DESTINATION DESIGN: NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR TOURISM DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

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How could 'destination design' enrich more traditional views on tourism destinations?

CONTEXT

Current global dynamics, including digitisation, climate change, demographic change as well as changing mobility behaviour, demand a revision of traditional methods and instruments of destination development. Perspectives rooted in design and design thinking can be a source for gaining fresh understandings of challenges in tourism destinations and for offering innovative solutions. "Destination design" can be an attempt to integrate thinking on aesthetics, new technology and the established research tradition on destination development.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Design thinking refers to the ability to pursue a solution-oriented approach and engage in unconventional thinking outside the known.

- Cognitive psychology and linguistics can be useful in broadening the current view on destination naming and branding.

- The pursuit of a homogeneous tourism service chain can clash with the often heterogeneous worldviews and interests of stakeholders.

- The often market-driven view of the tourism destination should be combined with the resource-based view of the living space. Destination development conceptions should take the needs of both guests and residents into account.

- Co-creation of destination experiences with tourists: Creating attractive tourism products means enabling the alignment between the imagination of tourists as expressed in digital texts (including images) with co-created experiences during their actual stays.

- The role of destination designers is to encourage an ongoing process of linking people, places, artifacts and thoughts to create transformational realities where individuals can express themselves.

- Technology can help destination designers in familiarising themselves with the needs of specific target groups. At the same time technology can be part of effective governance and design solutions.

METHODOLOGY

- Overview of current perspectives in the literature on tourism destination research as well as in the design literature.

- Discussion of how design-theoretical approaches can be beneficial to research and practice in the context of tourism destinations

KEY CONCLUSIONS

- Destination design can be a way to advance our understanding of tourism destinations

- A more holistic approach towards destination development is needed, including the perspectives of both guests and locals

- Participation, inclusion, governance, experience creation and digitisation are the main building blocks of tourism destination design