



Università della Basilicata
L.M. Natural & Cultural Resources Economics

Experiential Consumption and Destination Marketing

Roberto Micera
roberto.micera@unibas.it



Tourism Destination Marketing & Management

Proff. C. Rossi e R. Micera



Introduction

Consumption Experiences

The role of tourism organizations is not only the development and promotion of the destination product but also the **manufacture of imagery of tourist experiences**



Purchased tangible components

Cognitive and emotional elements



The nature of experience and consumption experiences

The term experience:
different meanings, interpretations and perceptions of it exist

- (i) The omnipresence of **information technology** for fuelling innovative experiences
- (ii) The superiority of the **brand**
- (iii) A demanding consumer base that grew **more sophisticated** and **affluent**
- (iv) An increasingly **competitive services sector**
- (v) The ubiquity of **integrated communications and entertainment**



A summary of definitions of experience

Author	Year	Definition
Ray	(2008)	Experiences interrupt people from their lives and expectations to provide something of interest that demands attention; experiences themselves are incredibly involving.
Lashley	(2008)	Discusses tourism experiences from the perspective of creating hospitable relationships between the host and guest; these experiences engage emotions, which is essential to creating a memory.
Titz	(2007)	No single model of experiential consumption has emerged; experiential consumption is central to a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour in the hospitality and tourism context.
Mossberg	(2007)	A blend of many elements coming together and involving the consumer emotionally, physically, intellectually and spiritually.
Oh, Fiore, and Jeoung	(2007)	From a consumer's perspective experiences are 'enjoyable, engaging, memorable encounters for those consuming these events'.
Andersson	(2007)	The tourist experience is proposed as the moment when tourism consumption and tourism production meet.
Uriely	(2005)	The tourist experience is currently depicted as an obscure and diverse phenomenon, which is mostly constituted by the individual consumer.
Berry, Carbone, and Haeckel	(2002)	The means of orchestrating all the clues that people detect in the buying process.
Lewis and Chambers	(2000)	The total outcome to the customer from the combination of environment, goods and services purchased.
McLellan	(2000)	The goal of experience design is to orchestrate experiences that are functional, purposeful, engaging, compelling and memorable.
Schmitt	(1999)	Experiences are private events that are not self-generated but rather occur in response to some staged situation and involve the entire being.
Gupta and Vajic	(1999)	An experience occurs when a customer has any sensation or acquisition of knowledge resulting from some level of interaction with different elements of a context created by a service provider.



A summary of definitions of experience

Pine and Gilmore	(1998, 1999)	A distinct economic offering that is as different from services as services are from goods; successful experiences are those that the customer finds unique, memorable and sustainable over time, would want to repeat and build upon and enthusiastically promotes via word of mouth.
O'Sullivan and Spangler	(1998)	An experience involves the participation and involvement of the individual in the consumption and the state of being physically, mentally, emotionally, socially or spiritually engaged.
Carlson	(1997)	An experience can be defined as a constant flow of thoughts and feelings that occur during moments of consciousness.
Merriam-Webster	(1993)	The fact or state of having been affected by or gained knowledge through a direct observation or participation.
Arnould and Price	(1993)	Extraordinary experiences are those characterized by high levels of emotional intensity.
Denzin	(1992)	Extraordinary experiences rupture routines and life and provoke radical redefinitions of the self. In moments of epiphany, people redefine themselves. Epiphanies are connected to turning-point experiences.
Csikszentmihalyi	(1990)	Flow is the optimal experience that keeps one motivated. This feeling often involves painful, risky or difficult efforts that stretch the person's capacity, as well as an element of novelty and discovery. Flow is an almost effortless yet highly focused state of consciousness and yet the descriptions do not vary much by culture, gender or age.
Mannell	(1984)	An experience, or state of mind, is uniquely individual and it is the quality rather than the quantity of leisure in our lives that deserves attention.
Hirschman and Holbrook	(1982)	Those facets of consumer behaviour that relate to the multi-sensory, fantasy and emotive aspects of one's experience with products.
Maslow	(1964)	Peak experience is the experience in which the individual transcends ordinary reality and perceives being or ultimate reality; it is short in duration and accompanied by positive affect.
Thorne	(1963)	Peak experience is subjectively recognized to be one of the high points of life, one of the most exciting, rich and fulfilling experiences which the person has ever had; a nadir experience may be described operationally as a subjective experiencing of what is subjectively recognized to be one of the lowest points of life, one of the worst, most unpleasant and harrowing experiences of life.



A summary of definitions of experience

- (i) the ***peak of the primary hedonic process*** or state, precipitated by the stimulus onset
- (ii) a ***period of hedonic or affective adaptation*** during which the intensity of the hedonic state declines, even though stimulus intensity is maintained
- (iii) a ***steady level*** of the hedonic process that continues as long as stimulus intensity is maintained
- (iv) a ***peak of affective after-reaction***, which quickly follows stimulus termination and whose quality is hedonically very different from that of the primary hedonic state
- (v) The ***after state*** in which the experience decays and subsequently disappears

An experience or experience dimension(s) is a blend of **many individual elements** that come together that may involve the consumer **emotionally, physically, spiritually and intellectually**



Experience defined

Consumption experiences encompass more than just these experiences

- community experiences resulting from **reciprocal relationships** with friends or neighbours
- household experiences resulting from **obligatory relations** with members of the family
- state or citizen experiences resulting from **relationships with other citizens**
- market-related or consumer experiences resulting from **encounters with businesses** and other tourists

Destination marketers should recognize the **diversity of experiences** that tourists encounter and carefully craft their messages accordingly to include both market- and non-market-related experiences.



Consumer experience and destination marketing

Pine and Gilmore define experiences as “**events that engage individuals** in a personal way”

Physical environment and human interaction dimensions can have an impact on the experiences of purchasing and consuming products and services in the service industry



The consumer behaviour construct by hypothesizing **how these items might impact the consumer's perceived values**



Consumer experience and destination marketing

Throughout the consumer experience, consumers assess the overall utility of the product and service based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given.

Consumer experiences may induce certain consequences that are reflected in **consumers' perceived cognitive and emotive values.**



Consumer experience and destination marketing

➤ The consumption experience does not operate in a vacuum and can be subjected to **a number of other factors that may influence the outcome**

➤ Factors such as **consumer goals, product familiarity** can influence a consumer's interpretation of and reaction to store-environment cues.

➤ Experience is 'not self-generated' but, instead, occurs in response to **some staged event**

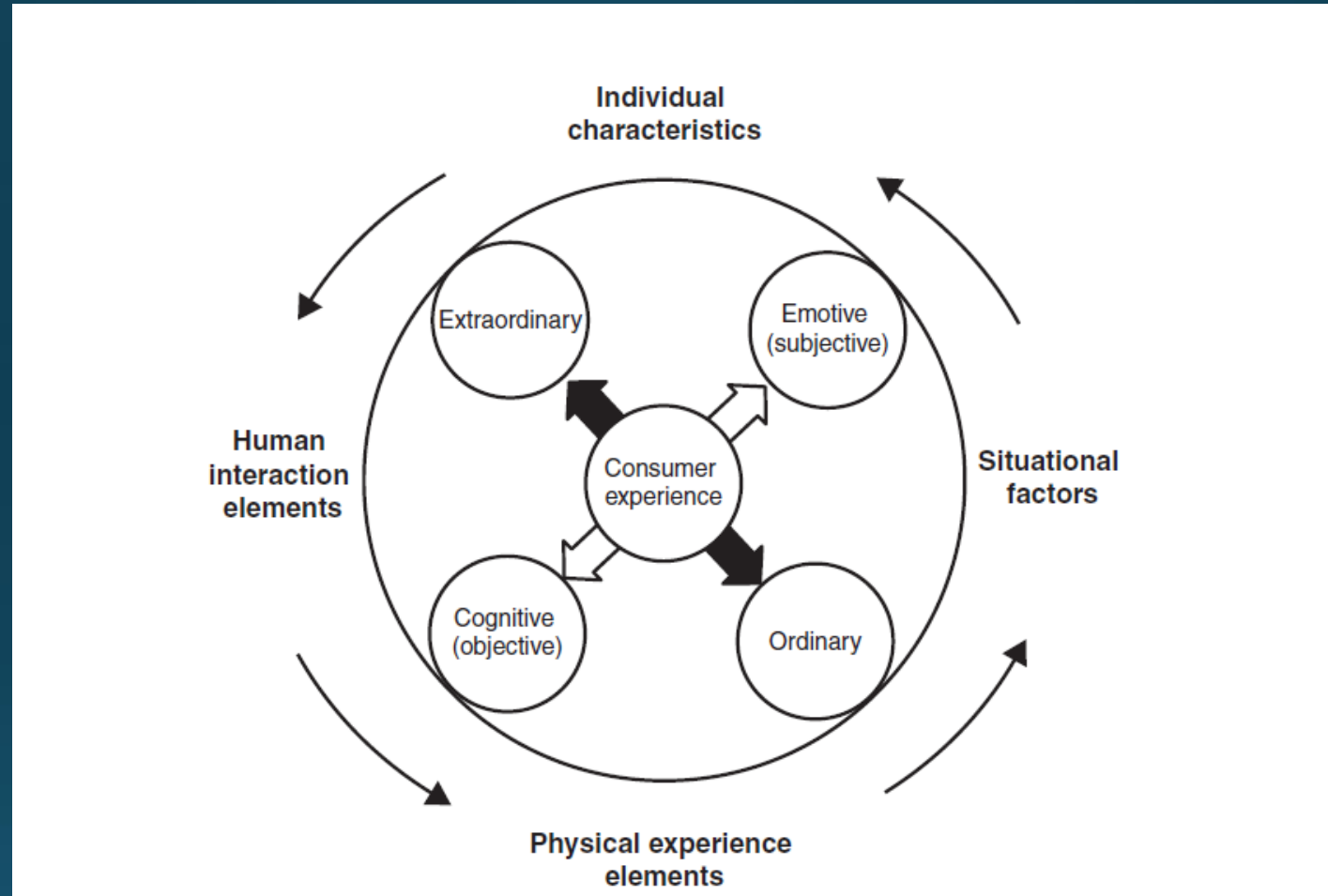
➤ An experience can occur only when a consumer is willing and able to **participate in that experience.**

➤ Experiences as **orchestrated cues** that people detect.

➤ Literature review illustrates the considered views of what an experience is and how it might **affect the consumer and the consumption process**



A Framework for Tourism Experience





A Framework for Tourism Experience

The tourism experience includes both peak (extraordinary) and **supporting daily experiences**, such as sleeping, eating and playing (McCabe, 2002), and can occur on a continuum ranging from ordinary or daily to transformative or epiphanic depending on the product or service (O'Sullivan and Spangler, 1998; Day, 2000; Quan and Wang, 2004).

These experiences can range from **exciting positive experiences** to unpleasant negative experiences.

The customer must not only be willing and able to receive an experience but the **product or service category** may also lend itself to certain types of expected and delivered experience dimensions.



Cognitive–emotive experience

Individuals can initiate the process in which an **experience can occur**

An experience can occur by happenstance, but it is postulated that the **experience is self-generated and that the consumer can control** or choose whether he will have an experience or not

It is assumed that consumer experiences are **received and absorbed dissimilarly by different people**

Experience can be characterized as a **steady flow of thoughts (cognitive) and feelings (emotive)**

An experience is an activity containing both **cognitive and subjective processes** that allow an individual to develop a means to construct reality

General types of experiences: the **epiphanic experience, the flow experience and the extraordinary experience**



Physical experience and human interaction factors

Hospitality and tourism companies can enhance consumers' experiences through managing physical and human interaction elements.

These factors may include **multi-sensory physical experiences, human interactions, cultural backgrounds and personality traits, and other situational factors**



Physical experience and human interaction factors

The consumer experience is multidimensional and evolving, with often **spontaneous interaction between the physical environment dimension and the human dimension consisting of the hosts and guests.**



Businesses, in an effort to have an impact on the **consumer, stage and enhance** the physical environment in order to appeal to the five senses of that consumer and create a physically appropriate **environment that meets their marketing objectives.**

Businesses also may enhance **human interaction experience elements by training employees and targeting a specific type of consumer** in order to create a socially engaging and appropriate environment.



Individual characteristics and situational factors

The consumer experience may vary because **not all tourism products and services at a destination are created or performed equally.**

The situational factors – such as trip-related characteristics in a tourism context – often **influence the nature of the trip.**

These factors include the **purpose of trip, travel companions and the nature of destination**, all of which influence the traveller's willingness to recognize staged experience elements



Tourism Experience Applications

A tourist experience is not necessarily related only to the tangible items usually witnessed in general consumer products; the tourist experience is referred to as the **total combination of goods, services and the environment that is purchased and/or experienced**

The tourist experience is **multidimensional** and **evolving**, often spontaneous interaction between the physical environment dimension and the human dimension consisting of the hosts and guests.



Tourism Experience Applications

- (i) the **distinctiveness** of tourism from everyday life
- (ii) The **tourism hospitality experience**, which includes a multiplicity of interacting dimensions
- (iii) A shift from statically displayed items to subjective interpretations of **physical and human dimensions**
- (iv) Consumer experiences that tend to be **relative and not absolute**



Conclusions and Implications

The tourism experience is rich in terms of the **experiencescape**' and tourists are actively engaged in the production of their own consumption experiences

The individual elements may involve the tourist emotionally, physically and intellectually. Interpersonal connections are created within the destination through **interaction with locals**, and second, relationships and meaning associated with the destination emerge from **the nature of the interaction between the visitors and the people at the destination**

From a practical standpoint, tourism providers, such as destination marketing organizations, travel agents and tour operators, should attempt to **engineer positive encounters** through the promotion of positive emotions through creative imagery and promotional videos.

Therefore, the relationship between consumption experiences and destination marketing organizations is necessary to **recognize the emotionally driven tourist who is interested in finding a destination to discover or to enhance important**



Directions for Future Research

To determine whether these items are indeed equally experience enhancing, and whether the use of a weighting system could be employed in which guests would **'weigh' how important each item is to their experience.**

It would be interesting to investigate **destination marketing managers' perspectives** of tourists' stay experiences

Previous research in the retail and consumer behaviour fields has indicated that there is a **direct link between a positive physical environment and friendly human encounters, and customer satisfaction and loyalty.**

It would be interesting to examine **if this link exists in a tourism setting as well**