

The Current State and Prospects for the Development of Digital Tourism

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Abstract: the article describes the current state of digital tourism and the prospects for the development of digital tourism. It contains the author's opinions and conclusions together with the analysis of the literature on the topic.

Key words: tourism, digital tourism, advanced information technologies, telecommunication systems, modern trends



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INTRODUCTION

Digitization permeates all areas of human activity, including tourism, and affects the way people search for, plan and conduct travel. The current state of digital tourism development is characterized by the rapid growth in the use of new technologies such as online booking, personalized recommendations, interactive guides and virtual and augmented reality.

Digital tourism is becoming increasingly important and in demand among modern travelers and tour operators. Thanks to the development of information technology and the availability of the Internet, digital tools are changing the usual approaches to planning, booking and conducting trips, opening new opportunities for the development of the tourism industry.

One of the key features of digital tourism is online booking. Travelers can easily and quickly book hotels, transport tickets, tours and other services using specialized platforms and applications. This provides convenience and flexibility in travel planning, while saving time and money.

Another important aspect of digital tourism is the personalization and customization of offers. Thanks to data analysis and target audience segmentation, tour operators can offer tourists personalized tours based on their preferences, interests and budget. This improves customer satisfaction and sales performance.

Areas of digital tourism is virtual travel. With the development of virtual reality and augmented reality, tourists can visit places of interest and learn about the culture of other countries without leaving home. Virtual tours allow travelers to gain unique experiences and inspiration that will motivate them to travel in real life in the future.

Another important trend in digital tourism is the development of mobile applications. Mobile apps offer travelers a wide range of services, from accommodation and restaurant searches to transportation and event information. The ease of use of mobile apps and their anytime, anywhere availability make them an indispensable tool for modern travelers.

Analysis of literature

Benyon D. et al. (2014) focused on the meaning of digital tourism in their research, stating that it is the promotion of tourism experience through digital tools. Digital tourism means the use of an information and communication tool, an IT solution that helps meet the needs of tourists and increases the competitiveness of organizations and enterprises in the field of tourism¹.

One of the leading experts on digital tourism is Dmitrios Bouhalis, professor at Bournemouth University in the UK, who emphasizes that digital tourism is the same as e-tourism and smart tourism, and e-tourism refers to organizations that are involved in tourism, travel, hospitality and catering. stated that it is digitalization of all process and service chains that allows to increase efficiency in the fields².

¹ Benyon, D., Quigley, A., O'Keefe, B., & Riva, G. (2014). Presence and digital tourism. *AI & society*, 29(4), 521-529.

² Buhalis, D. (2003): *eTourism: Information technology for strategic tourism management*, Pearson (Financial Times/Prentice Hall), London ISBN 0582357403.

The essence of electronic tourism is that the use of information and communication tools is found in all areas of tourism. E-tourism, as a type of e-commerce, is also a field dealing with the sale of products and services through an electronic system³. Like electronic commerce, it also includes electronic data transmission, distribution management, electronic marketing, online transactions, electronic data interchange, management systems, and automated data management⁴. In addition, e-tourism creates unique activities of tourism, for example, the emergence of various offers of tour operators and travel agencies in the virtual space⁵. Also, e-tourism includes e-information, e-booking (hotels, transport, etc.) and e-payments for consumers. Currently, digitalization is developing in all spheres of life. According to Buhalis and Jun (2011), digital tourism is a paradigm shift in tourism due to the emergence of digital tools and techniques⁶.

As a result of the analysis of the literature related to this field, we believe that digital tourism is the use of digital tools in the processes of planning, organizing, controlling and enjoying a trip, in which the set of electronic services provided to travelers before, during and after the trip is of great importance.

Research methodology

The methodology used by this study was based on the study and analysis of the literature on the topic. During the research, previous and ongoing researches focusing on digitization of economic sectors, digital tourism, and electronic tourism were studied. Lectures, conference materials, Internet publications and magazines, as well as new literature on the topic and prospective project data were studied, and methods such as analysis, synthesis, critical thinking, and generalization were used.

Analysis and results

The current state of digital tourism development shows its potential to transform the tourism industry. The prospects for digital tourism include further development of technology, improved personalization of services, expansion of virtual travel opportunities and increased usability of mobile applications. In the future, digital tourism will continue to transform the industry and make travel more convenient, fun and convenient for all stakeholders.

With the development of digital technologies and the widespread use of the Internet, social networks have become an integral part of our daily lives. They not only bring people closer to each other and provide communication at a distance, but also have a significant impact on various industries, including tourism.

Social media has dramatically changed the way we plan and conduct travel. Travelers are increasingly turning to social media reviews and recommendations to choose a destination, hotel or restaurant. Internet users share their travel experiences, photos, and tips, creating entire communities of travelers.

One of the main trends in modern tourism, supported by social networks, is the desire for a personalized and unique travel experience. Tourists prefer an individual approach and look for non-standard itineraries that reflect their interests and preferences. Thanks to social media, travelers can get personalized recommendations, create travel guides based on the advice of other users, and share their unique discoveries.

Table 1

Trends in the tourism industry

o	Tendency directions	Trends are the essence of content
·	Diversification of tourism products	increasing the variety of tourist routes, including cultural, historical, adventure and gastronomic tours. healthy tourism, taking into account the interest of tourists in natural attractions and active recreation. - increasing interest in the cultural heritage, crafts and traditions of the Uzbek people.
·	Development of infrastructure and services	- modernization of hotel and transport sectors in order to increase comfort and safety of tourists. - Expanding the hospitality industry, training staff and improving service standards. - creation of tourism clusters and centers that combine various services for tourists in certain regions.
·	Sales and promotion of tourism products	promotion of Uzbekistan as a tourist destination through digital media and social networks. participation in international exhibitions and forums in order to attract foreign tourists and investors.

³ Buhalis, D., & Jun, S. H. (2011). E-tourism. *Contemporary tourism reviews*, 1, 2-38.

⁴ Buhalis, D., & Licata, M. C. (2002). The future eTourism intermediaries. *Tourism management*, 23(3), 207-220.

⁵ Buhalis, D., Leung, D., & Law, R. (2011). eTourism: critical information and communication technologies for tourism destinations. *Destination marketing and management: Theories and applications*, 2011, 205-224.

⁶ Buhalis, D., & Jun, S. H. (2011). E-tourism. *Contemporary tourism reviews*, 1, 2-38.

		- development of personalized tourism programs and promotions for different groups of tourists.
.	Improving visa conditions and tourism infrastructure	- Simplification of visa and entry procedures for foreign tourists. highways to increase access to tourist areas . - creation of tourist information centers and services for the convenience and safety of visitors.
.	Promotion of domestic tourism	- Promotion of travel among citizens of Uzbekistan through various programs and promotions . - raising the awareness of the local population about the country's tourism opportunities. - development of domestic tourism infrastructure and services to create a comfortable environment for recreation and travel.
.	Creating a sustainable and inclusive tourism environment	- introduction of sustainable tourism principles to preserve natural resources and cultural heritage. - attraction of foreign investments for the development of the tourism industry and infrastructure renewal. - cooperation with international organizations and partners in order to exchange experience and best practices in the field of tourism.

An important aspect of the interaction between social media and tourism is the influence of bloggers and influencers. Travel celebrities can significantly influence the choice of tourist destinations and services. Cooperation with bloggers allows tourism companies and hotels to attract attention and attract new customers, while there are positive aspects of social media in tourism, there are also negative aspects. For example, too much information and unreliable reviews can confuse travelers and distort the true impression of a place. Furthermore, uncontrolled mass tourism driven by social media popularity can have a negative impact on the environment and local communities.

Social networks are becoming an important tool in modern tourism, helping to personalize and individualize travel. Interaction with social networks allows travel companies and hotels to attract new customers, and travelers get unique experiences and inspiration for new adventures. At the same time, one should not forget the balance between the virtual and real world, as well as responsible approach to tourism, respect for local culture and nature.

One of the main aspects of the impact of social networks on modern trends in tourism is the personalization of services. Thanks to the data of user profiles, companies can offer personalized offers, taking into account the preferences and interests of each customer. This helps to improve the quality of service and tourist satisfaction.

In addition, social networks create new forms of interaction between tourists and local residents. Travelers can communicate with local people, learn about their culture, traditions and customs, which helps to get deeper into the local atmosphere and broaden the cultural experience.

Social networks have become an integral part of modern tourism, enriching the experience of travelers, stimulating the development of the tourism industry, and serving to share experiences and knowledge between people from different parts of the world. It is important to take advantage of social media to create a better travel experience with the needs of modern travelers in mind.

Table 2

Current status and prospects of digital tourism

<i>The current state of digital tourism</i>	<i>Perspectives of digital tourism</i>
Online platforms and mobile applications simplify and speed up the process of booking hotels, air tickets, tours and other services, helping to make travel more convenient for tourists.	New technologies such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and blockchain will continue to be used to improve the quality and efficiency of tourism services.
Artificial intelligence algorithms analyze data about user preferences and behavior to offer them personalized and relevant travel products and services	The concept of smart tourism will expand to include the use of digital technologies, smart cities, wearables and the Internet of Things to improve the travel experience.
Virtual and augmented reality offer the possibility of traveling "at a distance", allowing tourists to experience places and attractions before they actually arrive.	Focuses on sustainable and responsible tourism that includes care for the environment, local communities and cultural heritage
Mobile apps and interactive maps help tourists find information about places, restaurants, routes, and even help them create individual programs and travel plans.	Delivering personalized and unique travel offers that meet the needs and requirements of every traveler will continue to improve

The modern development of digital tourism is characterized by rapid changes in technology and consumer behavior, which define new trends and perspectives of the travel industry.

Digital tourism continues to evolve and offers new opportunities and challenges for the travel industry. In order to create a unique and unforgettable travel experience, it is important to promote innovation, adhere to the principles of sustainability and pay attention to the needs of modern tourists.

CONCLUSION

One of the main aspects of the modern development of digital tourism is online booking. Tourists can easily and quickly book hotels, air tickets, tours and other services through specialized internet platforms and mobile applications. It simplifies the trip planning process and offers a wide range of options.

Interactive guides and applications are becoming an indispensable tool for travelers. They provide information about attractions, restaurants, events, and other tourist attractions, as well as help plan itineraries, find travel partners, and share experiences with other users.

Virtual and augmented reality open new opportunities for digital tourism. Tourists can explore the places they plan to visit through virtual tours and 3D tours, and enhance their travel experience with augmented reality, which adds interactive elements to real-life environments.

Digital tourism opens up new horizons for travel, making it more accessible, convenient and interesting. The development of digital technologies in tourism encourages innovation, improves the quality of service and deepens the travel experience.

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