

# TOURISM AND NEW MEDIA

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**FrancoAngeli**

Free time Environment  
**Governance**  
Society Agriculture  
Milieu  
Territory  
Food system  
**Economics**  
Life style  
Work  
Tourism  
Green building  
Well-being  
Community  
Mobility  
**Sustainability**



**NEW MEDIA, ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
and SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

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**FRANCOANGELI Eds, ITALY**

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## Introduction

Internet has been one of the most significant technological developments in the 20th century that has changed the daily basis lives of all people worldwide, mainly in terms of communication. In the 21st century, the new digital era of Web 2.0 has provided broadband Internet for everyone, providing smart technological solution, services and devices, widely accepted in all human life sectors. New Media is a term used to define all that is related to the internet and the interplay between technology combining Internet accessible digital text, images and video with web-links, with focus on the creative participation of contributors, interactive feedback of users and aiming to formulate a participatory community of stakeholders that are also web-content editors and donors for the benefit of non-community readers.

The new media of social network have created a new context in the implementation of innovative strategies and policies, nevertheless, in sustainability, in entrepreneurship and its combination.

Recently, sustainable development has been in the center-stage of national, international, trans-national and global policies while it is incorporated in decision-making, in strategies and in their policies by all stakeholders, communities, government, Regions, entrepreneurs, NGOs, networks etc. Sustainable development comprises successfully economic development, environmental preservation and social well-being. Our society is now environmentally aware. Environmental protection and environmental impact are key-topics in any project, nevertheless in and funding opportunity in the implementation of principles of sustainable development. The corporate agenda embraces sustainable development goals and the green trend in our society is now more solid than ever.

Consumers are apt to follow the firms that respect sustainability goals and comply with environmental responsibility frameworks. A “green” or “sustainable entrepreneurship would try to protect the environment, to minimize the consumption of resources and energy, to have a low carbon footprint and to have a positive impact on the society and the well-being of citizens. Green procedures and daily-choices, certifications, eco-labels, green

awards and green alliances would be the means to validate green entrepreneurship for aware and conscious consumers and employees.

An important economy sector globally is tourism and contributing factors have been the technology boost and socio-economic status of people. Within that framework, Sustainable Tourism has become critical factor in changing regional or local development forms. Sustainable tourism is tourism that respects the environment, which takes into account the requirements of the environment, local people, entrepreneurship, and visitors for the present and for the future. People are encouraged to pursue rural leisure activities in a manner that will benefit, rather than damage, the landscape, is gaining approval and popularity.

In that perspective, new media have become a decisive factor in the boost of sustainable tourism development. Social media, virtual social groups, tourism portals, blogs, wikis, smart digital trip organisation services have become a main information source for potential travelers in tourism products and services. New media have formulated an innovative dialogue framework for interactive information exchange for all to participate online.

In this book, there are 15 chapters aiming to describe and enlighten issues of sustainable tourism and entrepreneurship and the multi disciplinary contribution of new media and social media to sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, case studies and insight from online success stories about sustainable tourism development are presented aiming to inspire readers.

We hope that you enjoy reading it and give the opportunity to start a scientific discuss on the topics involved and a fruitful synergy to be produced by various stakeholders and decision makers.

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## Acknowledgement

The editors wish to express their gratitude to all those who directly or indirectly have given their contribution to the realization of the volume.

We wish to thank the authors of the chapters, who entrusted us with the results of their work, the members of the editorial board for their precious comments and corrections and the publisher's personnel for their support.

Moreover, we would also like to thank Simone Cesaretti Foundation for its support during the organization of that book and especially the President, Professor Gian Paolo Cesaretti for his continuous support.

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## **12. The state of the cultural heritage industry in Europe: a growth transformation perspective**

*by Dorothea Papathanasiou, Konstadinos Kutsikos*

### **12.1 Introduction**

Experiences (i.e. interactions with time, space, people, products and services) are the essence of cultural heritage (CH) - a cornerstone of every civilized society. As an indicative example, 77% of the European Union citizens consider cultural heritage an important driver of their everyday lives (Eurostat, 2011). In turn, CH consumers share their experiences (both positive and negative) through social media platforms, thus influencing other CH consumers' decisions and affecting supply-demand curves. This becomes even more important for CH providers when considering the profile of CH consumers: they are skilled individuals who ride en masse the wave of self-designing collaborative consumption at heritage places (Harvey and Lorenzen, 2006; Chan and Goldthorpe, 2007; Lizardo and Skiles, 2008).

At the same time, the strongly subsidized CH institutions (e.g. museums) are very slow in developing value propositions and business models that can satisfy the new demands, expectations and lifestyles of CH consumers (Caserta and Russo, 2002; Council of Europe, 2009).

Bridging this gap is not an easy fix. It will require transformation of the CH supply side along three axes, corresponding to three major challenges: a) CH supply-side fragmentation; b) cultural communication; and c) value innovation (Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2011; Dümcke, 2012; Dümcke and Gnedofski, 2013; Lagos et al, 2005).

In this article, we provide an analysis of these challenges and discuss their transformative potential for boosting growth in the CH sector. We then present different pragmatic approaches in addressing different combinations of these challenges, based on relevant international research and development projects that we engaged in. Finally, we showcase our research roadmap and future activities, for further investigating the aforementioned growth challenges.

### **12.2 The Value Paradox of Cultural Heritage**

Experience exists as a function of meeting the unknown and unexpected (Dewy, 1994). It should not be giving everything to the senses, but just what is required to put imagination on the right path. For example, in Homer's Iliad, we experience Helen's supreme beauty impact in the teichoscopia incident (verses 121-244): Helen approaches the part of the wall, where Trojans watch their sons die in battle for her sake. So great is her beauty that even these Trojans take their eyes away from their dying sons in order to admire the immaculate beauty. This unexpected attitude is what is shaking the audience in a cognitive-emotional fashion and immortalizes the concept of beauty.

Emotion is a conscious experience that affects the mental equilibrium, destabilizing and reconnecting mental links in new configurations. This process can be part of knowledge acquisition. However, knowledge alone is not enough to raise good citizens (both from the social and business viewpoint). A sentimental model is also needed. To that extent, the conscious use of culture, the possibility to interpret it and live with it through dialogue and mutual understanding, create Europe's cornerstones of a life context that rejects bullying, violence, extremism and terrorism. A society regulated by culture leaves no room for aggression whatsoever. It is therefore easy to understand how an investment in culture can generate a clear reduction of these phenomena, leading to the creation of stable social, political and business environments – the widely recognized catalysts for economic growth.

However, appreciating the economic value of culture is a continuous paradox. CH providers keep linking the economic value of culture and heritage to obsolete conceptualizations of the relationship between cultural activity and generation of economic value (Bucci and Segre, 2009; Sacco, 2011; Stavrinoudis et al, 2012). As a result, CH providers keep failing in their pace of developing new products and services, leading to low competitiveness for the sector. At the same time, scholars demonstrate that the contribution of Cultural and Creative Industries to the European GDP stands at 2.1% - higher than that of the Food, Beverages and Tobacco Manufacturing sector (1.9%), the Textile Industry (0.5%), and the Chemicals and Plastic Products Industry (2.3%) (EU Policy Handbook, 2012:6). In addition, there are vacancies for culture-oriented professionals with digital skills, offering high average wages (Williams et al., 2012). To make things worse, at political level, culture is considered to be a highly subsidized, low-productivity sector. Hence, at times of economic recession, it is an easy target for public funding cuts. For example, in the European Union Funding Research Period of 2007 – 2013, out of 347 billion euros budgeted for research grants, only 6 billion euros were allocated to culture – a mere 1.7% allocation of funds.

This web of paradoxes seems to expand due to a number of reasons:

- Culture is thought to be of national interest and as such it is not export-oriented;
- The contribution of culture is thought to be only of intangible nature and as such it is often not noticed by those who concentrate on the total value of the turnover as an indication of the significance of an industry (CSES, 2010);
- A mismatch in skills supply and demand impedes the CH sector's ability to perceive the full extent of Europe's Grand Societal Challenges (Chubeere and Lolios, 2010; EUS, 2015), and thus reshape the participatory public space, develop new value propositions, and create innovative business models for satisfying rising demands of experience seekers;
- The CH sector fails to activate the cognitive process in the minds and souls of CH consumers (Antinucci, 2014). According to Hans-Georg Gadamer, when dealing with an artwork of historical and architectural value from the past, the greatest difficulty to interpret the inherent value is the distance between the knowledge necessary to arrive at an understanding of the artwork, even at the elementary level (Gadamer, 1990). Similarly, Pierre Bourdieu makes the point that the cognitive gap of the public is growing and with it the losses in cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1979). This failure of CH providers can be attributed to their assumption that heritage interpretation tools are publicly and widely available, through educational and cultural institutes. Furthermore, CH providers seem to miss the fact that the human cognitive system is very complex. Hence, the lack of engaging CH consumers' abstract thinking and concept formulation results in a cognitive gap: low knowledge acquisition, low

emotional intelligence development. This further leads to a motivational gap for visiting and exploring CH assets, and to an overall failure of the CH sector at a cognitive / emotional level. Museums and portals that are rich only in standard descriptive information are a case in point (Palombini, 2012; Antinucci, 2014).

### **12.3 The Growth Transformation Challenges in the CH Sector**

The potential of the CH sector as a driver for stimulating innovation, creating new skills for new jobs, battling brain drain, and generating wealth is both underestimated and under-researched. However, achieving growth in such a traditional and slow-changing sector is not a straightforward task. We have identified three key growth transformation challenges, which we expect that they will pave the future research and business landscape of the CH sector.

#### **12.4 Challenge 1: supply-side fragmentation**

While major-fame CH assets are overburdened, lesser-known assets remain neglected, while different institutional, legal structures and governance responsibilities perpetuate tensions in heritage policy context (Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2011). Furthermore, different perceptions of CH by different-level actors and an extensive stakeholder fragmentation give rise to a complex set of competitive relations in the CH sector, resulting in conflicts in protection, conservation and utilization of CH (Papathanasiou-Zuhrt, 2011).

A supply-side driven lack of flexibility also emerges towards CH consumers. For example, CH settings are knowledge cells in non-formal and informal contexts, where CH consumers may become both self-providers and distributors of knowledge and experiences (e.g. through social media platforms). However, public authorities hold the monopoly of heritage information and often reject the individual expressions and aspects about heritage assets as untrue.

#### **12.5 Challenge 2: cultural communication**

Cultural growth is undeniably linked to successful cultural communication, conveyance of meanings and value transmission in an interactive context. Traditionally, CH operators try to attract consumers, merely focusing on the tangible form of heritage, while the intangible dimension, the meaning hidden in the tangible form, is neglected.

Indeed, CH presentations to the public, as authored by the supply side, often ignore human cognitive architecture. The eye scan path movement, the general cognitive ability, the ability to perceive / process / retain / evoke mental representations, and the human memory capacity mechanisms are often ignored by many CH operators as: a) sine qua non conditions that regulate the quality of heritage; b) catalysts of experience satisfaction (Miller, 1957 and 2003; Baddeley and Hitch, 1974; Prasada: 2000:66-72; Paas, van Gog, and Sweller, 2010; Prasada and Dillingham, 2013; Baddeley, 2013).

#### **12.6 Challenge 3: value innovation**

The public heritage sector is slow in developing value propositions and business models to satisfy rising demands of experience seekers, especially the digitally knowledgeable younger generations.

Indeed, while the CH demand side is a constantly growing pool of well-informed, demanding, and time-scarce consumers looking for heritage services with cognitive affinity,



CH providers/operators lack value strategies; i.e. the means to enhance the production mechanism of the intangible heritage capital, launch products and services that impact non-captive audiences in a cognitive-emotional way, provide CH operators with new skills for new jobs, and offer non-captive audiences a high added value, diversified and customized CH product in participatory public space with shared practices and values.

## **12.7 Making Transformation Happen – Case Studies**

In order to address the challenges described in the previous section, the CH sector must rethink its fundamental beliefs. In particular, how growth can be achieved. Traditionally, cultural growth is linked to the presence and capitalization of tangible assets, such as monuments, museums, historic sites, natural attractions, and landscapes. While these assets clearly help attracting CH consumers, merely focusing on the tangible form of heritage assets results in neglecting the potentially more valuable intangible dimension: the meaning hidden in the tangible form.

Hence, one way of boosting growth in the CH sector is to develop new services that focus on revealing the intangible dimension of CH assets. Based on our experience, this implies thorough understanding of the CH sector's value chain key components: a) the nature of CH providers/operators; b) the particularities of onsite, real-time learning and the principles of Human Cognitive Architecture; c) the role of information technologies; d) the need to (re)define new skills for new jobs in the CH sector.

For the rest of this section, we describe international research and development projects as short case studies that showcase our specific experiences in addressing the CH sector transformation challenges, by redesigning different combinations of the aforementioned value chain key components.

## **12.8 Project SAGITTARIUS - a new cultural heritage business model**

The SEE/B/0016/4.3/X project SAGITTARIUS, funded by the South East Europe TCP 2007-2013 Transnational Cooperation Programme, was a 42-month (2011 - 2014) research and development project with an overall budget of 2.6 million euros. SAGITTARIUS has developed a heritage management framework for unlocking and communicating cultural values and launch cultural heritage entrepreneurship. The framework is comprised of the following elements:

- A management framework for the valorisation of cultural heritage;
- A participatory knowledge platform to guide multilevel actors in protecting and utilizing heritage assets;
- Public-private-third sector alliances in order to exemplify how heritage is valued, protected, communicated and used with ecological, economic and social profit;
- A value-driven cultural heritage business model.

The implementation and operationalization of this framework have facilitated cognitive-emotional experiences in cultural heritage environments by effectively revealing and showcasing cultural values to non-captive audiences. It is about involving visitors on site, encouraging identity development, social aggregation, and self-directed learning. This is achieved via the Roving Museum with offline and online services that are designed on the basis of cognitive-emotional experiences and implemented as multi-channel, emotionally interactive narratives. The Roving Museum adapts to visitor needs in a constantly changing

knowledge ecosystem implementing new ways of recreational learning and visitor satisfaction. It includes: a) a portable exhibition of 110 cultural heritage narratives, accessible via QR codes onsite; b) a mobile app for iOS and Android operating systems; c) a social media-driven participatory space, to support contextual co-creation and participatory learning.

## **12.9 Project ALECTOR - new skills for cultural heritage management**

The MIS ETC 2617 project ALECTOR, funded by the Black Sea Joint Operational Programme 2007-2013, was a 30-month (2014 - 2016) research and development project with an overall budget of 1.1 million euros. ALECTOR has created a new cultural heritage infrastructure in the Black Sea Basin, with highly replicable tools and practices. This is achieved by working with local actors, at grass roots level, to: a) co-create integrated narratives with the aid of interactive devices and special-effects films and videos; b) launch nine place-driven projects with high cognitive and emotional value to CH consumers. The latter may thus become part of the exploration and exhibit strong desire for repeating consumption of the same quality experience.

Overall, the developed infrastructure is focused on orchestrating new skills, new ventures and new jobs for stakeholders linked to CH assets. The ALECTOR Cultural Heritage Infrastructure includes:

- An e-course and an onsite course in Heritage Tourism;
- A Skills Certification system for planning and management of heritage attractions, resulting in the Black Sea Pool of Heritage Experts;
- SCRIPTORAMA, the first Black Sea Open Street Museum, consisting of: a) 100 bilingual interpretive narratives; b) a print Travel Aider; c) a multimedia iBook for iOS and Android operating systems with 490 digital spaces connected to the Google Maps app (available as free download from Apple's App Store and Google Play);
- The Black Sea Heritage Observatory, a legal association to manage the sustainability of the project's results beyond the project's lifetime.

## **12.10 Project DIVERTIMENTO - helping local CH ventures reach global markets**

Project DIVERTIMENTO, funded by the COSME Programme 2014-2020, is an 18-month (2016 – 2017) research and development project with an overall budget of 0.3 million euros. DIVERTIMENTO aims to internationalize local SMEs that operate in the CH sector in peripheral destinations. This is achieved by initially targeting stakeholder fragmentation, outdated skills and lack of IT-enabled services, through a new, shared vision for growth, aiming to transform the product buyer to product seller. Seamlessly connected with local heritage consumption points, 70 new authentic and multi-cultural experiences are created, through services that unite digital and offline offerings, whether central or peripheral to CH consumption (accommodation, transportation, catering, artistic activities, etc.).

The end result will be a Cultural Heritage Trilogy (a 70 geolocations Cultural Route, an iBook for iOS and Android operating systems, and 7 Heritage Games), inspired by the Council of Europe's Principles for Cultural Routes. The Trilogy will deliver both technology-intensive and onsite-specific experiences. These results will be showcased at the ITB Berlin 2017 (a leading travel trade show), addressing primarily the connected consumer market, as well as the senior and the youth markets.

## 12.11 Conclusions and Future Work

In times when the European identity is challenged by the global economic crisis, refugee flows, and terrorist attacks, it is imperative to reconsider the role of culture in creating a new narrative for Europe that will: a) enhance citizen reflection and performance, in both social and business dimensions; b) connect nations through digital cultural learning; c) reject violence and promote abstract thinking. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to design and implement a new strategic approach to the European CH sector, accounting for both research and business activities.

However, it is unfortunate that the CH Sector in Europe is challenged by multiple gaps between supply (CH operators, authorities, management bodies, businesses) and demand (CH consumers, tourists, visitors), thus making the aforementioned strategic realignment a difficult task. Being strongly subsidized, the CH supply side is slow to develop value propositions and business models that adapt to new demands of heritage experience seekers; especially, for the increasingly digitally minded, affluent CH consumers who value meta-cognition and critical thinking.

The first step that CH providers need to take in order to adapt to 21st century CH consumers is obvious yet transformative: to appreciate the need to connect the tangible form of culture to its intangible dimensions (symbols, meanings, inherent and social values). Acting upon and satisfying this need may require an interdisciplinary approach that accounts for:

- The understanding of CH institutions, especially their operations and mission;
- The assessment of production-consumption of the CH industry in Europe;
- The understanding of CH as a participatory public space that promotes critical thinking and intercultural dialogue with more educated and sensitized citizens;
- The human ability for categorical knowledge, as well as the limitations and capacity of human cognitive architecture;
- The understanding of the shifts in knowledge brought by various information technologies;
- The rising desire for experienced-based products and services in the CH sector and the need to restructure the learning paradigm and the methodological approach to attract the audience in heritage settings;
- The understanding that a transformed, value-driven CH sector that can meaningfully contribute to innovation, growth, jobs creation and better educated citizens across Europe is not disconnected from philosophical thinking and practice.

Through three short case studies, we described different pragmatic approaches for addressing the above transformation challenges of the CH sector. Going forward, we believe that business model innovation will continue to be a strong transformation catalyst for the sector, especially for adaptive re-use of cultural heritage.

Indeed, due to the financial crisis across Europe, many CH assets (industrial buildings, religious, settings, etc.) are facing functional redundancy that cannot be recovered by the public sector or private sector investments alone. Innovative financing, business and governance models are needed for enabling optimal adaptive re-use of such CH assets, in order to: a) integrate them with the modern social and business environments; b) enhance the appreciation of linked CH values and qualities by contemporary societies. As a result, our current research efforts are unfolding along the following axes:

- Identify and explore existing successful business models, financing vehicles and governance structures for re-use of CH assets;
- Codify such practices by developing relevant indicators, methods and tools, for assessing their effectiveness and understanding the context of their application;
- Develop business models and decision-making tools for adaptive re-use of CH assets, that account for: a) replicability potential; b) local conditions; c) multiplicity and type of stakeholders; d) cultural, natural and financial capital.

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