Preface

This year the ENTER conference will be celebrated for the 16th time. Founded in 1993 as an interface between information and communication technologies on the one side and travel and tourism on the other, ENTER has steadily matured to become the world’s premier global conference in this fascinating and constantly advancing and progressing area of research and praxis.

The aim and unique purpose of ENTER is to bring together practitioners from the travel and tourism industry, representatives from national and regional tourism boards, and academics and researchers from different disciplines to facilitate the exchange and joint development of new ideas, innovative approaches and advanced solutions. Therefore, research findings presented at ENTER always have a strong relationship and relevance to problems faced by the industry.

Information and communication technologies have reshaped the travel and tourism industry in the last decade and new topics and corresponding challenges are evolving rapidly. The dynamic nature of tourism markets has become ever more pronounced and innovative business models like online communities continue to emerge. ENTER 2009 pays attention to this situation and the theme eTourism: dynamic challenges for travel and tourism expresses the objective to present a collection of cutting-edge academic and industrial research as well as practical applications dealing with new challenges and new ways of doing business in a rapidly changing and highly dynamic environment.

Over 70 papers have been submitted to ENTER 2009 and the finally selected 42 papers were double blind reviewed by members of the scientific committee. These high quality papers cover a wide range of cutting-edge topics currently driving research and development activities in the field of IT and travel & tourism. Under the topic online communities papers deal with the virtualisation of travel communities and experiences as well as the driving forces of online communities within travel and tourism. The topic user generated content deals with travel reviews and blogs and their influence and importance within the travel decision making process. The topic recommender systems covers papers presenting approaches for knowledge-based decision support and their acceptance under tourism-specific settings. The topic mobile technology presents analysis results and practical applications in the area of mobile services and tourist guides. The topic platforms and tools covers presentations of several innovative IT tools and their applications in the tourism domain. In the age of online distribution, website optimisation is a fundamental aspect and papers in this section discuss different approaches for measuring and improving the performance of tourism websites. The topic electronic marketing investigates in more detail specific aspects of using the Internet to market tourism services like affiliate marketing and email communication. Papers in the section ICT and tourism destinations especially focus on the application of techniques and approaches mentioned above in the context of tourism destinations as amalgams of different tourism suppliers and stakeholders. The section technology acceptance concludes the range of topics by presenting
research results in the areas of technology acceptance and adoption in the travel and tourism industry.

The ENTER paper submission process, following the objective of quality assurance and quality improvement, is a challenging process both for authors and members of the programme review committee and the success of the ENTER research track strongly depends on such input and support. Therefore, the research track chairs would like to thank all the members of the review committee for their continuous support of the ENTER review process and their dedication to ENTER, which has spanned in many cases already more than a decade. And, of course, we would like to thank all authors for their valuable input and effort. A high quality ENTER programme is nothing else than a collection of single high quality papers, written by experienced researchers all over the world.

ENTER is especially characterised by a worldwide community of individuals from all parts of the travel and tourism industry and different research disciplines, coming together once a year to discuss latest trends and developments in this challenging area. We would like to thank all ENTER attendees for their continuous support of ENTER and wish all of us a successful and joyful ENTER 2009 in Amsterdam.

Wolfram Höpken
Ulrike Gretzel
Rob Law

Amsterdam, January 2009
Contents

Index of Authors .......................................................................................................................... XI
Research Programme Review Committee ........................................................................... XIII

1 Online Communities

U. Gretzel, H. Go, K. Lee, and T. Jamal
Role of Community Informatics in Heritage Tourism Development .......................... 1

L. Cantoni, S. Tardini, A. Inversini, and E. Marchiori
From Paradigmatic to Syntagmatic Communities: A Socio-Semiotic Approach to the Evolution Pattern of Online Travel Communities .................. 13

C. M. Paris
The Virtualization of Backpacker Culture ............................................................................ 25

2 User Generated Content

K.-H. Yoo and U. Gretzel
Comparison of Deceptive and Truthful Travel Reviews ............................................. 37

K.-H. Yoo, Y. Lee, U. Gretzel, and D. R. Fesenmaier
Trust in Travel-Related Consumer Generated Media ..................................................... 49

C. Bosangit, S. McCabe, and S. Hibbert
What is Told in Travel Blogs? Exploring Travel Blogs for Consumer Narrative Analysis .......................................................... 61

N. Au, D. Buhalis, and R. Law
Complaints on the Online Environment – The Case of Hong Kong Hotels ..................... 73

K. L. Sidali, H. Schulze, and A. Spiller
The Impact of Online Reviews on the Choice of Holiday Accommodations ..................... 87

C. Hofstaetter and R. Egger
The Importance and Use of Weblogs for Backpackers .................................................. 99

3 Recommender Systems

H.-S. Doong, H.-C. Wang, and J.-G. Fong
The Effects of Virtual Product Experience on Changing Consumers’ First Impression Bias .................................................................................. 111
4 Mobile Technology

D. Buhalis and L. Pistidda
Wireless Applications in Destinations .................................................. 161

G. Tumas and F. Ricci
Personalized Mobile City Transport Advisory System ......................... 173

A. Garcia, M. T. Linaza, O. Arbelaitz, and P. Vansteenwegen
Intelligent Routing System for a Personalised Electronic Tourist Guide...... 185

5 Platforms and Tools

F. Bellotti, R. Berta, A. De Gloria, and L. Primavera
Designing Online Virtual Worlds for Cultural Heritage ....................... 199

M. Zanker, M. Fuchs, A. Seebacher, M. Jessenitschnig, and M. Stromberger
An Automated Approach for Deriving Semantic Annotations of Tourism Products Based on Geospatial Information ..................... 211

N. Zeni, N. Kiyavitskaya, S. Barbera, B. Oztaysi, and L. Mich
RFID-Based Action Tracking for Measuring the Impact of Cultural Events on Tourism ................................................................. 223

N. Holyoak, D. Carson, and D. Schmallegger
VRUM™: A Tool for Modelling Travel Patterns of Self-Drive Tourists..... 237

M. T. Linaza, C. Sarasua, and Y. Cobos
MPEG-7 Compliant Indexation Tool for Multimedia Tourist Content...... 249

A. Bilgihan, S. Beldona, and C. Cobanoglu
The Adoption of Fingerprint Payment Technology Mechanisms at the Customer End................................................................. 261
6 Website Optimisation

L. Xiong, C. Cobanoglu, P. Cummings, and F. DeMicco
Website Accessibility of U.S. Based Hospitality Websites ......................... 273

S. Qi, R. Law, and D. Buhalis
A Study of Chinese and International Online User Perceptions of Hotel
Websites’ Usefulness ........................................................................................ 285

P. O’Connor
Global e-Readiness of Hotel Chain Websites ............................................... 297

R. Baggio and M. A. Corigliano
On the Importance of Hyperlinks: A Network Science Approach .............. 309

A. Inversini and L. Cantoni
Cultural Destination Usability: The Case of Visit Bath ............................... 319

F. Anuar, Z. Xiang, and U. Gretzel
Effectiveness of eBrochures: An Analysis of Use Patterns ........................... 333

7 Electronic Marketing

R. Daniele, A. J. Frew, K. Varini, and A. Magakian
Affiliate Marketing in Travel and Tourism ..................................................... 343

W.-J. Huang and B. C. Lee
Capital City Tourism: Online Destination Image of Washington, DC .......... 355

U. Bauernfeind and A. Dickinger
E-Mail Service Quality of Profit and Not for Profit Organisations in
the Tourism Industry ...................................................................................... 369

8 ICT and Tourism Destinations

A. Inversini and D. Buhalis
Information Convergence in the Long Tail: The Case of Tourism
Destination Information .................................................................................. 381

B. C. Lee, B. Wicks, and W.-J. Huang
Development of Technology Training for Destination Marketing
Organisations ................................................................................................. 393

S. H. Valsson
The Credibility of Online News: The Case of the Iceland Tourist
Guide Association’s Website and e-Newsletter .............................................. 407

Z. Xiang and B. Pan
Travel Queries on Cities in the United States: Implications for
Search Engine Marketing in Tourism .............................................................. 419
9 Technology Acceptance

M. Fuchs, C. Witting, and W. Höpken
E-Business Readiness, Intensity and Impact - An Austrian Hotel Study........... 431

T. Jung
Assessing Low-Cost Carrier eAirline System Success........................................ 443

B. Lubbe and A. Douglas
Information and Communication Technologies in Business and Corporate Travel Management: An Overview......................................................... 455

A. H. Zins
Deconstructing Travel Decision Making and Information Search Activities.............................................................. 467

M. Sigala
Destination Management Systems (DMS): A Reality Check in the Greek Tourism Industry................................................................. 481

B. Stangl and A. Schneider
Do Emotional Mental Models Before and After an Effective Visitation of a Virtual World Differ?.......................................................... 493

M. Fux and T. Myrach
Adoption of a Destination-Wide CRM Approach: An Empirical Analysis of the Determinants in the Swiss Hospitality Industry............... 507
Index of Authors

Adigun, M. ................................. 135
Anuar, F. ................................. 333
Arbelaitz, O. .............................. 185
Au, N. ..................................... 73
Ayo, C. .................................... 135
Baggio, R. ................................. 309
Barbera, S. ............................... 223
Bauernfeind, U. .......................... 369
Beldona, S. ............................... 261
Bellotti, F. ................................ 199
Berta, R. .................................. 199
Bilgihan, A. ............................. 261
Bosangit, C. .............................. 61
Buhalis, D. .............................. 73, 161, 285, 381
Cantoni, L. .............................. 13, 319
Carson, D. ............................... 237
Cobanoglu, C. ......................... 261, 273
Cobos, Y. .................................. 249
Corigliano, M. A. ....................... 309
Cummings, P. .......................... 273
Daniele, R. ............................... 343
Daramola, O. ............................ 135
De Gloria, A. ............................ 199
DeMicco, F. ............................... 273
Dickinger, A. ............................. 369
Doong, H.-S. ............................. 111
Douglas, A. .............................. 455
Egger, R. .................................. 99
Fesenmaier, D. R. ....................... 49
Fong, J.-G. ............................... 111
Frew, A. J. ............................... 343
Fuchs, M. ............................... 211, 431
Fux, M. .................................. 505
Garcia, A. ................................ 185
Go, H. ................................. 1, 37, 49, 333
Hibbert, S. ............................... 61
Hofstaetter, C. .......................... 99
Holyoak, N. ............................. 237
Hopfken, W. ............................. 431
Huang, W.-J. ........................... 355, 393
Inversini, A. ............................ 13, 319, 381
Jamal, T. ............................ 1
Jessenitschnig, M. ..................... 211
Jung, T. .................................. 443
Kiyavitskaya, N. ....................... 223
Law, R. ................................. 73, 285
Lee, B. C. ............................. 355, 393
Lee, K. .................................. 1
Lee, Y. ................................. 49
Linaza, M. T. ............................ 185, 249
Lubbe, B. ............................... 455
Magakian, A. ............................ 343
Mahmood, T. ........................... 149
Marchiori, E. ............................ 13
McCabe, S. ............................... 61
McGrath, G. M. ......................... 123
Mich, L. ................................. 223
Myrach, T. ............................... 505
O’Connor, P. ............................. 297
Oztaysi, B. ............................... 223
Pan, B. ................................. 419
Paris, C. M. ............................. 25
Pistidda, L. ............................... 161
Primavera, L. ........................... 199
Qi, S. .................................. 285
Ricci, F. ................................. 149, 173
Sarasua, C. .............................. 249
Schmallegger, D. ....................... 237
Schneider, A. ........................... 491
Schulze, H. ............................... 87
Seebacher, A. ........................... 211
Sidali, K. L. .................................. 87
Sigala, M. .................................. 479
Spiller, A. ................................... 87
Stangl, B. .................................... 491
Stromberger, M. ......................... 211
Tardini, S. .................................... 13
Tumas, G. ..................................... 173
Valsson, S. H. ............................ 407
Vansteenwegen, P. ...................... 185
Varini, K. .................................... 343
Venturini, A. .............................. 149
Wang, H.-C. ................................. 111
Wicks, B. ................................. 393
Witting, C. ................................ 431
Xiang, Z. ................................ 333, 419
Xiong, L. .................................. 273
Yoo, K.-H. ................................. 37, 49
Zanker, M. ................................. 211
Zeni, N. .................................. 223
Zins, A. H. ................................. 465
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