

## BOOK REVIEW

# Innovation strategies and organizational culture in tourism – Concepts and case studies on knowledge sharing

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### Introduction: Overview of the book

Innovation in tourism has recently become a major topic of discussion in both the academic (Hasanein et al., 2026) and the business worlds (Cortese et al., 2018). Marco Valeri's edited *'Innovation Strategies and Organizational Culture in Tourism'* contributes to this discourse by presenting diverse approaches on how innovation management and organizational culture are related to knowledge sharing in the tourism sector. The book combines contributions from 22 contributors across 12 chapters, deepening insights into innovation tactics and organizational culture that affect knowledge sharing in tourism. It is part of the Routledge Insights in Tourism Series and brings together contributors from multiple countries, offering a rich international perspective on the theme. The book's structure integrates organizational theory, knowledge management, and tourism studies (Camilleri & Valeri, 2021; Valeri, 2023). It is presented in two primary parts; the first is about ways for managing innovation, and the second is about case studies of sharing information in tourism enterprises.

### Part I: Innovation management strategies (Chapters 1 to 6)

This section is the introductory part of the book providing theoretical background that in understanding knowledge sharing and its importance in the sphere of tourism. In this section, the author demonstrates the creation and management of different types of knowledge across

various stakeholders in the tourism industry. Special attention is given to concepts that can facilitate knowledge sharing, including collaboration, networks, and organizational structures. The text also explains the role of technology, trust, and social relations in this context. Generally, Part I argues that successful tourism development depends on the ability of individuals, organizations, and destinations to generate, share, and apply knowledge strategically.

CHAPTER ONE: Role of New Era on Information Management of Tourist Guides  
*Asli Sultan Eren, Jeetesh Kumar, Gül Erkol Bayram, and Marco Valeri*

This chapter sets the tone of the book by examining how technological advancements are reshaping the tourist guiding profession. The authors highlight the integration of digital tools such as GPS navigation, mobile applications, and even robot-guiding systems into overall tourism experiences. The authors focus on how innovations increase the efficiency of guiding operations and make tourism more accessible while at the same time posing uncertainty regarding job security (Demir & Vatan, 2024; Seyitoğlu et al., 2024). One of the most important aspects of this chapter is its dual perspective since the authors acknowledge the potential for innovations while discussing its risks (Çolak, 2023). Nevertheless, the absence of empirical evidence or comparisons between destinations undermines the credibility of the argument.

CHAPTER TWO: Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Knowledge Sharing among Employees Working at SMEs in the Tourism and Service Sectors  
*Ladislav Mura and Tibor Zsigmond*

This chapter explores the human factors in innovation by further investigating the role of emotional intelligence in knowledge sharing within small and medium-sized enterprises. The discussion aligns with the current literature by highlighting the association between emotional intelligence and the enhancement of knowledge-sharing behaviors through better communication and collaboration among employees (Khan et al., 2025; Mura et al., 2021). The authors also emphasize the interpersonal aspects, such as trust and motivation, which often go underrepresented within academic discourse. Although the chapter presents a relevant topic to the tourism industry due to the importance of personal contact, it lacks empirical case studies and therefore fails to provide actionable information.

CHAPTER THREE: Managing the Use of Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication in Tourism  
*Stylianos Bouzis, Panoraia Poulaki, and Marco Valeri*

Chapter three highlights the importance of both verbal and non-verbal communication. It acknowledges that tourism experiences rely heavily on good communication, demonstrating how various non-verbal communication techniques contribute to creating positive tourist experiences. Despite the authors presenting several intriguing ideas, the chapter fails to address relevant theories for analyzing communication in tourism.

CHAPTER FOUR: Identifying Wellness Value Formation in Young Wine Tourists—A Grounded Theory Approach  
*Bob Yi-Chen Duan, Jingjing Dai, and Emily Ma*

This chapter introduces a grounded theory approach to understanding the value of wellness in wine tourism. It examines the influence of emotional, cultural, and experiential values on

wellness experiences. The chapter adopts a qualitative approach and thus allows for a holistic analysis of the personal perception of wellness in specific tourism scenarios. Although concentrating on a specific niche within the tourism industry may limit the study's transferability to other sectors, the chapter findings are advantageous in understanding niche tourism.

#### CHAPTER FIVE: Digital Marketing and Consumer Behavior in Tourism

*Tolga Gök and Mahmut Baltaci*

This chapter provides key insights into digital marketing strategies and their impact on the consumer decision-making process. The authors underscore the importance of social media, virtual engagement, and online platforms as alternative means of engaging consumers. Although the chapter considers digital marketing, a relevant theme, in various sectors of tourism, it requires updated innovation concepts such as AI-powered marketing and data analytics in marketing strategies (Aman et al., 2024a) and block chain to enhance effectiveness and adapt to changing consumer behaviors.

#### CHAPTER SIX: “Airbnb Ireland” as an “Information Society Services” Provider and Not a Real Estate or Tourist Services Provider

*Anastasios E. Thomaidis*

This chapter adopts a legal and conceptual perspective on Airbnb, positioning the company in the context of information society services. This interdisciplinary approach adds a unique dimension to the book. Although the interdisciplinary perspective is useful, the chapter does not fully address the core themes of knowledge and innovation and therefore seems misplaced in the book.

## Part II: Knowledge-sharing case studies

This part of the book consists of chapters 7 to 12, which extend from theories to practice through case studies that examine how knowledge sharing works in the world of tourism. It reveals that innovation is achieved through collaboration and knowledge sharing between different participants within different tourism contexts. These case studies include destination management, the consumption of street foods, sustainable tourism, and the legacy of mega-events.

#### CHAPTER SEVEN: Destination Management: The Role of DMOs in Digital Brand Communication -The Case of Greece

*Panagiota Dionysopoulou and Eftychia Christina Aivaliotou*

The chapter highlights the role of Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) in leveraging digital platforms for enhanced destination branding, stakeholder coordination, and market visibility in Greece. This conclusion is consistent with the findings of Aman et al. (2024a), that the development of destination branding is nowadays determined by the use of such technologies as artificial intelligence, data analytics, and smart tourism. Given the increasing role of smart tourism in enhancing destination competitiveness, the inclusion of emerging technological advancements could increase the value of destination branding and stakeholder cooperation (Aman et al., 2024b; Zhang et al, 2025) and sustainability in the long-

term competitiveness of destinations. Additionally, strengthening coordination between private and public stakeholders could enhance destination branding (Aman et al., 2024b), thus adding to the contribution of the chapter by fostering collaboration that leverages technological advancements and aligns stakeholder interests for more effective branding strategies. The authors focus on specific contexts that provide evidence on the need for sharing knowledge in digital communication but fail to provide any theoretical advancement in the area. The integration of theoretical background and recent technological advancements could improve the contribution of the study in the scholarly space.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Factor that Influences Consumption of Unhealthy Street Food  
*Norhidayah Azman and Albattat Ahmad*

This chapter explores the factors contributing to tourists' preference of unhealthy street foods during travel. It identifies price, convenience, taste, and hygiene as major contributors and concludes that poor dissemination of knowledge about nutrition contributes to the wrong food choices made by tourists. Nonetheless, the relevance of the chapter in the book seems rather weak due to its failure to link consumer behavior to the book's theme. It addresses consumer behaviors in terms of consumption habits but fails to use any theoretical background for these insights. Tourists' consumption behaviors can also be analyzed from the perspective of consumer lifestyles and values. It is assumed that the consumer's choice of a particular product is determined by their behavior as well (Szakály et al., 2011), and therefore, structured theoretical approaches such as the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model could be used to understand the tourists' behavior outcomes such as satisfaction and decision-making (Szántó et al., 2025). These issues are important in terms of explaining the process of knowledge sharing that could strengthen the chapter.

CHAPTER NINE: Sustainable Tourism in the Post-Covid Era - The Case of Athens as a Destination  
*Panoraia Poulaki, Antonios Kritikos, Nikolaos Vasilakis, and Marco Valeri*

The chapter provides evidence that Athens has managed to recover from Covid-19 due to knowledge sharing and collaboration between stakeholders. In addition to being an excellent case of rebuilding, it is considered a successful example of sustainable tourism since cultural and social heritage contributes to its sustainable recovery from the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the importance of integrating local traditions and community involvement in tourism strategies.

CHAPTER TEN: Factors that Influence the Tourist Perception Toward Street Foods Moderated by Price - Case Study of George Town, Penang  
*Albattat Hmad and Norhidayah Azman*

This chapter further examines issues related to food tourism but discusses how the price of street food influences tourist behavior. It indicates that while affordability draws tourists, their satisfaction depends primarily on the quality and hygiene of products. Thus, there should be more communication on this issue to regulate it properly. Incorporating theories related to behavior and branding models in relation to customer perception, experience, and decision-making can strengthen the chapter. For example, the use of digital engagement models and immersive elements that influence the authenticity and satisfaction of visitors can make the chapter more relevant to the current advances in tourism studies (Zhang et al., 2025).

## CHAPTER ELEVEN: Knowledge Legacy of the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa *Willem JI Coetzee*

This chapter proposes another innovative concept for tourism industry management that is described as "knowledge legacy". In particular, the chapter discusses its relevance to mega-events through analyzing the case of the 2010 FIFA World Cup held in South Africa. Researchers emphasize that events contribute much to the development of the intellectual heritage of a country, particularly by fostering knowledge exchange, enhancing cultural understanding, and leaving a lasting impact on local communities.

## CHAPTER TWELVE: Management of Cultural Routes as the New Status Quo in Urban Cultural Tourism *Theodor Rachiotis and Panoraia Poulaki*

Chapter 12 discusses the role of cultural routes in urban tourism. It reveals that, in addition to being an efficient way to enhance cultural and educational purposes of tourism, cultural routes facilitate knowledge exchange, sustainability, and heritage preservation. In addition, the author explains how technology and cooperation with the private sector could increase tourist interest and satisfaction by providing personalized experiences, improving accessibility, and enhancing marketing efforts.

## Critical Evaluation Summary

The book successfully provides an examination of innovation strategies, organizational culture, and knowledge transfer in tourism. The interdisciplinary approach is applied to illustrate that innovation in tourism does not only involve technical aspects but can also have an impact on an organization's culture and knowledge transfer practices. Tourism destinations and organisations can improve service quality, develop more flexible business models, and enhance their overall competitiveness by adopting digital technologies in their operations. It also shows that innovation in tourism is greatly dependent on information sharing. Despite the potential benefits of the interdisciplinary approach, certain shortcomings persist. The first limitation of the book lies in its theoretical base. There is a lack of integration between the chapters in terms of theory in Chapters 1, 3, and 6, causing a fragmented approach to the analysis. Chapters 2 and 11 explore the topic from the standpoint of knowledge sharing and innovation theories. Other chapters, especially Chapters 3, 6, and 8, do not refer to knowledge-sharing concepts, thus failing to build on existing theoretical approaches to further understand innovation and its role in tourism. The second aspect is the lack of attention to new technologies. Although the authors discuss how some conventional means of innovation are used in tourism, for example, GPS systems, mobile applications, and social media (Chapters 1, 5, and 7), they fail to explore how recent trends in information technology, including artificial intelligence, big data analysis, and the emergence of smart tourism systems, impact the area. Lastly, although case studies of different destinations explored in Part II (Chapters 7 to 12) offer insightful perspectives on various topics related to destination management, sustainability, and mega-events, the book fails to explore common trends among the discussed cases. As a result, it does not fully derive overarching theoretical insights and general recommendations. Some chapters contain overlapping concepts, for instance, Chapters 8 and 10, while other chapters lack a strong connection to the main theme of innovation and knowledge sharing.

## Conclusion

The themes discussed in this book are highly pertinent to modern discussions on tourism development post-COVID-19 and the growing focus on sustainability, technological innovation, and the development of digital infrastructure. *Innovation Strategies and Organizational Culture in Tourism* is a significant work in tourism research. It highlights the importance of innovation and knowledge sharing as essential competitive advantages. Despite having several drawbacks, the interdisciplinary approach, international scope, and use of empirical case studies make this book highly recommended to students, researchers, practitioners, and enthusiasts in the tourism and hospitality industry. Furthermore, it provides a useful conceptual grounding for examining tourism development in emerging contexts, including mountain tourism and local community sustainability. Scholars and stakeholders in tourism development can harness the linkage between knowledge sharing, innovation capability, and organizational performance to provide an understanding of the contribution of niche tourism products to sustainable livelihoods at the local level.

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