

Implicit cognitions in the experience economy: Anticipation of desired travel experiences

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Abstract

To elicit consumers' true attitudes toward different types of travel experience, this study applies a novel methodology of implicit attitude measurement in an empirical study. Findings show that potential travelers implicitly associate esthetics more with positive impressions and education more with negative travel impressions. Comparing escapism and entertainment, respondents on average associate entertainment more with positive mood and escapism more with negative mood. Overall, results hint that even academic travelers (students) implicitly strive for passive travel experiences (entertainment, esthetics) instead of an active participation (educational or escapist), stressing the – often explicitly denied - relaxation motive for destination choice. Findings contribute to theory by highlighting the implicit cognition roots in consumers' anticipation of travel events. They indicate that the novel methodology is well suited to assess consumers' unspoken desires in the experience economy.

Keywords: *experience economy; implicit association test ; destination choice*

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