New Cultural Mediators, Cocreation, and the Cultural Consumption of Creative Tourism Experiences

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Abstract

Creative tourism has been a proficuous ground for the implementation of ICT's (Information and Communications Technology) strategies and the so-called creative industries. New cultural mediators are changing tourism consumption. Postmodern consumers have brought new perceptions to cocreation processes through user-generated content, eWOM (Electronic Word of Mouth), peer-to-peer exchange, collaborative economy, SoLoMo (social-local-mobile) tourists, among others. Booktubers and music fans/consumers in Chile constitute examples of diverse consumption through virtual and physical mediation, as capital construction enables social practices. In this exploratory study, the authors discuss how creative experiences are being consumed through cultural mediation made possible by technological developments. The creative tourism network website is analysed in the light of postmodern cultural mediation and capital construction.

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Introduction

Creative tourism can be understood as a postmodern type of tourism (Molina, 2016) where tourists engage with locals directly and are given the chance to develop their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986, 2010). ICT's and new technologies play an important role where new consumers act as cultural mediators influencing cultural and tourism consumption. New cultural mediators (Arriagada & Cruz, 2014; Jeffman, 2014), present themselves as being part of a specialized group of consumers which

proactively influence consumption choices in several fields. In this exploratory study, two examples are analyzed in order to connect new approaches to cultural mediation in the sociology of culture and tourism. Booktubers and music consumer fans represent two important examples where cultural mediation exceeds virtual purposes. New ways of cultural capital creation are present as the establishment of new virtual and physical networks crucial for tourism and culture fruition, boosts social phenomena. The aim of this chapter is to discuss how creative tourism experiences are being consumed by a new cultural mediation made possible by technological developments. The creative tourism network website is analyzed (http://www.creativetourismnetwork.org (http://www.creativetourismnetwork.org)) using content analysis (Carvalho, Costa, & Ferreira, 2015; Ratz, 2016). This exploratory research seeks to perceive how cultural mediation occurs in relation to this special niche tourism (Richards, 2016), how the website allows for social engagement and how creative destinations are been promoted in terms of cultural mediation processes. The chapter is organized in several sections. The Background is divided in three theoretical areas in which the paper is based. In the next section the main focus of the chapter treats in detail the creative tourism network website, followed by future research directions and conclusions sections.

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Key Terms in this Chapter

Technological Mediated Experiences (/dictionary/technological-mediated-experiences/61905): Consumer experiences negotiated and enhanced by virtual platforms, websites and the internet where intervenients make use of technology to improve tourism phenomenon.

Co-Creation (/dictionary/co-creation/4101): Process through which the customer participates in the production and consumption of products, services or experiences.

Creative Tourism (/dictionary/creative-tourism/39287): Special interest tourism alternative to massive forms of cultural consumption of tourism, where the tourists have the possibility to develop their creative capital through engaging with locals.

Creativity (/dictionary/creativity/6166): Problem-solving strategy or innovation process used to design more engaging and memorable tourism experiences.

Creative Experiences (/dictionary/creative-experiences/61902): New ways for tourists to engage in cultural experiences based in activities characteristic of the touristic destination where they are undertaken.

New Cultural Mediators (/dictionary/new-cultural-mediators/61903): These new cultural agents endowed with digital capital are present in virtual networks with physical manifestations that influence and change cultural/creative tourism consumption by overcoming traditional cultural production systems.

Specialized Consumption (/dictionary/specialized-consumption/61904): Reflexive consumption made by conscious consumers who often know more about the experience/service than who is providing them.

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