Guest editorial

The emergence of social media channels has fundamentally transformed all aspects of doing business from operations to marketing. The tourism and hospitality industries are no exception to this transformation. With its increased accessibility and popularity, social media platforms have altered the way that hospitality and tourism companies communicate and engage with their customers. In the same vein, social media has become a powerful source of information for travelers, which has ultimately changed the way travelers plan their trips. Presently, travelers heavily rely on social media channels to search and plan their trips, interact with others throughout their travels, share their experiences and provide post-trip memories and feedback.

To examine online social media related trends and issues in the hospitality and tourism industry, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology* presents this special issue that consists of nine articles. Each article focuses on a specific aspect of online social media by providing valuable theoretical contributions for researchers and practical implications for practitioners. The following provides a summary of the articles included in the special issue.

The first article by Miyoung Jeong and Seonjeong Ally Lee explores effects of different types of service recovery strategies on customers' trust, satisfaction and behavioral intentions in the context of social media. The results of the study indicate that when managers incorporated authenticity and compensation components, customers are more likely to show a higher level of trust, satisfaction and behavioral intentions. The study findings suggest that service recovery communication processes, in particular, authenticity and compensation, should be an integral part of hotel mangers' service recovery strategies in the social media context.

The second article by Xi Leung, Sarah Tanford and Lan Jiang explores the marketing effectiveness of hotel Facebook messages in terms of promoting favorable attitudes and behavioral intentions among potential hotel guests. The findings reveal that picture messages are the most effective for promoting the brand, whereas Web link messages influence intentions to book hotels based on product attributes. The results of the study suggest that hotel marketers should include picture messages that prominently feature the brand image to foster favorable attitudes and build brand awareness. To motivate booking a particular product, word messages describing product features should be provided, along with a Web link that takes the customer directly from product information to a hotel booking engine.

The third article by Murat Kizildag, Mehmet Altin, Ozgur Ozdemir and Ilhan Demirer aims to understand the emergence, the revolution and the relevant knowledge of academic research concentrating on social media and hospitality and tourism firms' financial performance. By examining 26 peer-reviewed scholarly articles, the authors clearly observed that none of the papers went beyond analyzing the effect of social media on hotels' RevPAR, revenues, net profit, ADR, occupancy rates, NOI, etc., and all papers ignored the analysis of many critical financial proxies. The study findings provide a blueprint to guide future research, facilitate

knowledge accumulation and create a new understanding and awareness in the context of social media and financial performance.

By considering Pokémon Go game as an example, the fourth article by Ajay Aluri examines smartphone users' perceptions toward mobile augmented reality games as travel guides. The study results indicate that majority of the respondents are interested in using mobile augmented reality games as a travel guide in general and Pokémon Go game in particular.

Based on Schwartz and Carroll's three-domain approach to CSR motivation, the fifth article by Laura Zizka investigates how the hospitality companies communicate CSR to their stakeholders. The author's examination of previous literature about CSR communication in the hospitality industry demonstrates that hospitality companies communicate information through social media in a one-way direction instead of two-way participative dialogue.

The sixth article by Mike Thornhill, Karen L Xie and Young-Jin Lee analyze the relative effects of owned and earned social media exposures on brand purchase as well as their advertising externality concerning competing brands. More specifically, based on theory of planned behavior and advertising externality literature, the article hypothesizes that owned and earned social media exposures positively influence brand purchase. The study results reveal that both owned and earned social media exposures positively affect brand purchase, the purchase effect of owned social media exposures is greater than earned social media exposures and owned social media exposures generate not only more purchase of the focal brand but also positive advertising externality to competing brands.

By adopting a qualitative semi-structured in-depth interview approach, the seventh article by Eleftherios Varkaris and Barbara Neuhofer aims to uncover how social media influence consumer behavior during hotel selection decision-making process. Overall, the study findings reveal that the way consumers search hotel information has changed, as social media play an important role in influencing their decision-making process. The study offers implications for hospitality practitioners in highlighting how social media can lead to informed decision-making in the hotel selection process.

The eighth article by MiRan Kim and Ronald F. Cichy investigates factors affecting private club members' behavioral intentions toward social media. More specifically, the article examines the impacts of perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment on private club members' attitude toward social media involvement and their behavioral intention to use social media. The findings of the study indicate that perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment significantly influence private club members' attitude toward social media involvement and private club members' attitude toward social media involvement has a significant impact on their behavioral intention to use social media.

Finally, by using a cross-sectional, self-administered online survey, the last article by Seonjeong (Ally) Lee and Minwoo Lee investigate the role of different types of relationships on customers' brand-relevant responses in the context of hotel social media platforms. The results of the study reveal that customers' relationships with service, brand and other customers influence their parasocial interactions

(PSI). In addition, customers' PSI positively influence their self-brand connection and their brand usage intention.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Editor in chief, Dr Cihan Cobanoglu, and Assistant Editor, Dr Katerina Berezina, for their help and support for producing this timely special issue. I would also like to thank the reviewers for their valuable feedbacks. I hope the articles included in this special issue will offer valuable insights for hospitality and tourism researchers, students and practitioners in the context of online social media.

Ahmet Bulent Ozturk
Rosen College of Hospitality Management, University of Central Florida, Orlando,
Florida, USA