

Mapping Discrepancies in Destination Image: A Cognitive-Affective-Experiential Approach

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Abstract

Destination image is central to destination branding and choice, yet traditional Cognitive and Affective approaches often overlook the experiential foundations of tourism. This paper introduces a scalable, data-driven approach that integrates the 6As and the Experience Economy frameworks with sentiment analysis to compare Destination Management Organization's (DMO's) projected images with tourist's perceived e-WOM images. We analyze 10,015 TripAdvisor reviews and official DMO content for seven Swedish UNESCO cultural World Heritage Sites. Discrepancy mappings are developed to compare the differences in the emphasis of attributes and experiences, with weighted sentiment scores. Results show strong strategic alignment on core elements: attraction, activity, and esthetic, but consistent under projection of site-specific attributes and experiential qualities valued by visitors. The findings demonstrate how discrepancy mapping can diagnose expectation gaps and guide DMO resource allocation.

Track: Tourism Marketing