



Editorial

Special Issue on ‘Smart Tourism in Brazil: New Technologies, Applications, Knowledge management, and Tourists Experience’

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1. Introduction

The integration of technology in tourism destinations has the potential to enhance visitor experiences, improve destination management, contribute to sustainable practices, and residents' quality of life (Koo et al., 2019; Santos-Júnior et al., 2020). Otowicz et al. (2022) after the compilation of data obtained from an integrative literature review research supported the proposition of 14 operational dimensions of Smart Tourism, namely: collaboration, technology, sustainability, experience, accessibility, knowledge management, innovation management, human capital, marketing, customized services, transparency, safety, governance, and mobility.

Several limitations and gaps in the current understanding of Smart Tourism still exist: i) lack of standardized frameworks; ii) understanding vulnerability in the digital landscape of Smart Tourism; iii) incomplete understanding of visitor behavior; iv) artificial intelligence for personalized experiences; v) the role of social media in empowering marginalized communities in Smart Tourism; vi) informing ethical guidelines and best practices in data collection involving vulnerable populations in Smart Tourism; vii) data analytics for destination management; viii) potential adverse impacts perceived by residents concerning Smart Tourism Destinations, such as the digital divide, e-gentrification, and overtourism. (Cho, 2023; Matyusupov et al., 2024; Wei et al., 2024).

The Journal of Smart Tourism presents this special issue that comprises three articles, focusing on ‘Smart Tourism in Brazil: New Technologies, Applications, Knowledge management, and Tourists experience, exploring the impact of smart tourism in the Brazilian context, examining innovative approaches and technology solutions, and shedding light on the opportunities and implications of this emerging field in tourism.

Brazil, with its rich multi-ethnic cultural heritage and remarkable biodiversity, offers a wealth of potential experiences for travelers from all over the world. The country's vast expanse is home to a variety of destinations ranging from tropical beaches to dense forests and large metropolises (Lohmann et al., 2022). Furthermore, as one of the largest global economies, Brazil has the necessary infrastructure to support a robust tourism industry capable of catering for a wide range of tourist preferences and budgets.

The first paper of the special issue, “Smart Tourism Destination from a Systemic Perspective: A Brazilian Case Study,” by Ralyson Soares and Luiz Mendes-Filho, analyses Natal city in Brazil as a potential Smart Tourism Destination to step towards modernizing the city's tourism infrastructure. By analyzing the

perceptions of public and private managers, the research shows the importance of a strategic approach to destination development. The systemic perspective adopted in the study, encompassing Strategic-Relational, Instrumental, and Applied levels, provides a comprehensive framework for assessing and enhancing Natal's tourism capabilities. Despite the challenges identified, such as infrastructure and security, the study optimistically points out opportunities for improvement, particularly through better governance and the integration of smartness principles into the City Master Plan.


The second paper, ‘Digital Collaborative Network Architecture Model Supported by Knowledge Engineering in Heritage Sites’, written by Márcio Crescêncio, Alexandre Biz and José Todesco, provides a comprehensive approach to enhancing the management of heritage sites in Brazil through the development of an integrated model. This model leverages a digital collaborative network, underpinned by knowledge engineering, to streamline processes and facilitate more effective heritage site management. The research adopts an exploratory and qualitative methodology, utilizing thematic analysis to dissect data across various themes such as collaborative networks, digital platforms, world heritage, and tourism. The findings underscore the importance of a strategically oriented collaborative network model, which is augmented by a digital platform. Such a model promises to revolutionize the way heritage sites are managed, making them more accessible and engaging for both stakeholders and visitors alike.


The last paper, “Generational Perspectives on Smart Tourism: A Focus on Baby Boomers,” by Karla Camargo, Tercio Pereira and Pablo Limberger, presents a relevant contribution to understanding the dynamics of technology adoption among Baby Boomers in the context of smart tourism destinations. It underscores the importance of perceived utility and risk perception in shaping the intentions of this generation to use Information and Communication Technologies. The research involves questionnaires administered to elderly groups belonging to the baby boomer generation in Brazilian cities, and provides robust insights into the factors influencing technology acceptance. The findings suggest that addressing the security concerns of Baby Boomers and reducing their risk perception can enhance their willingness to engage with technologies. The study has practical implications for destination managers, who should tailor their strategies to accommodate the unique needs of different age groups, ensuring inclusivity and minimizing digital exclusion.

The papers cover different issues about Smart Tourism in Brazil, contributing to a deeper understanding of using of

technologies in tourism. They provide empirical, analytical, and conceptual approaches to better comprehend what is happening in terms of smart tourism in the Brazilian context, offering insights and ideas to academics and industry related to tourism.

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