Mapping of open innovation practices in the tourism industry

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Open tourism, a collective term for open models of value creation applied in the tourism industry, has been highlighted as a possible strategy for differentiation and renewal for the tourism industry. The last decade has seen a surge in a wide range of open tourism practices, whereby external, community-based resources are used for purposes ranging from marketing of small farms to promotion of regional development. Utilizing a combination of literature-based and empirical-based research techniques, this paper identifies and characterizes open tourism practices not previously studied in the academic literature. It categorizes the practices into four major types, namely co-creation, crowdsourcing, crowdfunding of tourism products, and community-based product development and volunteering, as well as a number of subtypes. Concrete, real-world examples are provided for each approach. The contribution of this research is a systematic classification of open tourism practices, thus providing the academic literature with a framework, and practitioners with a toolbox, for open tourism practices.

Keywords: Open tourism; Co-creation; Crowdfunding; Crowdsourcing

1. Introduction

Innovation is an important strategic objective for every industry in achieving growth, but plays an increasingly important role for those industries where markets are saturated, as is the case in tourism (Hjalager, 2002; Peters & Pikkemaat, 2014). As competition increases and the lifetime of new products and experiences get shorter, companies need to offer novel solutions to their customers, which makes innovation a need for the tourism industry (Willfort et al., 2016).

In the vast literature on innovation, a growing body of research has focused on the practice of open innovation, in which organizations leverage the outside world for their innovation. Defined as "the use of purposive inflows and outflows of knowledge to accelerate internal innovation, and expand the markets for external use of

innovation, respectively" (Chesbrough, 2003). Open innovation, in essence, is a means for organizations to gain an advantage in the market.

Open innovation provides opportunities to organizations by allowing them to capture value through leveraging external resources that complement internal research and development capabilities (Bogers & West 2012; Chesbrough 2003; Chesbrough 2006a; Chesbrough 2006b). From a conceptual perspective, open innovation is an organizational approach to understanding and leveraging network resources to improve an organizations' performance and resource utilization.

Applied in the tourism industry, open innovation has been referred to as "open tourism", where it encapsulates different manifestations of "opening movements" in the tourism industry (Egger et al., 2016), among which crowdsourcing and co-creation are the most well researched. In line with Chesbrough's definition of open innovation, each mode of open tourism shares the common basis of attempting to bring resources in a company's external environment into the formerly autonomous value creation process of the company or to expand the markets for the company's external use of innovation. Open tourism has been highlighted as a possible strategy for differentiation and renewal for the tourism industry (Egger et al., 2016).

An edited book by Egger et al. (2016) on open tourism investigated various aspects and applications of open innovation practices in the tourism industry. A small number of other articles have made use of the concept or discussed open innovation in relation to the tourism industry. No previous research, however, has attempted to systematically classify open innovation practices that have been applied in the tourism and hospitality industry. Therefore, this paper aims to *systematically classify open innovation practices used in the tourism industry*.

To address this research aim, we used a combination of literature-based and empirical research-based techniques to identify relevant open innovation practices that have been applied in the tourism and hospitality industry over the last decade. Our research revealed four types of open innovation practices in the tourism industry, namely co-creation, crowdsourcing, crowdfunding of tourism products, and community-based product development and volunteering. Real-life examples of the different types of open tourism practices were identified and described.

This paper contributes to two literature streams, open innovation and studies looking at innovation in the tourism industry. It also makes a contribution to practitioners in the tourism industry.

First, we contribute to the open innovation literature by systematically categorizing open innovation practices observed in the tourism industry. The scope is not limited to cases already studied in the academic literature; using primary online sources, we identify and classify instances of open innovation in the tourism industry that have not previously been accounted for in the academic literature.

Second, our study contributes to research that looks into innovation in the tourism industry by categorizing a subset of innovation practices in the tourism industry and providing an overview of the different open modes of innovation that are available to actors in the tourism industry.

Third, the four modes and their associated real-life cases described in this paper can provide practitioners with a rich toolbox and inspiring examples for their own innovation work.

The paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 reviews the academic literature on open innovation in tourism. Section 3 outlines the methods used in identifying relevant open innovation activities in the tourism industry and classifying these into four major modes of open tourism. In Section 4, we present the four modes that were synthesized from the academic and empirical literatures. In Section 6, we interpret the findings, discuss their implications for the overarching research aim, and outline the contributions of the paper.

2. Theoretical Background

The tourism industry is characterized by rapidly changing customer needs and behaviors (Egger et al., 2016; Lohmann, 2004; Witt et al., 2013), while the industry is dominated by small players who often lack resources to work in a structured way to capture new opportunities and attract customers (Egger et al., 2016; Buhalis, 1998). In this environment, the concept of value creation is a key issue in tourism research as it is recognized as being vital in creating competitive advantage (Nasution & Mavondo, 2008; Sanchez et al., 2006). More recently, open models of value creation applied to the tourism industry have become an area of scientific study. This form of open innovation in the tourism industry, or "open tourism", has been highlighted as a possible strategy for differentiation and renewal for the tourism industry (Egger et al., 2016), where it is used as a collective term for open models of value creation applied to the tourism industry.

The rationale for actors in the tourism industry to collaborate with stakeholders beyond their organizational boundaries in order to gain access to resources for value co-creation can be found in the open innovation literature. This literature posits that organizations should engage with partners in order to innovate since they cannot solely rely on their own resources (Dahlander & Gann 2010; West & Gallagher, 2006).

One of the first researchers who examined open tourism identified the use of open innovation, crowdsourcing, and co-creation within the hospitality industry was Menzel (2011). Keeping with the literature on open innovation, we argue that crowdsourcing and co-creation fall into the broader category of open innovation (Enkel et al., 2009).

Although a number of instances of open tourism practices have been studied in the open tourism literature (Egger et al., 2016), no attempt has been made to systematically map the entire breadth of practices, as well as the broader modes, of open innovation applied in the tourism industry. Herein lies the research gap that this paper seeks to fill.

3. Methodology

We utilized a combination of literature-based and empirical research-based techniques to identify relevant open innovation practices that have been applied in the tourism and hospitality industry over the last decade.

First, we searched Web of Science for academic articles containing "open innovation" in conjunction with "tourism". This resulted in 64 academic articles. We then specifically searched Google Scholar for journal articles citing Egger et al. (2016), adhering to the "cited literature method" (e.g., Venkatesh et al., 2016). This resulted in an additional 28 academic articles. The total of 92 academic articles, which we read through in search of specific cases of open innovation in the tourism industry.

Second, we searched for instances of open innovation in the tourism industry by using Google Advanced Search results for relevant terms. Such terms included keywords related to open innovation ("open innovation", "co-creation", "contest", and so on) in conjunction with terms related to the tourism industry ("tourism", "travel", "hospitality", and so on). These terms were derived from the academic literature review. We went through the top 500 results returned by Google Advanced Search and noted down examples of open innovation practices in tourism.

Third, we manually clustered similar instances into higher-level categories. Although some modes of open innovation in tourisms are already known from the literature, the fact that no systematic mapping had been done led us to opt for an entirely bottom-up approach, not assuming the existence of any preexisting categories. This meant that new categories could emerge from the data.

Fourth, we exemplified each mode of open innovation in the tourism industry with real-world cases. The fact that these modes were derived by clustering similar instances meant that each identified instance was explicitly connected to a higher-level category.

4. Results

The study resulted in four high-level modes of open innovation applied in the tourism industry. The four modes are (1) co-creation; (2) crowdsourcing; (3) crowdfunding of tourism products; and (4) community-based product development and volunteering. Crowdsourcing contains four sub categories, namely (1) crowdsourcing for branding and marketing; (2) crowdsourcing of ideas for destination and product development; (3) problem solving through shorter events; and (4) algorithmic crowdsourcing. Table 1 provides an overview of different modes, as well as an example of each. Each mode is described in further detail in subsequent sections.

Table 1: Overview of the four modes of open tourism.

Open Tourism practice	Real-life Example
Co-creation	Self-produced wine offered by the Pasadena Neighborhood Winery in California offers visitors the possibility to create private label wine.
Crowdsourcing	*Crowdsourcing for branding and marketing.* The "Curators of Sweden" campaign, which was organized by the Swedish Institute in collaboration with Visit Sweden, let "spokespersons" with interesting backgrounds share their image of Sweden on the official Twitter account of Sweden. *Crowdsourcing of ideas for destination and product development.* Vienna2020 was an idea contest organized by Vienna Tourist Board, in which the general public was asked to contribute ideas to the city's 2020 Tourism Strategy. *Problem solving through shorter events.* The 2017 Edinburgh Tourism Innovation Challenge, a 3-day hackathon, was organized to analyze a range of tourism-related data and help take steps to solve the current problems in Scottish tourism industry.

	Algorithmic crowdsourcing. Researchers at Yahoo Labs uses algorithms that analyze user-generated online content to provide users with the most scenic route between two destinations, rather than simply the fastest route.
Crowdfunding of tourism products	The "Karma Project" uses crowdfunding to support a Sherpa village in Nepal to create their own sustainable tourism project, and then to use the tourism revenue for a local medical clinic.
Community-based product development and volunteering	Mountain bike tracks of Whakarewarewa Forest in New Zealand are designed and developed by a community of mountain bike enthusiasts.

4.1. Co-creation

Co-creation is defined as "the joint creation of value by the company and the customer; allowing the customer to co-construct the service experience to suit her context" (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004, p.8). It can thereby be seen as a process whereby actors together create mutual value (Grissemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012).

The importance of co-creation in tourism has primarily been described in terms of value creation in relation to the consumer (Shaw et al., 2011; Grissemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012; Roeffen & Scholl-Grissemann, 2016), by for instance creating unique and memorable experiences for customers in the emerging experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). In this regard, co-creation can be seen as a potential for value creation through interaction rather than by simply providing a service (Etgar, 2008).

Co-creation is especially interesting to study in the tourism industry since the industry itself sells experiences (Campos et al., 2015; Ihamäki, 2012; Ooi, 2010; Volo, 2009). It allows tourists to become a part of the process and co-design the experience, as the tourists actively participate and interact with the service providers. The concept has been applied successfully in an array of tourism businesses and it has especially been popular with food related businesses such as farms and wineries. These types of businesses saw the value in offering visitors the opportunity to not only buy their goods but also to participate in the production process.

One example is the self-produced wine offered by the Pasadena Neighborhood Winery in California that offers visitors the possibility to create private label wine. Guests are involved in every step of the production, everything from sorting, crushing, fermentation and pressing the grapes, to designing the packaging and making custom labels. A similar idea is offered to visitors of the German Alps, but in

cheese making rather that wine making. At Käseschule Allgäu in Oberstaufen, Germany guests can learn to produce their own cheese from local fresh milk (Egger et al., 2016). Another example of co-creation in tourism identified in this study is the "Dine with the Dutch" experience that matches tourists with host families in Amsterdam for a private home dinner.

4.2. Crowdsourcing

Crowdsourcing is defined as the act of outsourcing tasks originally performed inside an organization to an undefined, and generally large, network of people, typically through an open call (Hammon & Hippner, 2012; Howe, 2006). It allows organizations to leverage the power of crowds to generate and access new ideas as well as the development and marketing of new products and services (Willfort et al., 2016).

Depending on the objective and resources available, crowdsourcing can be conducted autonomously or through the help of crowdsourcing platforms that intermediate between the solution seeking organization and the "crowd" of individuals helping in providing solutions. Crowdsourcing platforms build connections and foster collaboration, thus acting as the intermediary between travellers and local communities. Sometimes, this means they take over the role of traditional commercial tour operators (Kohler et al, 2016).

The last decade has seen a surge in tourism businesses that have been tinkering with crowdsourcing (Sigala et al. 2012). Not only can crowdsourcing help tourism organizations to tap into ideas and resources outside the boundaries of the organization; they can also make it possible to implement marketing campaigns or improve a destination or tourism product in a time- and cost-effective manner, addressing the issues of resource scarcity and high-risk aversion (Menzel, 2016). Crowdsourcing can either be the foundation of a new business model or can be integrated into an existing business model (Menzel, 2016). Our research revealed that crowdsourcing initiatives in tourism, academic and empirical literatures are mainly conducted within existing business models.

There are numerous examples of the use of crowdsourcing in the tourism industry, often taking the form of innovation contests. Crowdsouring in the tourism industry can be classified into four distinct sub categories, described below.

Crowdsourcing for branding and marketing

The first and most common type among the identified instances is the use of crowdsourcing for branding and marketing purposes. Through crowdsourcing anyone can become part of a tourism marketing campaign, instead of the message coming from just one organization. One example is the "Curators of Sweden" campaign, co-organized by the Swedish Institute and Visit Sweden, in which spokespersons with interesting backgrounds were chosen to share their image of Sweden at the official Twitter account of Sweden (Kiráľová & Pavlíčeka, 2015). Another example is the Swedish Tourist Association's campaign "The Swedish Number", that connects callers from around the world with random Swedes who have signed up to be de facto ambassadors.

Crowdsourcing of ideas for destination and product development

A second type of crowdsourcing initiatives applied in the tourism industry is the use of idea contests. Such contests often aim to accelerate destination and tourism product development. Idea contests in the tourism industry sometimes target a specific group of individuals, such as students or experts, but sometimes invite the general public to contribute ideas and suggestions for how to make a destination or a tourism product better.

An example of such a contest is the Vienna2020 idea contest, organized by the Vienna Tourist Board (Diaconescu & Stanciulescu, 2016). The board had been working on its "Vienna 2020" tourism strategy since 2013 and launched the idea contest to improve its 2020 Tourism Strategy by challenging tourists and tourism stakeholders from all over the world to contribute ideas. An international strategy board evaluated the novelty and feasibility of the submitted ideas and their benefits for visitors to Vienna and local residents. The contest generated more than 500 ideas submitted from 40 different countries and according to the Vienna Tourist Board, some ideas have been integrated into its 2020 tourism strategy.

Problem solving through shorter events

One type of crowdsourcing that emerged from our research is problem solving through shorter events. Through short event of 1-3 days, a group of people who are experts in their fields get together to help develop a solution for a particular problem. This can take the form of individual and even competitive work or collective and

collaborative work where the participants work together toward a common goal. Such events are often organized in the form of hackathons[1], online contest, or workshops.

Such short events started to gain popularity in the tourism industry to tackle challenges of all sorts, from the enhancement of the travelers' journey through wearable technology to improvements in the process of itinerary planning. A majority of such events organized by tourism industry actors aim to solve problems that need technical solutions. They typically target app developers or data scientists.

An example of a hackathon in the tourism industry is the 2017 Edinburgh Tourism Innovation Challenge, which aimed to generate economic, social and scientific value from big data for the tourism industry. The contest presented the challenge of analyzing a range of tourism-related data and help take steps to solve the current problems in Scottish tourism industry. The contest was run as a 3-day event, where teams of technology professionals and students, as well as tourism- and festival-related experts, were brought together to analyze a range of tourism-related data and help take steps to solve the current problems in Scottish tourism industry.

Algorithmic crowdsourcing

The third category of crowdsourcing, algorithmic crowdsourcing, relies on algorithms and data collected through computers to improve a product or service. In some cases, humans actively contribute information that algorithms use, while in other cases computers collect and analyze data from open sources such as online reviews, photos, internet searches, and posts in social media. Outcomes of such crowdsourcing initiatives include travel and itinerary planning tools that are based on crowdsourced user-generated content (Zhou et al., 2017).

As discovered in this study, a research project initiated by Yahoo Labs aims to provide maps that show users the most scenic route between two destinations, rather than simply the fasted route as in traditional map applications. The project gathers data from Urban Gems, a website with user-generated content that aims to capture aspects of the travel experience that are difficult to define, such as beauty, happiness, quietness, and deprivation. The Yahoo researchers presented users of the website with

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[1] Hackathons are events in which software developers, graphic designers, and others subject-matter-experts collaborate to solve a specific predefined problem.

two street-view photos side by side and asked them to pick the one that looks most beautiful, quiet and happy.

The researchers later expanded the number of locations in their software by mapping out beautiful routes in Boston. This time they developed an automated process to mine photos as well as data such as comments, keywords and tags of more than 1.3 million inhabitants and visitors in Boston. Both in London and Boston, users assessed specific paths mapped by the software developed, confirming that they were both beautiful and efficient.

4.3. Crowdfunding of tourism products

Crowdfunding is a method for funding a venture by allowing founders of for-profit, cultural, or social projects to receive financing from many individuals (Mollick, 2014). Since around 2008, after pioneering crowdfunding platforms such as Kickstarter and Indigogo were lauched, the crowdfunding market has been growing exponentially. The number of crowdfunding platforms has been increasing globally, moving from about $53 million in 2010 to over $16 billion in 2014 (Massolution, 2015, Massolution, 2013).

Crowdfunding initiatives advertised on online platforms can potentially deliver a wide range of benefits by allowing anyone across the globe to help fund tourism ideas or products through online platforms. There have been several examples of crowdfunding initiatives for tourism projects up to date. One platform that is leading crowdfunding in tourism is TravelStarter, a website dedicated to startup ideas in the tourism industry that enables people to travel in ways that support local tourism (Alkier et al., 2017). Acting as a bridge between local communities and global travelers, the platform allows project owners to get the funding they need as well as providing them market insights and validation from potential customers. Some projects that were funded through TravelStarter include an eco-lodge started by a local in Kyrgyzstan as well as a luxury hostel that was turned from a disused Grade II-listed building in the UK. Thanks to the funding they received through the platform, founders of these tourism businesses were able to start their projects and in return provide crowd investors free stays at their lodge/hostel.

Other examples of crowdfunding in the tourism industry include the crowdfunded billboard campaigns of Up Greek Tourism, a private initiative to promote Greek Tourism. Greeks were encouraged to help fund the project and the

money raised successfully funded billboards in high traffic locations such as London's Piccadilly Circus, New York's Time Square and Washington DC's Verizon Center.

Crowdfunding can also help create sustainable tourism projects such as in the case of the "Karma Project" funded through the Indiegogo platform. The project aims to support a Sherpa village in Nepal to create their own sustainable tourism project, which would help them generate tourism revenue for a medical clinic (Willfort et al., 2016).

As seen in these examples, crowdfunding can have benefits to tourism businesses beyond the monetary resources they receive. Through crowdfunding, businesses can get ideas and attention from potential customers before they launch the project, get marketing exposure by promoting an idea to early adopters, and lower business risk since the community provides direct feedback and share experiences and know-how with the founder.

4.4. Community-based product development and volunteering

Community-based tourism has been described as a community development tool that strengthens the ability of rural communities to manage tourism resources while ensuring the local community's participation (Anuar et al., 2017). It aims to generate positive outcomes for the local community while minimizing the negative impacts on the community and its environment (Anuar et al., 2017).

This study has found examples of the community-based approach in the area of mountain bike tourism, a niche that is known to generate significant benefits to communities (Freeman & Thomlinson, 2014). One example is the mountain bike tracks of Whakarewarewa Forest in New Zealand, which are designed and developed by a community of mountain bike enthusiasts. The local mountain bike club, and particularly its president and advocacy manager, were heavily involved in the project and later received an award from the country's Community and Voluntary Sector Minister. An important motivation for voluntary community-based product development is the fact that the enthusiasts and the community can themselves benefit from their work, in this particular case in the form of mountain bike tracks. The example highlights the importance of cultivating and leveraging local communities for tourism development, which in turn depends on creating a situation where the community feels that it has something to gain.

5. Discussion and contributions

This paper documents the different modes of open innovation that have been observed in the tourism industry. By clustering individual instances, it arrives at four modes, namely (1) co-creation; (2) crowdsourcing; (3) crowdfunding of tourism products; and (4) community-based product development and volunteering. Crowdsourcing contains four sub categories, namely (1) crowdsourcing for branding and marketing; (2) crowdsourcing of ideas for destination and product development; (3) problem solving through shorter events; and (4) algorithmic crowdsourcing. The paper also provides concrete, real-life examples of each mode. It makes three contributions.

First, although many instances of open innovation in the tourism industry have been covered in the academic literature, a systematic classification of open innovation practices in the tourism industry has not been attempted. Since the scope of the study includes instances documented in other sources than academic literature, the research contributes to the academic literature a richer body of information about open innovation in the tourism industry. This is useful for open innovation scholars and tourism scholars alike.

Second, by documenting the key modes of open innovation in the tourism industry, this paper contributes a stronger link between the open innovation literature and the tourism literature.

Third, the findings in this paper can help practitioners in the tourism industry better understand the open innovation toolbox. The ability to innovate is crucial for survival in highly competitive markets such as the tourism industry. Thus, understanding how to leverage open innovation can be beneficial to industry actors. The examples of real-life cases described in relation to each mode of open innovation can be used by practitioners as a source of inspiration for their own innovation work.

Further research can be conducted into the connection between open tourism and the broader area of open innovation. There may be modes of open innovation that have not yet been applied in the tourism industry. Comparing practices in open innovation in general with those in open tourism in particular, could therefore provide insights into practices with the potential to be used in the tourism industry. Further research could also shed light on best practices within the different modes of open tourism, in other words answer the question of *how* open tourism practices should be implemented.

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