

MILLENNIALS' ONLINE HOTEL BOOKING JOURNEY: WHAT? HOW? WHY?

Qiulin Wang

School of Hotel & Tourism Management, Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Hong Kong SAR, China

Daniel Leung

School of Hotel & Tourism Management, Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Hong Kong SAR, China

Abstract

To understand millennials' booking journey comprehensively and thereby guiding them to reserve hotel accommodations via the lucrative channels, it is of necessity for hotels to capture all the touchpoints and channels employed by customers. Harnessing a mixed-method approach (including scenario-based experiments and think-aloud protocol analyses), this study research and unveil the complexity and diversity of millennials' online hotel booking journeys. Through the answers from "what", "how" and "why" diversified channels constitute millennials' online booking journey, this study provides valuable information to understand millennials' online hotel booking journey in a bigger picture.

Keywords: Online hotel booking journey; decision making; multi-touchpoints; multi-channels

Introduction

Over the past few decades, we have been observing that the Internet has been exerting a prominent impact on our daily routines (Vilhelmson, Thulin & Elldér, 2017). eMarketer (2017) reports that online shopping accounted for one-tenth of worldwide retail sales in 2017. Since many researchers empirically prove that one's technology use in everyday life can transfer to tourism (MacKay & Vogt, 2012; Murphy, Chen & Cossutta, 2016), it is not surprising that researching and booking hotel accommodations online are now becoming the mainstream trend. The World Tourism Organization (2014) reports that customers carry out nine travel-related searches on search engines and visit 14 different travel-related sites before making an online hotel reservation. Phocuswright (2017) also reports that one-third of global hotel bookings in 2016 were transacted online.

Being one of the most researched topics in the hospitality and tourism context, a plethora of researchers have explored various topics about customers' hotel selection process (e.g., Decrop & Snelders, 2005; Kim, Kim & Kim, 2018; Liu & Zhang, 2014; Sirakaya & Woodside, 2005). Tsai, Yeung and Yim's (2011) research and report that Chinese travelers and non-Chinese travelers rate the hotel selection criteria differently. The survey results from Murphy, Chen and Cossutta's (2016) study exhibit that search engines as well as family and friends are the most frequently used information sources by Swiss in the hotel booking context. Despite the existence of many academic evidence, extant studies mostly employ the static approach and investigate how individual factors influence customers' choice at a particular time point only (e.g., Chan & Wong, 2006; Lockyer, 2005). Several researchers follow Nedungadi's (1987) choice-set theory and embrace the dynamic approach to investigate how hotel customers go through a funnel-like process to make their final booking decisions (e.g., Jones & Chen, 2011; Park, Yin & Son, 2018;). Although their findings do

unveil how customers narrow down their choices in different phases, the inclusion of only one channel in their works constrains the generalizability of their findings.

Considering that modern customers now tend to use multiple channels concurrently and switch among them frequently in order to identify the best alternative (Lu, Gursoy & Lu, 2016; van Dijk, Minocha & Laing, 2007), it is of necessity to examine customers' hotel booking journey in a holistic and omni-channel context (Amaro & Duarte, 2013; Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015). Only by means of understanding how customers dynamically interact with different channels throughout the customers' booking journey, academic researchers can formulate a typology of customers' online hotel booking approaches while hoteliers can optimize the efficacy of their marketing and distribution strategy.

Being one of the first studies that attempt to customers' hotel booking journey in the omni-channel context, this exploratory study purports to explore "what" and "how" diversified channels constitute customers' online hotel booking journey. Besides describing how customers switch among different channels before making their final decision, the examination of "why" customers select and switch among different channels throughout their booking journey is another objective of this study. Through combining the answers from the "what", "how" and "why" questions, this study is expect to complement prior studies and enrich the knowledge about customers' online hotel booking journey.

As millennials have already made up 40% of leisure travelers who book travel online, adding that 70% of them stayed in a hotel (nSight for Travel, 2016; Rezdy, 2018), they are widely acknowledged as the most influential consumer segment in the new trend of tourism industry (Morrison, 2017). In view of their growth in both size and significance, this paper focuses on millennial travelers' online hotel booking journey. To be specific, the objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to investigate the dynamic hotel booking roadmap from the millennial travelers' point of view; (2) to identify which digital channels are the most influential during different stages of customers' booking journey; and (3) to identify factors affecting customers' decision to select and switch among different channels.

Literature Review

Online Hotel Booking Decision

As booking hotel accommodations using online channels is becoming increasingly prevalent among consumers, many researchers have dedicated a lot of effort to enrich the knowledge about this topic. Generally speaking, previous research can be classified into three main streams.

The first stream investigates and discusses customers' hotel selection process. Alike the signature five-stage model created by Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1990), many researchers find and report that certain established steps (e.g., information search, evaluation and purchase decision) are followed when customers make a purchase decision and reach a final choice (Erasmus, Boshoff & Rousseau, 2001; Nicosia & Mayer, 1976). Smallman and Moore (2010) argue for a greater emphasis on decision-making process and the consequential changes in ontology and epistemology. In this way, variations across different moments of decision-making may be explored. That is, research needs to focus on the whole process that what the customers search, review and choose.

The second stream mainly investigates factors affecting customers' hotel selection process. As expected, numerous research unveil that customers evaluate hotel attributes, such as hotel rating, price and availability of rooms when they book hotels online (Casalo, Flavian, Guinaliu & Ekinci, 2015; Park, Ha & Park, 2017). Since user-generated content is easily accessible and reliable, online reviews from review websites (e.g., TripAdvisor) and online travel agencies (e.g., Booking.com) are empirically proven to have some influences on one's online booking intention and even their

perceived trust towards the reviewed hotel (Ladhari & Michaud, 2015; Yu, Wang, Wang & Li, 2018). Sometimes, website attributes and search engine are more likely to be used as selection criteria, rather than the hotel attributes (Jones & Chen, 2011). Verma, Stock, and McCarthy (2012) echo and supplement that travelers use different websites to search information when they are in different decision stage. In this vein, the factors affecting consumers' hotel selection decision are different at each moment.

The third stream of research about this topic mainly investigates decision-making style used by consumers. Sproles and Kendall (1986) underscore that the impact of decision-making style on consumer decisions is long-lasting. Some researchers also stress that different customer segments have different decision-making style. For instance, when couples make tourism decisions, the dynamic of the shared decision-making process is varied with couples' length of experience with one another (Smith, Pitts, Litvin & Agrawal, 2017). Atadil, Sirakaya-Turk, Meng and Decrop (2018) examine and verify there is difference among the rational, adaptive and daydreamer decision-makers' segments in their behavioral and attitudinal characteristics. Although a detailed understanding of decision patterns is essential to explain customer's hotel booking behavior better, the examination of consumers' decision-making style have been rarely investigated in the hotel booking context.

Customer Purchase Journey

Customer purchase journey refers to the process a customer goes through, across all stages and touchpoints and finally makes up the customer experience (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). Stein and Ramaseshan (2016) explained that atmospheric, technological, communicative, process, employee-customer interaction, customer-customer interaction and product interaction are seven basic touchpoints. Customers communicate with firms through myriad touchpoints, accelerating media and fragmented channels, resulting in more complex customer journeys (Brynjolfsson, Hu & Rahman 2013).

Analyzing customer decision-making journey does matter because the results can reveal problematic and incoherent service delivery that may result into bad customer experiences (Halvorsrud, Kvale & Følstad, 2016). This analysis will help firms to analyze channels contribution and develop an understanding of how to enrich customer experience in every moment. Another reason why analyzing customer decision-making journey matters is because the interactions between customers and firms involve many channels and also reflect emotional, behavioral and cognitive responses in the process. A single channel may re-appear during the decision-making process, and some channels may be used simultaneously during one shopping stage (Wolny & Charoensuksai, 2014).

Although the results derived from the analysis of customers' decision-making journey are of value and importance, to the best of the authors' knowledge, the current study is one of the first studies that attempt to investigate customers' decision-making journey in the online hotel booking context.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a scenario-based experimental design approach, including a mixture of observations and interviews, to thoroughly understand the dynamic hotel booking roadmap by millennial customers. A screen capturing software was used to record the entire searching and selecting processes made by the participants. Interviews were carried out after the observation in order to understand why customers select and switch among different touchpoints and channels throughout their booking journey.

Data Collection

Data were collected using a two-step approach:

Step1: Before the start of the experiment, the researchers firstly introduced the study objectives to each participant and sought for their consent to collect data from them. After soliciting the consent from the participants, they were then asked to read the following text in order to help them familiarize with the scenario and setting of the experiment: “*Imagine that you are planning a long-awaited trip to Paris (France) with a group of close friends for the upcoming summer vacation/annual leave (June 2019). As your friends are responsible for other issues, they are asking you to take the lead in looking for one hotel accommodation for this week-long trip.*”

The current study selected Paris as the destination because it is one of the most popular destination cities among international and particularly Chinese millennial travelers (Ipsos, 2016). Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau (2018) also reports that Greater Paris received 40 million tourists in 2017 and Mainland China climbed to the fourth place among all source markets. Paris was chosen because the city has many accommodation options. According to those popular tourism products websites like TripAdvisor and online travel agencies, thousands of accommodations in Paris are available for customers’ consideration and selection.

After reading the hypothetical scenario, participants were asked to freely search, review and find a hotel accommodation for a trip using any web browser, software and other gadgets pre-installed in a standard computer. Throughout the searching process, they are allowed to login to their personal accounts (e.g., email, social media sites) at their convenience. Subjects were not disturbed throughout the entire experiment and they can withdraw at any time in the process. The whole searching and selecting process were recorded by the pre-installed screen capturing software for further analysis.

Step2: After the completion of the searching task, a post-completion interview was conducted with each participant. A researcher watched the recorded video together with the corresponding participant. Whenever the subjects performed an operation, the researchers asked them why they did it and what they were considering. Each interview process was recorded and transcribed.

Data collection was performed in November 2018 and December 2018, and participants were recruited using the convenience sampling approach. Anyone who is aged 23 - 36 (born between the early 1980s and the mid-1990s) is qualified to join. The sample size consisted of 12 subjects and participant information were presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Participant’ Demographic Profile

Participant pseudonym	Gender	Age	Highest level of education level
Leung	Female	27	Bachelor
Vicky	Female	23	Doctoral
Xin	Male	30	Master
CQS	Male	29	Master
Koko	Male	28	Master
Charlene	Female	30	Master
Faye	Female	25	Master
Ice	Male	27	Bachelor
Tao	Male	23	Bachelor
Aaron	Male	24	Master
Olive	Female	29	Bachelor
Ann	Female	27	Bachelor

Data Analysis

During the observation stage of data analysis, a transcript was written for each video data file. These transcripts included the sequence of channels visited, keywords used, pages viewed, modules viewed, type of channels, time spent for each channel and any filter or activities that help participants to search and review information. Then, the researcher aggregated all transcripts and delineated the dynamic online hotel booking roadmap. In addition to understanding the customers' decision style, data obtained from the survey were added to interpret participants' online hotel booking patterns.

For every interview, participants' responses were combined with their actual booking behavior from the video recording. Think-aloud protocol analysis is often used to study the cognitive aspect of translation (Künzli, 2009). In this study, it was used to identify which digital channels are the most influential during different stages of customers' booking journey and explore factors affecting customers' decision to select and switch among different channels.

Findings and Discussions

The findings show that diversified channels constitute customers' online hotel booking journey. The journey begins with customers' most commonly used websites and then they switch to other channels to find more information or evaluate alternatives before making final decisions for different reasons. Besides, customers scan different types of touchpoints during their online hotel booking journey.

Dynamic Online Hotel Booking Roadmap

As can be seen in Table 2, all participants successfully chose a hotel for their hypothetical trip in Paris. The range of hotels number that they scanned is from 1 to 30. Each participant switched among several channels when booking hotels online. The number of channels that the participants used has a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 6.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Searching Task

Participant	Time	Channel Number	Hotels Scanned	Final Booking Channel
Leung	43m35s	2	14	Airbnb
Vicky	10m30s	4	6	Airbnb
Xin	30m14s	4	16	Mafengwo
CQS	20m20s	2	8	Ctrip
Koko	31m07s	5	4	Ctrip
Charlene	29m00s	3	4	Mafengwo
Faye	30m40s	4	5	Airbnb
Ice	31m10s	6	5	Agoda
Tao	57m50s	6	30	Airbnb
Aaron	43m05s	6	9	Agoda
Olive	41m15s	6	11	Hotels.com
Ann	14m30s	4	1	Feizhu

Several types of roadmap can be found based on different patterns of participants' online booking journey. The first type of roadmap is simple. Customers complete their online hotel booking journey by using only one or two channels. For example, Leung used a general search engine to

search for one online hotel booking platform, which her previous experience on this platform was great. Then, she switched to Airbnb and spent a lot of time to select alternatives and finally chose the one she wanted. She conducted all her selecting process in one online hotel booking website. This kind of roadmap is short and simple.

The second type of roadmap has a high demand for online travel agency platforms. For those who are affiliated with this type, they need a large range of hotel choices and hotel information to make their final decisions. In this way, they may swap among different online travel agency platforms to find enough information. In Faye’s online hotel booking journey, she opened Airbnb and Booking.com simultaneously to search and compare hotels between these two platforms. For Ice, he browsed through five online travel agency platforms (including Mafengwo, Airbnb, Booking.com, Feizhu, and Agoda) successively. It is noteworthy that they have enough knowledge about how to book hotels online and are familiar with the online booking channels.

The third type is an interlacing roadmap. During the online hotel booking journey, customers need to switch among different types of channels. For instance, Koko searched for hotels on Ctrip and Booking.com at first. However, he recognized he could not make decisions due to the lack of ideas about what kind of hotels he wanted to book. Therefore, he turned to Mafengwo and Zhihu, which are two popular travel experience-sharing channels in China, to look for travel guidebooks and hotel recommendations. Also, Koko searched for *Lonely Planet* to get ideas about hotels recommendation in Paris. In addition, Ann turned to a social media channel (i.e., Weibo) to check whether the hotels she selected had a discount. When considering the location of hotels, Aaron switched to Rentalcars to check whether it was appropriate to rent a car to reach Paris tourist attractions conveniently. For this type of roadmap, customers may seek other assisted information from varied types of channels when they book hotels online.

Table 3
Participants’ Online Hotel Booking Roadmap

Participant	Roadmap
Leung	Baidu->Airbnb->Baidu
Vicky	Google->Feizhu->Google->Qunar->Feizhu->Airbnb
Xin	Baidu->Mafengwo->Hotels.com->Mafengwo->Booking.com->Mafengwo
CQS	Baidu->Ctrip
Koko	Baidu->Ctrip->Booking.com->Baidu->Mafengwo->Zhihu->Baidu->Mafengwo ->Ctrip->Zhihu->Ctrip->Baidu->Ctrip
Charlene	Google->Mafengwo->Agoda->Mafengwo->Agoda
Faye	Google map->Booking.com->Airbnb->Google->Booking.com->Google map ->Booking.com->Airbnb->Google->Airbnb
Ice	Baidu->Mafengwo->Airbnb->Booking.com->Feizhu->Agoda
Tao	Baidu->Qunar->360 search->Booking.com->Qunar->Baidu->Agoda
Aaron	Google->Booking.com->TripAdvisor->Airbnb->Google map->Rentalcars ->TripAdvisor->Airbnb->Google map->Google
Olive	Baidu->Lehuo->Airbnb->Mafengwo->Baidu->TripAdvisor->Hotels.com
Ann	Baidu->Feizhu->Booking.com->Weibo

Influential Digital Channels of Online Hotel Booking

Many types of research sources and booking channels are provided to customers, like general search engines, online travel agencies, user-generated content sites and social media sites (Liu & Zhang, 2014; Murphy & Chen, 2016). Table 4 shows the dominant channel types that were most frequently used by participants during their booking journey. As shown in Table 3, participants

often used the general search engines like Baidu and Google as their first channel. Surprisingly, no official hotel websites were adopted during participants' online hotel booking journey. Instead, the most frequently used channels were online travel agencies, which had a wide range of options. Booking.com, Airbnb, Agoda, Ctrip, and Feizhu were popular online travel agencies used by participants. Concerning user-generated content sites, Mafengwo destination and Zhihu (a third-party expert), which were mainly used by participants to search guidebook information to find hotels recommendation. Few participants also logged on their social media (e.g., Weibo) to help them make decisions.

Table 4 Types and Samples of Channels Used by Participants

Channel types	Samples
General search engine	Baidu, Google, 360 search
Online travel agency	Booking.com, Airbnb, Agoda, Feizhu, Qunar, Ctrip, TripAdvisor, Hotels.com
User-generated content site	Mafengwo destination, Zhihu
Social media site	Weibo
Others	Rentalcars, Google map

Table 5 presents the frequencies of those online travel agencies used by the. Booking.com and Airbnb are the two most favorable online travel agency among participants, and they offer different types of accommodation options. Though many participants browse hotels on Booking.com and Airbnb, they regard these two online travel agencies as different roles during their booking journey. For instance, Leung searched for apartments on Airbnb directly as she preferred this type of accommodation. Faye compared hotel options between Booking.com and Airbnb until she found a suitable choice on one of the channels. Ann only took Booking.com as a price parity platform and finally booked a hotel on Feizhu. The following most frequently used online travel agency is Mafengwo hotel, which is a sub-part of Mafengwo website. After looking guidebooks on Mafengwo destination, which is also a sub-part of Mafengwo, subjects turn to the hotel page to scan hotels. While few participants, such as Koko and Ice, would like to turn to professional online travel agency to compare and book hotels after collecting travel information on Mafengwo destination.

Table 5 List of Online Travel Agency Sites used by Participants with Frequency Statistics

Online travel agency	Frequency	Percentage
Booking.com	7	23.33%
Airbnb	7	23.33%
Mafengwo hotel	4	13.33%
Agoda	3	10.00%
Feizhu	2	6.67%
Ctrip	2	6.67%
TripAdvisor	2	6.67%
Hotels.com	2	6.67%
Qunar	1	3.33%

Customers may face many touchpoints when selecting hotels carefully on an OTA channel. At different stages, different types of touchpoints work. Attractive pictures, convenient location, appropriate price, high ratings and hotel position in the hotel lists can attract customers to explore this hotel more. Xin, Charlene, and Leung said if the hotel photo style were their favorite type, they

would like to consider booking this hotel. For the price touchpoint, Ice said discount offers would promote his booking. Leung and Charlene would not choose the lowest price, worrying that this would lead to bad services. After clicking in a hotel, customers mainly focus on the number of reviews, negative reviews, rooms and stars. In particular, longer reviews can make them seem credible, and hotel photos posted by other tourists can help customers know a hotel better. When comparing among alternatives, participants pay more attention to location, picture details, price, and surroundings. These touchpoints determine whether a consumer book a hotel or not.

Factors for Switching Among Different Channels

Table 6 summarizes influential factors for customers’ multi-channel switching behavior during their online hotel booking journey. In general, there are two types of switching. One is switching among online travel agency channels and another one is switching between Online travel agencies and other channel types. For switching among Online travel agencies, one of the common factors is that customers are trying to get more choices. As different Online travel agencies have different hotels lists and prices offer, customers can expand their options range and find a proper price to meet both of their constraints and needs. At first, Faye and Tao searched for hotels on booking and Qunar respectively. However, they found that the hotel prices for a week exceeded their budgets, so they changed direction and tried to find an apartment on other channels. Ann decided to book a hotel on Feizhu because of her high membership level on this channel, but she also logged in Booking to compare price for every hotel in her choice set. If there were large price gap, she would consider changing another channel to book hotels. In addition, Ann would scan reviews and hotel pictures on different channels. For example, she said she scanned reviews on Booking, because there were more reviews provided on this international channel than Feizhu did. Also, she browsed hotel pictures on Booking because of the reliability of photos. The same behaviour happened to Ice as well.

For switching between online travel agencies and other types of channels, there are two particular categories of factors. First, since the location is an important factor when booking hotels, subjects switch between Online travel agencies and other channels, such as Google map and Mafengwo destination, to know more about distribution and attractions for Paris and measure the distance between a hotel and an attraction on Google map. Second, searching for specific information to support decision making. For example, Koko tried to search hotel recommendation on a third-party UGC platform (Zhihu). Because he thought recommendation on such a platform could be more reliable than on commercial Online travel agencies’. What’s more, searching for the exchange rate, cars renting information and other Online travel agencies that didn’t know before on general search engine also are influencing factors for channels switching.

Booking hotels in such a multi-channel environment can provide consumers with sufficient information to help them make satisfied decisions. Their booking roadmaps represent a channel parallel and also a circular state because of various purposes. Therefore, switching among channels seem ordinary and necessary during the process of millennial travelers’ online hotel booking.

Table 6
Factors for Multi-Channels Switching Behaviour

Switch among online travel agencies	Switch between online travel agencies and other channels
To compare price of a same hotel	To find recommendation from a third-party platform
To find different hotel options	To find car renting
To compare hotel price range and location	To search for hotel booking channels
To scan reviews/pictures on reliable channels	To confirm hotel location on google map

The current platform is not user friendly	To scan reviews on Google map
To seek out more discount information	To convert exchange rate
Unconscious transformation	To search for Paris attractions and guidebooks

Conclusions and Implications

This work adopted a scenario-based experimental design approach, including a mixture of observations and interviews, to thoroughly understand millennial travelers' end-to-end experience during their hotel booking journey. The results reveal that several types of roadmap can be found based on different patterns of participants' online booking journey. Online hotel booking roadmaps represent a dynamic character in current multi-channel context. In addition, the results also show that the most frequently used channels are online travel agencies, which have a wide range of options. Booking.com, Airbnb, Agoda, Ctrip and Feizhu are the most influential online travel agencies chosen by customers. There are many factors influence customers to switch among channels, one of the common influential factors is that they try to get more choices. Another one is that they need to know more about the destination and other support information to make hotel booking decisions. Through accessing and navigating in multi-channel and interacting with multi-touchpoint, customers can have more confidence to make decisions during their online booking journey.

From an academic perspective, this study would contribute new knowledge to the customer behavior related literature and strengthen the understanding the way that hotel customers communicate with hotels in different channels and different moments under such a changing hotel market. In terms of business perspective, having a better understanding of a bigger picture of hotel booking journey can help hotels to gain a much greater opportunity to target customers in the right place at the right moment with the right information. Hotels can spend more on the most important channels and touchpoints in each booking stage.

Finally, this study has several limitations, with also indicate future research directions. First, the relatively small sample size did not allow deeper insights. However, this study paid attention to such a critical issue that customers' dynamic hotel booking roadmap in current multi-channel context. This study can reflect the behavior of millennial travelers during their online hotel booking journey and it also opens up more questions for future research and quantitative research is needed to explore deeper. Second, the perception of destination spatial distance can influence travelers' information search and hotel select behavior (van Boven, Kane, McGraw & Dale, 2010). Thus, a future study could consider customers' perception of destination distance and compare the difference of online booking hotel roadmap between long-distance travel and short-distance travel. Third, in the real word, the selection of hotels is usually closely related to travel plans. That is, the sightseeing, restaurants and the travel activities all can have influences on hotel selection. Thus, in the stage of information search, considering how travelers make their travel plans is also necessary to get a bigger picture for the online booking journey.

References

- Amaro, S., & Duarte, P. (2013). Online travel purchasing: A literature review. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(8), 755-785.
- Atadil, H. A., Sirakaya-Turk, E., Meng, F., & Decrop, A. (2018). Exploring travellers' decision-making styles. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 30(1), 618-636.
- Brynjolfsson, E., Hu, Y. J., & Rahman, M. S. (2013). Competing in the age of omni-channel retailing. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 54(4), 23-29.

- Casalo, L. V., Flavian, C., Guinaliu, M., & Ekinci, Y. (2015). Do online hotel rating schemes influence booking behaviors? *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 49, 28-36.
- Chan, E. S. W., & Wong, S. C. K. (2006). Hotel selection: When price is not the issue. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 12(2), 142-159.
- Decrop, A., & Snelders, D. (2005). A grounded typology of vacation decision-making. *Tourism Management*, 26(2), 121-132.
- eMarketer. (2017). *Worldwide retail and commerce sales: eMarketer's estimates for 2016-2021*. Retrieved <https://www.emarketer.com/Report/Worldwide-Retail-Ecommerce-Sales-eMarketers-Estimates-20162021/2002090>
- Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Miniard, P. W. (1990). *Consumer Behavior (6th edition)*. Chicago: Dryden.
- Erasmus, A. C., Boshoff, E., & Rousseau, G. G. (2001). Consumer decision-making models within the discipline of consumer science: a critical approach. *Journal of Consumer Sciences*, 29(1), 82-90.
- Halvorsrud, R., Kvale, K., & Følstad, A. (2016). Improving service quality through customer journey analysis. *Journal of Service Theory and Practice*, 26(6), 840-867.
- Ipsos. (2016). *Market Research Report on Chinese Outbound Tourist (City) Consumption 2015*. Beijing: Ipsos.
- Jones, P., & Chen, M. M. (2011). Factors determining hotel selection: Online behaviour by leisure travellers. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 11(1), 83-95.
- Kim, J., Kim, P. B., & Kim, J. E. (2018). Impacts of temporal and gender difference on hotel selection process. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 27(6), 711-732.
- Künzli, A. (2009). Think-aloud protocols-a useful tool for investigating the linguistic aspect of translation. *Meta: Translators' Journal*, 54(2), 326-341.
- Ladhari, R., & Michaud, M. (2015). eWOM effects on hotel booking intentions, attitudes, trust, and website perceptions. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 46, 36-45.
- Lemon, K. N., & Verhoef, P. C. (2016). Understanding customer experience throughout the customer journey. *Journal of Marketing*, 80(6), 69-96.
- Liu, J. N., & Zhang, E. Y. (2014). An investigation of factors affecting customer selection of online hotel booking channels. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 39, 71-83.
- Lockyer, T. (2005). The perceived importance of price as one hotel selection dimension. *Tourism Management*, 26(4), 529-537.
- Lu, A. C. C., Gursoy, D., & Lu, C. Y. R. (2016). Antecedents and outcomes of consumers' confusion in the online tourism domain. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 57, 76-93.
- MacKay, K., & Vogt, C. (2012). Information technology in everyday and vacation contexts. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(3), 1380-1401.
- Morrison, G. (2017). *Millennial traveller report 2016 by Brand Expedia Worldwide*. Retrieved from <https://www.foresightfactory.co/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Expedia-Millennial-Traveller-Report-Final.pdf>
- Murphy, H. C., & Chen, M. M. (2016). Online information sources used in hotel bookings: Examining relevance and recall. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55(4), 523-536.
- Murphy, H. C., Chen, M. M., & Cossutta, M. (2016). An investigation of multiple devices and information sources used in the hotel booking process. *Tourism Management*, 52, 44-51.
- Nedungadi, P. (1987). *Formation and use of a consideration set: implications for marketing and research on consumer choice*. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation).
- Nicosia, F., & Mayer, R. (1976). Toward a sociology of consumption. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 3(2), 65-75.

- nSight for Travel. (2016, March, 18th). *10 Things You Need to Know About Millennial Travelers*. Retrieved from <http://www.nsigthfortravel.com/10-things-you-need-to-know-about-millennial-travelers/>
- Paris Convention and Visitors Bureau. (2018, March, 23th). *Paris: record tourist numbers in 2017*. Retrieved from <https://press.parisinfo.com/news/press-releases/Paris-record-tourist-numbers-in-2017>
- Park, K., Ha, J., & Park, J. Y. (2017). An experimental investigation on the determinants of online hotel booking intention. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 26(6), 627-643.
- Park, S., Yin, Y., & Son, B. G. (2018). Understanding of online hotel booking process: A multiple method approach. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*. doi: 10.1177/1356766718778879
- Phocuswright (2017). *2017 Phocus Forward: The year ahead in digital travel*. New York: Phocuswright.
- Rezdy. (2018, February 1st). *Millennials: An In-depth Look into the Travel Segment*. Retrieved from <https://www.rezdy.com/blog/millennials-depth-look-travel-segment-infographic/>
- Sirakaya, E., & Woodside, A. G. (2005). Building and testing theories of decision making by travellers. *Tourism Management*, 26(6), 815-832.
- Smallman, C., & Moore, K. (2010). Process studies of tourists' decision-making. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 37(2), 397-422.
- Smith, W. W., Pitts, R. E., Litvin, S. W., & Agrawal, D. (2017). Exploring the length and complexity of couples travel decision making. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 58(4), 387-392.
- Sprotles, G. B., & Kendall, E. L. (1986). A methodology for profiling consumers' decision-making styles. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 20(2), 267-279.
- Stein, A., & Ramaseshan, B. (2016). Towards the identification of customer experience touch point elements. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services*, 30, 8-19.
- Tsai, H., Yeung, S., & Yim, P. (2011). Hotel selection criteria used by Mainland Chinese and foreign individual travelers to Hong Kong. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 12(3), 252-267.
- The World Tourism Organization. (2014). *Online guest reviews and hotel classification systems: An integrated approach*. Madrid, Spain: The World Tourism Organization.
- van Boven, L., Kane, J., McGraw, A. P., & Dale, J. (2010). Feeling close: emotional intensity reduces perceived psychological distance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 98(6), 872.
- van Dijk, G., Minocha, S., & Laing, A. (2007). Consumers, channels and communication: Online and offline communication in service consumption. *Interacting with Computers*, 19(1), 7-19.
- Verhoef, P. C., Kannan, P. K., & Inman, J. J. (2015). From multi-channel retailing to omni-channel retailing: introduction to the special issue on multi-channel retailing. *Journal of Retailing*, 91(2), 174-181.
- Verma, R., Stock, D., & McCarthy, L. (2012). Customer preferences for online, social media, and mobile innovations in the hospitality industry. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 53(3), 183-186.
- Vilhelmson, B., Thulin, E., & Elldér, E. (2017). Where does time spent on the Internet come from? Tracing the influence of information and communications technology use on daily activities. *Information, Communication & Society*, 20(2), 250-263.
- Wolny, J., & Charoensuksai, N. (2014). Mapping customer journeys in multichannel decision-making. *Journal of Direct, Data and Digital Marketing Practice*, 15(4), 317-326.
- Yu, S. M., Wang, J., Wang, J. Q., & Li, L. (2018). A multi-criteria decision-making model for hotel selection with linguistic distribution assessments. *Applied Soft Computing*, 67, 741-755.