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Special issue on
Value co-destruction and online deviant behavior in tourism

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The concept of value co-destruction (VCD) (Ple & Chumpitaz-Caceres, 2010) has emerged recently as an important way to conceptualize the negative outcomes of actor-to-actor interactions. However, this dark side of value co-creation has been addressed by a limited number of studies (e.g. Echeverri & Skålén, 2011; Edvardsson, Tronvoll, & Gruber, 2011; Heidenreich, Wittkowski, Handrich, & Falk, 2014). The unbalanced focus of the literature (emphasising the positive aspects of actors’ interactions and focussing less on the negative aspects of value co-creation) shapes a naïve and simplistic perception of the existence of harmonious interactions amongst actors that lead to value co-creation. Authors (e.g. Plé and Cáceres, 2010; Lindgreen et al. 2012) have also advocated that the service-dominant logic (SDL) perspective presents an inherently optimistic and favorable view of value co-creation. Recent findings show that value co-destruction and value co-creation are the two sides of value formation that can simultaneously exist (Heidenreich et al., 2014; Smith, 2013).

The current research on VCD does not also provide a clear understanding of the conceptualization and manifestation of VCD. Nor does it clearly explain the role of multiple actors and their engagement behaviors on interactive value formation. Previous studies have primarily been based on context-specific case studies that lack generalisability and require wide validation (e.g. (Echeverri and Skalen, 2011; Vartiainen and Tuunanen, 2016; Smith 2013); dyadic B2C perspectives that ignore the complex interactions amongst multiple actors taking place within networks and service ecosystems (Lindgreen et al., 2012; Stieler et al., 2014; Chowdhury et al., 2016); and customer-oriented approaches that ignore the phenomenological conceptualisation of value by failing to unravel how other actors (apart from the customer) participating in value formation contribute to and perceive the outcomes of the co-creation activities (Prior and Marcos-Cuevas, 2016; Smith, 2013). These shortcomings limit our understanding of VDC, because in the increasingly networked economy, value formation is heavily determined by multiple actors, who may have different and sometimes conflicting perspectives and interests. Value formation practices are also phenomenologically driven, interpreted and evaluated by each actor. Research in VCD has also solely focused on offline contexts, while the nature and special features of online contexts (e.g. anonymity) may boost as well as form VCD in different ways. Thus, there is an urgent need to further investigate and understand
VCD from a network and multi-actor perspective as well as in online service environments.

VCD has also been related with deviant customer behavior, as both concepts are related to diminished value for service actors (Dootson et al., 2016). However, research in deviant customer behavior does not capture a holistic perspective of VCD, as it adopts a customer-centric perspective. Studies investigating deviant behaviour in online contexts are also limited (Sigala, 2015). However, both industry and consumers are increasingly aware of potentially malicious online behaviours adopted by various actors (e.g. customers, online communities, firms, marketing companies and search engine optimization consultants, review farm companies) such as, deceptive online reviews, fake online profiles, provision of false information online (Munzel, 2016; Luca & Zervas, 2016; Sigala, 2015). The increasing practice of online fake content and ‘bad’ online behaviours destroy value for several actors: it jeopardizes the credibility and competitiveness of websites and social networks as important information sources for consumers; it misleads consumers’ decision-making processes; it endangers the reputation, image and sales potential of service providers; and it destroys a valuable source for gathering marketing intelligence. Despite the importance and increasing scale of fake reviews and deviant online behaviour, there is a small but growing literature investigating the quality, authenticity and impacts of online reviews and users’ interactions (Luca & Zervas, 2016). However, the majority of the literature comes from computer science, psychology and computational linguistics aiming to develop algorithms and methodologies that can detect fake reviews and online fraud (e.g. Feng et al. 2012; Akoglu et al., 2013). Very few studies explore deviant online behavior from a social science and managerial perspective (Luca & Zervas, 2016).

The tourism industry is not exempt from online fake reviews and malicious online behaviours (Yoo and Gretzel, 2009; Luca, 2011; Munzel, 2016; Jin & Leslie, 2009; Schuckert et al., 2016). Although there are several studies examining the impact of online reviews on travellers’ decision making, firms’/destinations’ reputation/image, firms’ online sales and price competitiveness (e.g. Filieri et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2015; Banerjee & Chua, 2016; Schuckert et al., 2015; Schuckert et al. 2015), there is a lack of research investigating the phenomenon of online fake travel reviews and deviant online behavior by tourism actors. Research about the types of online deviant behavior (what), who is involved, why and what motivates and drives this behavior, and what the results / outcomes of this behavior are is limited.

The objectives of this special issue are to publish findings and exchange knowledge on the phenomenon of VCD and online deviant behavior in the tourism sector as well as the challenges created by them to all the tourism actors, e.g. tourists, tourism suppliers, tourism destination, tourism policy makers. Tourism is one of the top industries using and being affected by the internet and social media, and the existence as well as even the perception of existence of deviant online behavior can critically ‘destroy’ value for many tourism actors.

Theoretical, empirical, experimental, and case study research contributions are welcome. All contributions should clearly address the practical and theoretical implications of the research reported.
Topics of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Typologies of online deviant behavior in tourism
- Online deviant behavior and VCD in tourism
- Theoretical perspectives for understanding online deviant behavior and VCD in tourism
- Motivation, profile and understanding of actors of online deviant behavior in tourism
- Impacts (socio-cultural, economic and environmental) of online deviant behavior in tourism
- Measurement of VCD deriving from online deviant behavior in tourism
- Ethical and legal issues related to online deviant behavior in tourism
- Mechanisms and tools for preventing and detecting online deviant behavior in tourism
- Management practices for detecting, preventing and managing online deviant behavior in tourism

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Inquiries should be sent by email to the coordinating JBR Guest Co-Editor Professor Marianna Sigala ([Marianna.sigala@unisa.edu.au](mailto:Marianna.sigala@unisa.edu.au))

**REFERENCES**


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