

Abstract

Topic: The Role of Immersive Technology in the Hospitality and Tourism Industry

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Course/ Year: BBA Tourism, Hotel Management & Operations

Pages: 76

Content: Immersive technologies have the power to connect people and places in a wide spectrum of industries. As immersive technologies serve different functions towards various industries, the characteristics of purchasing intentions, booking behaviors, customer experiences and customer satisfaction are tested to identify the effect which it has on the industry. To determine the effects immersive technologies have on the tourism and hospitality industry, this thesis tests how immersive technologies effect and/ or influence different types of consumers. Therefore, the mixed method approach is used to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of an individual's perspective on immersive technologies and the factors influencing their perspectives using a survey. Parallely, the factors influencing the perspectives of expert individuals are assessed using qualitative interviews. In this research study, four main findings have been clearly identified. There has been a positive indication that augmented reality is widely perceived as the ideal tool for immersive navigation of destinations and hotel premises. Virtual reality is perceived to offer significant added benefits to virtual tours of tourism and hospitality related environments. Immersive technologies serve as an added benefit in the customer journey both prior to purchasing as well as post-purchasing. There has been a positive significance between immersive technology tools/ applications and the influence on consumer purchasing behaviors. The uprising of the metaverse is projected to expand customer bases and will aid to create additional revenue streams for the tourism and hospitality industry. However, it is evident from findings that immersive technologies need to undergo further research and development to create more realistic immersive experiences while effectively mitigating health barriers such as motion sickness and vertigo.

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