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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CULTURAL AND DIGITAL TOURISM - SPECIAL ISSUE

“Culture and Tourism in a Smart Digitalized World”

EDITORIAL

The tourism industry has been strengthened in recent decades by incorporating innovative technological achievements through the implementation of traditional and digital marketing strategies. With the spread of the pandemic, there is an urgent need, the implementation and introduction of modern technological innovations for the further development of tourism in a smart digitalized world.

During this unprecedented and demanding era due to health conditions, the importance of managing tourist destinations is highlighted with health protection coming to the forefront.

This issue of the International Journal of Cultural and Digital Tourism has selected three papers representing a variety of topics related with contemporary issues regarding the development of digital marketing policies with integration of innovative technological advances in tourism industry.

In the first paper, **Polyxeni Georgaki, Pavlos Chatzigeorgiou, Vasiliki Nikolakopoulou and Eleni Chatzigrigoriou** draw attention on tour guiding issue during Covid-19 pandemic presenting a pilot case study in the island of Syros. The authors propose a digital platform to evolve the tour guidance in a primary tool and also an experience enriched with actions and events for instance interviews, music, videos in order to stimulate the visitor.

In the second paper, **Ioannis Karydis, Elissavet Kosta, Emmanouil Magkos, Stavros Vlizon, Dimitris Provatas, Aggeliki Tsohou**, acknowledge the integration of information and communication technologies in the amplification of travel experience and propose an innovative interactive platform called “Octane” for the amelioration of visitors’ experience which allows travelers walking around the cities of destination as if they were in an open museum. With this way, cross-border historical, architectural and other cultural assets are standing out, promoting tourism development.

In the third paper of the issue, **Antiopi Panteli, Aristotelis Kompothrekas, Constantinos Halkiopoulos, and Basilis Boutsinas** illustrate the topic of health tourism providing an innovative recommender system, whose main purpose is to address health tourists’ needs and preferences with appropriate correspondence with those offered by health/tourism providers. The whole project includes a database of cases incorporating medical, wellness and tourism service providers. Variety of health tourism packages provide ratings for certain categories of attributes and the interested party can choose the one that is more suitable.

We would like to extend our thanks to all these authors and all the reviewers for their hard work and contribution to this special issue of International Journal of Cultural and Digital Tourism. We believe

that these works are providing a valuable contribution to the tourism practitioners as well as encouraging further research on the respective topics.

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