagiotis Papageorgiou, International Hellenic University, JTHSM Editorial Office, Program of Postgraduate Studies in Tourism Management, School of Economics & Business, P.O. Box 141, GR-57400, Thessaloniki, Greece. Phone: +30-2310-013450, E-mail: [editorial-office@jthsm.gr](mailto:editorial-office@jthsm.gr). For any other questions or for inquiries regarding submission of manuscripts, please contact with the Editor-in-Chief at: Prof. Evangelos Christou, International Hellenic University, School of Economics & Business, P.O. Box 141, GR-57400, Thessaloniki, Greece. Phone: +30-2310-013193, E-mail: [echristou@ihu.gr](mailto:echristou@ihu.gr)

---

## LEGAL CODE & CONTENT LICENSING

Authors of papers published in JTHSM hold the copyright of their paper without restrictions. All work in JTHSM is licensed under an Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International Licence. According to this, you are free to copy, distribute, display and perform the work in any media or form, as long as you give the original author(s) credit, do not use this work for commercial purposes, and do not alter, transform, or build upon this work. For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work. Any of these conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holders. Nothing in this license impairs or restricts the authors' rights. You can download the Legal Code for this Licence at: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171

Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.

---

## OPEN ACCESS POLICY

JTHSM is an Open Access journal, conforming fully to the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) and all of its content is available immediately after publication. JTHSM has adopted the BOAI policy of "free availability on the public internet, permitting its users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of its articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, is to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited".

JTHSM is indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ), accessed at: <http://www.doaj.org>

---

## SAN FRANCISCO DECLARATION ON RESEARCH ASSESSMENT

JTHSM has signed the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). DORA recognizes the need to improve the ways in which the outputs of scholarly research are evaluated. It is a worldwide initiative covering all scholarly disciplines and all key stakeholders including funders, publishers, professional societies, institutions, and researchers. JTHSM encourage all individuals and organizations who are interested in developing and promoting best practice in the assessment of scholarly research to sign DORA.

---

## PUBLICATION ETHICS POLICY & MALPRACTICE STATEMENT

JTHSM is committed to maintaining the highest standards of publication ethics and to supporting ethical research practices and adheres to the COPE Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers. The journal editors follow the COPE Code of Conduct for Journal Editors.

This journal has adopted a comprehensive publication ethics and publication malpractice statement, composed using the publishing ethics resource kit and in compliance with Elsevier recommendations and COPE guidelines.

---

## PLAGIARISM

---

JTHSM evaluates submissions on the understanding that they are the original work of the author(s). We expect that references made in a manuscript or article to another person's work or idea will be credited appropriately. Equally we expect authors to gain all appropriate permissions prior to publication. JTHSM systematically run all submitted papers through plagiarism-detection software (using iThenticate by Turnitin plagiarism checker) to identify possible cases; JTHSM accepts and publishes manuscripts that score as "Green" in Similarity Report by Turnitin.

Re-use of text, data, figures, or images without appropriate acknowledgment or permission is considered plagiarism, as is the paraphrasing of text, concepts, and ideas. All allegations of plagiarism are investigated thoroughly and in accordance with COPE guidelines.

---

## ORCID

---

All submissions should include author's (and all co-authors') ORCID (compulsory for all submissions since volume 5, issue 1, 2019).

---

## PUBLICATION EXPENSES, FEES & REVENUE SOURCES

---

JTHSM does not charge authors fees for submitting, processing, or publishing papers. The journal's expenses are fully covered by the publisher (International Hellenic University), the third largest state-owned (public) university in Greece.

JTHSM do not publish any advertising material.

---

## COMPLAINTS

---

The authors who may have a complaint against any of the aspects of their interaction with JTHSM should, in the first instance, write/e-mail to the Associate Editor. In case it does not resolve the issue, the complaint should be forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief. The Associate Editor and the Editor-in-Chief aim to acknowledge the complaint within 7 days after receiving it. In addition, they should explain to the author the procedure which they will be undertaking to resolve the matter.

---

## ARTICLE RETRACTION AND CORRECTION POLICY

---

Corrections are published if the publication record is seriously affected, for example with regard to the scientific accuracy of published information, or the reputation of the authors, or the reputation of the journal. Corrections that do not affect the contribution in a material way or significantly impair the reader's understanding of the contribution (e.g. a spelling mistake or grammatical error) will not be published. When an amendment is published, it is linked bi-directionally to and from the article being corrected. A PDF version of the correction is added to the original article PDF so that the

original article PDF will remain the same as the printed page and readers downloading the PDF will receive the original article plus amendment.

Amendments are published in the article category "Addenda and Errata" and will be further classified as an "Erratum", "Corrigendum", "Addendum" or "Retraction". All such amendments should be as concise as possible, containing only material strictly relevant to the contribution being corrected. In very rare circumstances, JTHSM also reserves the right to remove articles

**Errata** concern the amendment of mistakes introduced by the journal in editing or production, including errors of omission such as failure to make factual proof corrections requested by authors within the deadline provided by the journal and within journal policy. Errata are generally not published for simple, obvious typing errors, but are published when an apparently simple error is significant (for example, a greek mu for an 'm' in a unit, or a typing error in the corresponding author's email address).

If there is an error in a figure or table, the usual procedure is to publish a sentence of rectification. A significant error in the figure or table is corrected by publication of a new corrected figure or table as an erratum. The figure or table is republished only if the editor considers it necessary. If the colours of histogram bars were wrongly designated in the figure legend, for example, a sentence of correction would be published as an erratum; the entire figure would not be reproduced.

**Corrigenda** submitted by the original authors are published if the scientific accuracy or reproducibility of the original paper is compromised. JTHSM will publish corrigenda if there is an error in the published author list, but not usually for overlooked acknowledgements.

Readers wishing to draw the journal's attention to a significant published error should submit their comments as a "Letter to the Editor". Such "Letters to the Editor" will be carefully reviewed by unrelated and neutral referees. On editorial acceptance, the paper will be sent to the authors of the original paper to provide an opportunity for their early response.

**Addenda** are judged on the significance of the addition to the interpretation of the original publication. Addenda do not contradict the original publication, but if the authors inadvertently omitted significant information available to them at the time, this material will be published as an addendum after peer review.

**Retractions** are judged according to whether the main conclusion of the paper is seriously undermined as a result, for example, of subsequent information coming to light of which the authors were not aware at the time of publication. In the case of experimental papers, this can include e.g. further experiments by the authors or by others which do not confirm the main experimental conclusion of the original publication.

Readers wishing to draw the editors' attention to published work requiring retraction should first contact the authors of the original paper and then write to the journal, including copies of the correspondence with the authors (whether or not the correspondence has been answered). The editors will seek advice from reviewers if they judge that the information is likely to draw into question the main conclusions of the published paper.

Infringements of professional ethical codes, such as multiple submission, bogus claims of authorship, plagiarism, fraudulent use of data, or the like, will also result in an article being retracted.

All co-authors will be asked to agree to a retraction. In cases where some co-authors decline to sign a retraction, the editors reserve the right to publish the retraction with the dissenting author(s) identified.

**Article removal:** in very rare circumstances it may be necessary to remove an article from JTHSM. This will only occur where the article is clearly defamatory, or infringes others' legal rights, or where the article is, or there is good reason to expect it will be, the subject of a court order, or where the article, if acted upon, might pose a serious health risk.

In these circumstances, while the bibliographic information (title and authors) will be retained online, the text will be replaced with a page indicating that the article has been removed for legal reasons.

# Journal Sections

---

## EDITORIAL

The Editorial addresses issues of contemporary interest and provides a detailed introduction and commentary to the articles in the current issue. The editorial may be written by the Editor-in-Chief, the Associate Editor, or by any other member(s) of the Editorial Board. When appropriate, a “Guest Editorial” may be presented. However, the Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing does not accept unsolicited editorials.

---

## FULL (RESEARCH) PAPERS

For the Research Papers section, the Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing invites full-length manuscripts (not longer than 8,000 words and not shorter than 4,500 words) excluding references, from a variety of marketing disciplines; these papers may be either empirical or conceptual, and will be subject to strict double blind peer review (by at least two anonymous referees). The decision for the final acceptance of the paper will be taken unanimously by the Editor and by the Associate Editor. The manuscripts submitted should provide original and/or innovative ideas or approaches or findings that eventually push the frontiers of knowledge. Purely descriptive accounts are not considered suitable for this section. Each paper should have the following structure: a) abstract, b) introduction (including an overall presentation of the issue to be examined and the aims and objectives of the paper), c) main body (including, where appropriate, the review of literature, the development of hypotheses and/or models, research methodology, presentation of findings, and analysis and discussion), d) conclusions (including also, where appropriate, recommendations, practical implications, limitations, and suggestions for further research), e) bibliography, f) acknowledgements, and g) appendices.

---

## CASE STUDIES

Case Studies should be no longer than 3,500 words and not shorter than 2,000; these articles should be focusing on the detailed and critical presentation/review of real-life cases from the greater marketing sector, and must include – where appropriate – relevant references and bibliography. Case Studies should aim at disseminating information and/or good practices, combined with critical analysis of real examples. Purely descriptive accounts may be considered suitable for this section, provided that are well-justified and of interest to

the readers of the Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing. Each article should have the following structure: a) abstract, b) introduction (including an overall presentation of the case to be examined and the aims and objectives of the article), c) main body (including, where appropriate, the review of literature, the presentation of the case study, the critical review of the case and relevant discussion), d) conclusions (including also, where appropriate, recommendations, practical implications, and suggestions for further study), e) bibliography, f) acknowledgements, and g) appendices. All Case Studies are subject to blind peer review (by at least two anonymous referees). The decision for the final acceptance of the article will be taken unanimously by the Editor and by the Associate Editor.

---

## RESEARCH NOTES

Research Notes should be no longer than 3,000 words and not shorter than 1,000; these papers may be either empirical or conceptual, and will be subject to blind peer review (by at least two anonymous referees). The decision for the final acceptance of the paper will be taken unanimously by the Editor and by the Associate Editor. The manuscripts submitted may present research-in-progress or my focus on the conceptual development of models and approaches that have not been proven yet through primary research. In all cases, the papers should provide original ideas, approaches or preliminary findings that are open to discussion. Purely descriptive accounts may be considered suitable for this section, provided that are well-justified and of interest to the readers of JTHSM. Each paper should have the following structure: a) abstract, b) introduction (including an overall presentation of the issue to be examined and the aims and objectives of the paper), c) main body (including, where appropriate, the review of literature, the development of hypotheses and/or models, research methodology, presentation of findings, and analysis and discussion), d) conclusions (including also, where appropriate, recommendations, practical implications, limitations, and suggestions for further research), e) bibliography, f) acknowledgements, and g) appendices.

---

## BOOK REVIEWS

Book Reviews should be no longer than 1,500 words and not shorter than 1,000; these articles aim at presenting and critically reviewing books from the greater field of tourism, heritage, services and marketing. Most reviews should focus

on new publications, but older books are also welcome for presentation. Book Reviews are not subject to blind peer review; the decision for the final acceptance of the article will be taken unanimously by the Editor-in-Chief and by the Book & Conference Reviews Editor. Where appropriate, these articles may include references and bibliography. Books to be reviewed may be assigned to potential authors by the Book & Conference Reviews Editor, though JTHSM is also open to unsolicited suggestions for book reviews from interested parties.

---

## **CONFERENCE REPORTS**

---

Conference Reports should be no longer than 2,000 words and not shorter than 1,000; these articles aim at presenting and critically reviewing conferences from the greater field of tourism, heritage, services and marketing. Most reports should focus on recent conferences (i.e., conferences that took place not before than three months from the date of manuscript submission), but older conferences are also welcome for presentation if appropriate. Conference Reports are not subject to blind peer review; the decision for the final acceptance of the article will be taken unanimously by the Editor-in-Chief and by the Book & Conference Reports Editor. Where appropriate, these articles may include references and bibliography. Conference reports may be assigned to potential authors by the Book & Conference Reports Editor, though JTHSM is also open to unsolicited suggestions for reports from interested parties.

---

## **INDUSTRY VIEWPOINTS**

---

Industry Viewpoints should be no longer than 1,500 words and not shorter than 500; these articles may have a “commentary” form, and aim at presenting and discussing ideas, views and suggestions by practitioners (marketing industry professionals, marketing planners, policy makers, other marketing stakeholders, etc.). Through these articles, JTHSM provides a platform for the exchange of ideas and for developing closer links between academics and practitioners. Most viewpoints should focus on contemporary issues, but other issues are also welcome for presentation if appropriate. Industry Viewpoints are not subject to blind peer review; the decision for the final acceptance of the article will be taken unanimously by the Editor-in-Chief and by the Associate Editor. These articles may be assigned to potential authors by the editor, though JTHSM is also open to unsolicited contributions from interested parties.

# Notes for Authors

---

## MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION

---

Manuscripts should be written as understandably and concisely as possible with clarity and meaningfulness. Submission of a manuscript to the Journal of Tourism, Heritage & Services Marketing represents a certification on the part of the author(s) that it is an original work and has not been copyrighted elsewhere; manuscripts that are eventually published may not be reproduced in any other publication (print or electronic). Submissions are accepted only in electronic form; authors are requested to submit manuscripts (full research papers, case studies, research notes and all other types of manuscripts) through Easy Chair online submission system used by JTHSM, accessible at: <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=jthsm1>

All submissions should include author's and co-authors' – if any – ORCID (compulsory for all submissions since volume 5, issue 1, 2019).

Feedback regarding the submission of a manuscript (including the 3 anonymous reviewers' comments) will be provided to the author(s) within six weeks of the receipt of the manuscript. Submission of a manuscript will be held to imply that it contains original unpublished work not being considered for publication elsewhere at the same time. If appropriate, author(s) can correct first proofs. Manuscripts submitted to JTHSM, accepted for publication or not, cannot be returned to the author(s).

---

## MANUSCRIPT LENGTH

---

Full research Papers should be not longer than 8,000 words and not shorter than 4,500 words (excluding references). Research Notes should be no longer than 3,000 words and not shorter than 1,000. Case Studies should be no longer than 3,500 words and not shorter than 2,000. Book Reviews should be no longer than 1,500 words and not shorter than 1,000. Conference Reports should be no longer than 2,000 words and not shorter than 1,000. Industry Viewpoints should be no longer than 1,500 words and not shorter than 500. Manuscripts that do not fully conform to the above word limits (according to the type of the article) will be automatically rejected and should not be entered into the reviewing process.

---

## MANUSCRIPT STYLE & PREPARATION

---

All submissions (research papers, research notes, case studies, book reviews, conference reports, industry

viewpoints, and forthcoming events) must have a title of no more than 10 words.

Manuscripts should be double-line spaced, and have at least 2,5 cm (one-inch) margin on all four sides. Pages should be numbered consecutively.

The use of footnotes within the text is discouraged – use endnotes instead. Endnotes should be kept to a minimum, be used to provide additional comments and discussion, and should be numbered consecutively in the text and typed on a separate page at the end of the article.

Quotations must be taken accurately from the original source. Alterations to the quotations must be noted. Quotation marks (“ ”) are to be used to denote direct quotes. Inverted commas (‘ ’) should denote a quote within a quotation. If the quotation is less than 3 lines, then it should be included in the main text enclosed in quotation marks. If the quotation is more than 3 lines, then it should be separated from the main text and indented.

The name(s) of any sponsor(s) of the research contained in the manuscript, or any other acknowledgements, should appear at the very end of the manuscript.

Tables, figures and illustrations are to be included in the text and to be numbered consecutively (in Arabic numbers). Each table, figure or illustration must have a title.

The text should be organized under appropriate section headings, which, ideally, should not be more than 500-700 words apart.

The main body of the text should be written in Times New Roman letters, font size 12.

Section headings should be written in Arial letters, font size 12, and should be marked as follows: primary headings should be centered and typed in bold capitals and underlined; secondary headings should be typed with italic bold capital letters; other headings should be typed in capital letters. Authors are urged to write as concisely as possible, but not at the expense of clarity.

The preferred software for submission is Microsoft Word.

Authors submitting papers for publication should specify which section of the journal they wish their paper to be considered for: research papers, research notes, case studies, book reviews, conference reports, industry viewpoints, and forthcoming events.

Author(s) are responsible for preparing manuscripts which are clearly written in acceptable, scholarly English, and which contain no errors of spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Neither the Editorial Board nor the Publisher is responsible for correcting errors of spelling or grammar.

Where acronyms are used, their full expression should be given initially.

Authors are asked to ensure that there are no libelous implications in their work.

---

## MANUSCRIPT PRESENTATION

---

For submission, manuscripts of research papers, research notes and case studies should be arranged in the following order of presentation:

**First page:** title, subtitle (if required), author's name and surname, author's ORCID (compulsory for all submissions since volume 5, issue 1, 2019), affiliation, full postal address, telephone number and e-mail address. Respective names, affiliations, emails and addresses of co-author(s) should be clearly indicated. Also, include an abstract of not less than 100 and not more than 150 words and up to 5 keywords that identify article content. Also include a short biography of the author (about 25 words); in the case of co-author(s), the same details should also be included. All correspondence will be sent to the first named author, unless otherwise indicated.

**Second page:** title, an abstract of not more than 100 words and up to 5 keywords that identify article content. Do not include the author(s) details, affiliation(s), and biographies in this page.

**Subsequent pages:** the paper should begin on the third page and should not subsequently reveal the title or authors. In these pages should be included the main body of text (including tables, figures and illustrations); list of references; appendixes; and endnotes (numbered consecutively).

The author(s) should ensure that their names cannot be identified anywhere in the text.

---

## GUIDANCE ON WRITING ABSTRACTS

---

*JTHSM* provides the following guidance to help authors write an abstract of maximum value to readers. Authors are encouraged to follow this guidance. An abstract is a concise summary of a larger work, typically written in one paragraph of 100 to 200 words. Its purpose is to help readers quickly discern the purpose and content of the work. Manuscripts submitted to *JTHSM* must include an abstract written in English, of not less than 150 and not more than 200 words. Accuracy, brevity, and clarity are the ABCs of writing a good abstract. Writing style: a) Use a who, what, when, where, why, how, and "so what" approach to addressing the main elements in your abstract; b) Use specific words, phrases, concepts, and keywords from your paper; c) Use precise, clear, descriptive language, and write from an objective rather than evaluative point of view; d) Write concisely, but in complete sentences; e) Use plain language, do not use jargon, and do not use acronyms except for commonly used terms (then define the acronym the first time used); f) Write in the third person; do not use "I" or "we"; g) Use verbs in the active voice. A well-written abstract generally addresses four key elements:

- **Purpose:** describes the objectives and hypotheses of the research.
- **Methods:** describes important features of your research design, data, and analysis. This may include the sample size, geographic location, demographics, variables, controls, conditions, tests, descriptions of research

design, details of sampling techniques, and data gathering procedures.

- **Results:** describes the key findings of the study, including experimental, correlational, or theoretical results. It may also provide a brief explanation of the results.
- **Implications:** show how the results connect to policy and practice, and provide suggestions for follow-up, future studies, or further analysis.

---

## REFERENCING STYLE

---

In the text, references should be cited with parentheses using the "author, date" style – for example for single citations (Ford, 2004), or for multiple citations (Isaac, 1998; Jackson, 2003). Page numbers for specific points or direct quotations must be given (i.e., Ford, 2004: 312-313). The Reference list, placed at the end of the manuscript, must be typed in alphabetical order of authors. The specific format is:

- For journal papers: Tribe, J. (2002). The philosophic practitioner. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 29(2), pp. 338-357.
- For books and monographs: Teare, R. & Ingram, H. (1993). *Strategic Management: A Resource-Based Approach for the Hospitality and Tourism Industries*. London: Cassell.
- For chapters in edited books: Sigala, M. and Christou, E. (2002). Use of Internet for enhancing tourism and hospitality education: lessons from Europe (pp. 112-123). In K.W. Wober, A.J. Frew and M. Hitz (Eds.) *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism*, Wien: Springer-Verlag.
- For papers presented in conferences: Ford, B. (2004). Adoption of innovations on hospitality. *Paper presented at the 22nd EuroCHRIE Conference*. Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey: 3-7 November 2004.
- For papers published in conference proceedings: Jackman, F. (2008). Adoption of innovations on hospitality. *Proceedings the 26th EuroCHRIE Conference*. Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- For unpublished works: Gregoriades, M. (2004). The impact of trust in brand loyalty, *Unpublished PhD Thesis*. Chios, Greece: University of the Aegean.
- For Internet sources (if you know the author): Johns, D. (2003) The power of branding in tourism. [Http://www.tourismabstracts.org/marketing/papers-authors/id3456](http://www.tourismabstracts.org/marketing/papers-authors/id3456). Accessed the 12 th of January 2005, at 14:55. (Note: always state clearly the full URL of your source)
- For Internet sources (if you do not know the author): Tourism supply and demand. [Http://www.tourismabstracts.org/marketing/papers-authors/id3456](http://www.tourismabstracts.org/marketing/papers-authors/id3456). Accessed the 30 th of January 2004, at 12:35. (Note: always state clearly the full URL of your source)
- For reports: Edelstein, L. G. & Benini, C. (1994). *Meetings and Conventions*. Meetings market report (August), 60-82.

---

## PLAGIARISM

---

*JTHSM* evaluates submissions on the understanding that they are the original work of the author(s). We expect that references made in a manuscript or article to another person's work or idea will be credited appropriately. Equally we expect authors to gain all appropriate permissions prior to publication. *JTHSM* systematically run submitted papers through plagiarism-detection software (using iThenticate by Turnitin plagiarism checker) to identify possible cases; *JTHSM* accepts and publishes manuscripts that score as "Green" in Similarity Report by Turnitin.

Re-use of text, data, figures, or images without appropriate acknowledgment or permission is considered plagiarism, as is the paraphrasing of text, concepts, and ideas. All allegations of plagiarism are investigated thoroughly and in accordance with COPE guidelines.

---

## AUTHORSHIP CRITERIA

---

Authorship confers credit and has important academic, social, and financial implications. Authorship also implies responsibility and accountability for published work. The following recommendations are intended to ensure that contributors who have made substantive intellectual contributions to a paper are given credit as authors, but also that contributors credited as authors understand their role in taking responsibility and being accountable for what is published.

The JHTSM recommends that authorship be based on the following 4 criteria:

- Substantial contributions to the conception or design of the work; or the acquisition, analysis, or interpretation of data for the work; AND
- Drafting the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content; AND
- Final approval of the version to be published; AND
- Agreement to be accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

In addition to being accountable for the parts of the work he or she has done, an author should be able to identify which co-authors are responsible for specific other parts of the work. In addition, authors should have confidence in the integrity of the contributions of their co-authors.

All those designated as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, and all who meet the four criteria should be identified as authors. Those who do not meet all four criteria should be acknowledged as contributors (see below). These authorship criteria are intended to reserve the status of authorship for those who deserve credit and can take responsibility for the work. The criteria are not intended for use as a means to disqualify colleagues from authorship who otherwise meet authorship criteria by denying them the opportunity to meet criterion 2 or 3 (see above). Therefore, all individuals who meet the first criterion should have the opportunity to participate in the review, drafting, and final approval of the manuscript.

The individuals who conduct the work are responsible for identifying who meets these criteria and ideally should do so when planning the work, making modifications as appropriate as the work progresses. It is the collective responsibility of the authors, not the journal to which the work is submitted, to determine that all people named as authors meet all four criteria; it is not the role of journal editors to determine who qualifies or does not qualify for authorship or to arbitrate authorship conflicts. If agreement cannot be reached about who qualifies for authorship, the institution(s) where the work was performed, not the journal editor, should be asked to investigate. If authors request removal or addition of an author after manuscript submission or publication, journal editors should seek an explanation and signed statement of agreement for the requested change from all listed authors and from the author to be removed or added. The corresponding author is the one individual who takes primary responsibility for communication with the journal during the manuscript submission, peer review, and publication process, and typically ensures that all the journal's administrative requirements, such as providing details of authorship, ethics committee approval, clinical trial registration documentation, and gathering conflict of interest forms and statements, are properly completed, although these duties may be delegated to one or more coauthors. The corresponding author should be available throughout the submission and peer review process to respond to editorial queries in a timely way, and should be available after publication to respond to critiques of the work and cooperate with any requests from the journal for data or additional information should questions about the paper arise after publication.

When a large multi-author group has conducted the work, the group ideally should decide who will be an author before the work is started and confirm who is an author before submitting the manuscript for publication. All members of the group named as authors should meet all four criteria for authorship, including approval of the final manuscript, and they should be able to take public responsibility for the work and should have full confidence in the accuracy and integrity of the work of other group authors. They will also be expected as individuals to complete conflict-of-interest disclosure forms.

---

## NON-AUTHOR CONTRIBUTORS

---

Contributors who meet fewer than all 4 of the above criteria for authorship should not be listed as authors, but they should be acknowledged. Examples of activities that alone (without other contributions) do not qualify a contributor for authorship are acquisition of funding; general supervision of a research group or general administrative support; and writing assistance, technical editing, language editing, and proofreading. Those whose contributions do not justify authorship may be acknowledged individually or together as a group under a single heading and their contributions should be specified (e.g., "served as scientific advisors," "critically reviewed the study proposal," "collected data," "participated in writing or technical editing of the manuscript").

Because acknowledgment may imply endorsement by acknowledged individuals of a study's data and conclusions,

authors are advised to obtain written permission to be acknowledged from all acknowledged individuals.

# Publication Ethics & Malpractice Policy

---

## PUBLICATION ETHICS

*JTHSM* is committed to maintaining the highest standards of publication ethics and to supporting ethical research practices and adheres to the [COPE Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers](#). The journal editors follow the [COPE Code of Conduct for Journal Editors](#) and to refer reviewers to the [COPE Ethical Guidelines for Peer Reviewers](#) as appropriate. Allegations of misconduct are investigated in accordance with the [COPE Best Practice Guidelines](#) as far as is practicable.

This journal has adopted a comprehensive publication ethics and publication malpractice statement, composed using the publishing ethics resource kit and in compliance with Elsevier recommendations and COPE guidelines, as described in-details below.

---

## DUTIES OF THE JTHSM EDITORS

### *Fair play*

Submitted manuscripts are evaluated for their intellectual content without regard to race, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, ethnic origin, citizenship, or political philosophy of the authors.

### *Confidentiality*

The Editor-in-Chief and any editorial staff do not disclose any information about a submitted manuscript to anyone other than the corresponding author, reviewers, potential reviewers, other editorial advisers, and the publisher, as appropriate.

### *Disclosure and conflicts of interest*

Unpublished materials disclosed in a submitted manuscript are not used in Editor's or Reviewers' own research without the explicit written consent of the author(s).

### *Publication decisions*

The Editor-in-Chief of *JTHSM* is responsible for deciding which of the submitted articles should be published. The Editor-in-Chief may be guided by the policies of the journal's Editorial Board and constrained by such legal requirements as shall then be in force regarding libel, copyright infringement and plagiarism. The Editor-in-Chief may confer with other editors or reviewers in making this decision.

---

## DUTIES OF PEER REVIEWERS

### *Contribution to editorial decisions*

Peer review assists the Editor-in-Chief in making editorial decisions and, through the editorial communication with the

author, may also assist the author in improving the manuscript.

### *Promptness*

Any invited referee who feels unqualified to review the research reported in a manuscript submitted to *JTHSM* or knows that its timely review will be impossible should immediately notify the Editor-in-Chief so that alternative reviewers can be contacted.

### *Confidentiality*

Any manuscripts received by *JTHSM* for review are treated as confidential documents. They are not shown or discussed with others except if authorised by the Editor-in-Chief.

### *Standards of objectivity*

Reviews should be conducted objectively. Personal criticism of the author is unacceptable. Referees should express their views clearly with appropriate supporting arguments.

### *Acknowledgement of sources*

Reviewers should identify relevant published work that has not been cited by the authors. Any statement that an observation, derivation, or argument had been previously reported should be accompanied by the relevant citation. A reviewer should also call to the *JTHSM* Editor's attention any substantial similarity or overlap between the manuscript under consideration and any other published data of which they have personal knowledge.

### *Disclosure and conflict of interest*

Privileged information or ideas obtained through peer review must be kept confidential and not used for personal advantage. Reviewers should not consider evaluating manuscripts in which they have conflicts of interest resulting from competitive, collaborative, or other relationships or connections with any of the authors, companies, or institutions connected to the submission.

---

## DUTIES OF AUTHORS

### *Reporting standards*

Authors reporting results of original research should present an accurate account of the work performed as well as an objective discussion of its significance. Underlying data should be represented accurately in the manuscript. A paper should contain sufficient detail and references to permit others to replicate the work. Fraudulent or knowingly inaccurate statements constitute unethical behaviour and are unacceptable.

### *Originality and Plagiarism*

The authors should ensure that they have written entirely original works, and if the authors have used the work and/or words of others they are responsible to ensure that this has

been appropriately cited or quoted. *JTHSM* systematically run submitted papers through plagiarism-detection software (using iThenticate by Turnitin plagiarism checker) to identify possible cases; *JTHSM* accepts and publishes manuscripts that score as “**Green**” in Similarity Report by Turnitin.

#### *Multiple, redundant or concurrent publication*

An author should not in general publish manuscripts describing essentially the same research in more than one journal or primary publication. Parallel submission of the same manuscript to more than one journal constitutes unethical publishing behaviour and is unacceptable.

#### *Acknowledgement of sources*

Proper acknowledgment of the work of others must always be given. Authors should also cite publications that have been influential in determining the nature of the reported work.

#### *Authorship of a manuscript*

Authorship should be limited to those who have made a significant contribution to the conception, design, execution, or interpretation of the reported study. All those who have made significant contributions should be listed as coauthors. Where there are others who have participated in certain substantive aspects of the research project, they should be named in an Acknowledgement section. The corresponding author should ensure that all appropriate co-authors (according to the above definition) and no inappropriate co-authors are included in the author list of the manuscript, and that all co-authors have seen and approved the final version of the paper and have agreed to its submission for publication. All submissions should include author's and all co-authors' – if any – ORCID (compulsory for all submissions since volume 5, issue 1, 2019).

#### *Disclosure and conflicts of interest*

All authors should disclose in their manuscript any financial or other substantive conflict of interest that might be construed to influence the results or their interpretation in the manuscript. All sources of financial support for the project should be disclosed.

#### *Fundamental errors in published works*

When an author discovers a significant error or inaccuracy in his/her own published work, it is the author's obligation to promptly notify the journal's Editor-in-Chief and cooperate with them to either retract the paper or to publish an appropriate erratum.

---

### **PUBLISHER'S CONFIRMATION**

---

In cases of alleged or proven scientific misconduct, fraudulent publication or plagiarism the Publisher (School of Business & Economics, International Hellenic University), in close collaboration with the *JTHSM* Editor-in-Chief, will take all appropriate measures to clarify the situation and to amend the article in question. This includes the prompt publication of an erratum or, in the most severe cases, the complete retraction of the affected work.

The Publisher and the Journal do not discriminate on the basis of age, colour, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, gender, genetic predisposition or carrier status, or sexual orientation in its publishing programs, services and activities.

---

### **SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT AND BREACHES OF PUBLICATION ETHICS**

---

Scientific misconduct includes fabrication, falsification, and plagiarism by the authors.

Breaches of publication ethics include failure to reveal financial conflicts of interest; omitting a deserving author or adding a non-contributing author; misrepresenting publication status in the reference list (erroneously claiming that a paper is “in-press”); self-plagiarism without attribution; and duplicate or redundant publication.

- Editorial action should be expected in breaches of publication ethics and cases of scientific misconduct. *JTHSM* has adopted the principles of, the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE). Any and all authors submitting a manuscript to *JTHSM* agree to adhere to the ethical guidelines contained in the Notes for Authors, and acknowledges that they are aware of the consequences that may result following breaches of publication ethics. Consequences include notification of the breach in the journal, retraction of published articles, notification of institutional authorities, subsequent institutional investigation, and loss of privileges of publishing in the journal.
- Redundant or duplicate publication is publication of data, tables, figures, or any other content that substantially overlaps with other material published previously or to be published in the future. This includes work published by others or any author of the manuscript submitted to *JTHSM*. When submitting a paper, the corresponding author must make a full statement to the Editor-in-Chief in the cover letter about all submissions and previous reports (in any language) that could be regarded as redundant or duplicate publication of the same or very similar work. The corresponding author is also responsible for alerting the Editor-in-Chief if the work includes subjects about which a previous report has been published or about a manuscript that is under review by, submitted to, in press at, or to be submitted to or published in another journal in the future. Any such work must be referred to and referenced in the new paper and a copy of the material should be included with the submission as a supplemental file. Abstracts presented at scientific meetings (with no press releases and not discussed in detail at a symposium) are not considered pre-published material.
- Plagiarism is the use of others' ideas or words without properly crediting the source. If authors include one or more sentences verbatim from another source, the original source must be cited and the sentence(s) put in quotation marks to avoid plagiarism. Authors must not use materials of others (text, figures, images, tables) without permission and attribution, including their own published work.
- Overlap detection technology has been implemented by *JTHSM* and a number of other journals in the form of iThenticate, a software tool created by CrossRef to check for overlap in submitted manuscripts. iThenticate detects possible plagiarism in text using an extensive database of published materials. Manuscripts with excessive duplication will be rejected.

- Editorial action should be expected in cases of scientific misconduct and breaches of publication ethics. Editorial actions that may be taken include notification of the breach in the journal, retraction of published articles, notification of institutional authorities, and loss of privileges of publishing in JTHSM.

---

## **COMPLAINTS**

---

The authors who may have a complaint against any of the aspects of their interaction with JTHSM should, in the first instance, write/e-mail to the Associate Editor. In case it does not resolve the issue, the complaint should be forwarded to the Editor-in-Chief. The Associate Editor and the Editor-in-Chief aim to acknowledge the complaint within 7 days after receiving it. In addition, they should explain to the author the procedure which they will be undertaking to resolve the matter.