A Study on the Perception of Tourists and Consumption Trends on Ethical Management Information of Travel Agencies Serviced through User eXperience oriented Web

Woong-Ki Min, Jin-Hee Ku, Nam-Jo Kim

College of Liberal Education, Department of Information Communication Engineering, Mokwon University, 88, Doanbuk-ro, Seo-gu, Daejeon, 35349, South Korea
{sunppk, jhku}@mokwon.ac.kr

1 Department of Tourism, Hanyang University, 222, Wangsimni-ro, Seongdong-su, Seoul, 04763, South Korea
njkim@hanyang.ac.kr

Abstract. With the development of information and communication technology, it is becoming common to access contents of travel products through various smart devices. From the viewpoint of UX, access to travel agent web information through smart devices are oriented towards Sit Forward that consumers have to search directly for a lot of contents about travel products compared to offline access. On the other hand, the information that is released to the people through the Internet media includes openness and public interest, so it must fulfill its social responsibility for the accuracy of the information. It is also necessary for people to receive equal opportunities to use tourism packages, which have the value of public goods, in the process of consumption. Recently, tourists have been becoming more interested in ethical management by travel agencies that share these two characteristics. Therefore, contents service through information and communication technology media and the efforts to investigate the characteristics of tourists, who pursue social values central to the relations of a virtuous cycle, are expected to form a crucial process in exploring new relations between information technology and tourists’ information exploration.

Keywords: Information and communication technology media, tourism packages, public interest, public goods, ethic management.

1 Introduction

Online tourist media has recently been providing tourists with information about diverse types of ethical management practices. Tourists receiving this information can exhibit different types of awareness, depending on their lifestyle [1][2].

1 Corresponding author
Companies are utilizing diverse types of ethical management. A type of ethical management which has recently been drawing attention is Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). CSR is largely divided into economic, legal, philanthropic, and ethical responsibility. Companies have recently started to pay attention to their responsibility towards consumers who form a source of profit-making [3][4]. Travel agencies in South Korea have also started to accept the characteristics of business management in the pursuit of social values. South Korean travel agencies are not funded by large companies, due to the uncertainty of the external environments which surround tourism packages, and are mostly operated in the form of small or medium-sized business. For this reason, travel agencies have had fewer chances to generate profits through ethical management due to lack of funds or other related reasons. Recently, however, travel agencies have made an active attempt to realize social values based on ethical management through online information media in South Korean society [5].

The development of information and communication technology has given accessibility to information. Tourists consuming travel packages as public goods have started to take an interest in information about tourism packages. This study aimed to determine how tourists were made aware of information about the ethical management of travel agencies, as publicized through online information media in South Korean society, on the basis of the characteristics of information media [6].

2 Main Discourse

Online information media publicizes major travel packages into diverse categories. Major online information can be accessed individually by consumers through a sit-forward model, whose characteristics are different from those of a lean-back model (i.e. information about tourism packages being exposed passively). Online product information gives details of select institutions and items to display the superiority of relevant goods and consumers may also take their time making minute observation [7][8]. Thus they have recently begun offering useful information about the superior aspects of major travel packages in order to differentiate them from others. Travel agencies' CSR has also begun to give stronger stimuli to consumers according to the characteristics of information and communication media.

A typical characteristic among the content of online promotional materials is to describe the differences among similar goods to prevent customers from moving to other agencies once they have used one of their tourism packages. This is also called an attention economy system. A travel agency's CSR is a characteristic of goods that can present the differentiated attributes of tourism packages in the same context [9][10].

The information given to consumers through information and communication media is expertise, which is not passively exposed to consumers. For this reason, consumers searching for information about tourism packages online are likely to be pursuing different social values than simply the existing information about general travel goods. Therefore, if travel agencies' PRs are related to CSR they can be more effective online. Consumers' responses to this information can vary based on their
own lifestyle. Consumers originally pursuing social and public-interest values can more keenly respond to the PRs by setting stricter consumption criteria through information media.

3 Conclusion

This study explored the characteristics of the information provision process in online information media, PRs concerning ethical management which travel agencies have recently regarded as important in getting their tourism packages known, and the characteristics of tourism consumers who log on to them to get information.

Information provisions using technology of online information media based on public interests has also changed tourists' purchasing activity of tourism packages. It has offered chances to take more interest in social values and public interest. Further research should be conducted to make in-depth discussions about what consumption propensity tourists have in terms of tourism packages of travel agencies performing ethical management, in regards to their lifestyle.

References