

Development of a design toolkit for memorable and meaningful smart tourism innovation

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Goals and purposes of the research: This proposal presents a work-in-progress that invites researchers and professionals who are interested in using design methods to create meaningful tourism propositions for their smart tourism initiatives. With the support of a design team, the goal of this project is to develop a design toolkit that enables a multi-disciplinary design team (i.e., designer and non-designer) to perform exploration, ideation, and concept development. The ENTERXchange can connect interested collaborators so that they can work together on the development of such a design toolkit.

Research background: The tourism experience and its contribution to tourists' wellbeing are important considerations in tourism development. Many travelers deliberately seek meaningful experiences on their journeys. Recent academic research in tourism and positive psychology recognize this as eudaimonia: experiences are intrinsically valuable and significant, hence memorable and meaningful to tourists. Furthermore, offering eudaimonic tourism experiences can create a more sustainable tourism service. Smart technologies often play roles in supporting such a transformation. Although both design thinking and service design adopt a user-centered approach, current methods fall short of addressing experiential factors and implicit personal factors pertaining to eudaimonia. Using culture tourism as the context, this study comprises two stages: the first stage identifies explicit experiential and implicit psychological dimensions about the eudaimonic tourism experience. Then, the second stage, as a result of this collaboration, incorporates insights into the development of a design toolkit.

Methodology: The study adopts an iterative participatory action research approach. The study will be conducted using online design sprint sessions via an online collaborative platform with the support of our design team. The study will be conducted in three steps: our research team will work with collaborators on a specific design brief. Then, the collaborator will receive a set of design tools with instructions and supports (e.g., design brief and tasks) to accomplish specific design tasks. Lastly, a follow-up interview will aid the improvement of the toolkit.

Contributions and implications: Collaborators will contribute to the development of the first design toolkit dedicated to the tourism industry. Such a toolkit supports tourism innovation and facilitates multidisciplinary design team members who are involved in a design process. The toolkit development process will also be published in academic journals.

Keywords: Smart tourism innovation, Design thinking, Service design, Co-design, Eudaimonic tourism experience, Cultural tourism.

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