Research and Academic Perspectives on Green Tourism: Putting Theories into Practice

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Evolution of terminology:

- Ecotourism
- Alternative tourism
- Community-based tourism
- Sustainable tourism
- Green tourism
- Responsible tourism

- The term “ecotourism” first emerged in academic literature in tourism in 1983
- 164,785 published documents exist today following the keyword search with any words on the left
- Largest number of documents are on “sustainable tourism”
- 4,071 published papers in academic and research journals
The *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* advances critical understanding of the relationships between tourism and sustainable development. The journal publishes theoretical, conceptual and empirical research that explores one or more of the economic, social, cultural, political, organisational or environmental aspects of the subject. Contributions are from all disciplinary perspectives, with interdisciplinary work being especially welcome. Holistic and integrative work is encouraged. All geographical areas are included, as are all forms of tourism, both mass and niche market.

- Ranked no. 6 in tourism and hospitality journals in terms of “impact factor”
The Journal of Ecotourism seeks to advance the field by examining the social, economic, and ecological aspects of ecotourism at a number of scales, and including regions from around the world. Journal of Ecotourism welcomes conceptual, theoretical, and empirical research, particularly where it contributes to the dissemination of new ideas and models of ecotourism planning, development, management, and good practice.
7 Key Components to Define the Concept of Sustainable Tourism

1. Minimizes impact - environment, society and culture
2. Enhances environmental awareness
3. Provides direct financial benefits for conservation
4. Provides financial benefits and empowerment for local people
5. Respects local culture
6. Conservation of diversity
7. Local people benefit from this form of tourism economically, often more than mass tourism
Two Important Drivers for Green Tourism

- “Conscious consumption” as a new consumer trend
- The rise of responsible tourism and corporate social responsibility (CSR)

- Climate change and global warming issue emerged more than ever before, calling to act on
- With stronger consumer awareness and demands – more businesses want to be perceived as green
- Generation Y is known to be savvy on CSR
  - Gen Y (born 1979-1994) accounts for 25.5% of world population as opposed to Babyboomers (born 1945-1966) who account for 18.6% of world population
  - “Voluntourism” is an opportunity for future community based tourism activities
Innovation is the key!

• Non-conventional and “new ways”
• New, innovative ways to challenge the traditional practices
• Innovations – key driver for success
Invent the New Ways

Tide to go!
World’s first teaching hotel with full integration of teaching and learning in a full service hotel environment:

- University owned and managed hotel
- 262 rooms
- 3 restaurants
- Swimming pool
- “Angsana Spa” by Banyan Tree
- Ballroom
- Training restaurant
- Prototype rooms
- Faculty and staff offices
- Classrooms
- Laboratories
- Library
- “Samsung Digital Lab for Hospitality Technology”
Hotel ICON in First 12 Months of Operation

- **ADR HKD1,900+, 80+ occupancy; operating profit in 3 months of operation**
- **TripAdvisor:** Ranked among top 4 hotels out of 316 hotels in Hong Kong
- **Wallpaper Magazine:** Listed among the world’s best new business hotel
- **CNN.Go:** Listed the hotel’s gym among world’s top 10 hotel gyms
- **Michelin Guide 2012**
  - Listed Hotel ICON among the top 10 hotels in Hong Kong
  - Its signature restaurant Above & Beyond listed only three months in operation with 3 forks and 3 knives
“Blue Ocean” Strategies: 
*Use Your Brain!*

- **Design**
  - Green innovation - energy saving, natural lights, indoor garden

- **Functionality**
  - “Timeless lounge”
  - Wifi system
  - Mini bar management

- **Customer oriented culture**
  - Gen Y employees
  - Employee-led innovations
Paperless Check-in and Check-out System

Remote Check-In System & Technology
- Wireless/ GPRS
- Opera
- Payment Gateway

Devices
- Tablets
- Hypercom
- Wacom
Energy Saving Rooms

Combination of LED Lighting, Infrared Occupancy Detector, Thermostat with IR Sensor and Room Occupancy Management System reduces guest room energy consumption by up to 56% per room
Vertical Garden on Concrete Wall

- 20 meters high wall in the lobby designed by Patrick Blanc
- 8,000+ plants of some 80 indigenous species
- The green wall serves as shelter for biodiversity and a cleaning system for indoor environment
  a. Lower energy consumption, both in winter (by protecting the building from the cold) and in summer (by providing a natural cooling system).
  b. Clean up the air. In addition to leaves and their well-known air-improving effect, the roots and all the micro-organisms related to them are acting as a wide air-cleaning ecosystem.
The Green Wall at Hotel ICON
The Future

• Responsible tourism is here to stay
• Key drivers:
  – Political dimensions
  – Consumer trend
  – CSR
• Innovations
  – Innovation will be the key driver for future of tourism industry
  – Entrepreneurship development and education is of highest importance
Thank you!

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