The Use of Mobile Travel Guide Systems during Travel

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Introduction. With the growing popularity of smart phones, mobile travel guide systems have been gradually accepted and used by global travelers. Many people are making use of this new technology to plan their itineraries while travelling, in order to improve the efficiency of their decision-making. This study conducted a questionnaire survey on self-guided tourists from around the world, and retrieved 608 valid questionnaires. The results revealed that the user benefit, cost of use, and presence all affect the consumers' perceived value of mobile travel guide systems, and further affect their intention to use these products. The findings of this study can serve as reference for tourism industry operators, the developers of mobile travel guide systems, and relevant researchers.

Materials and methods. Mobile travel guide systems (MTGS) are platforms integrating a cellular phone device with a geographic information system and community features, which can be used to assist travelers with their itinerary planning while travelling.

Results. According to the research results, the perceived value has an effect on the users' intention to use MTGS. The consumers' intention to use these systems would be triggered if they perceived that the new technology could create value for them. This study summarized previous studies and proposed that the three factors of the user benefit, the cost of use and presence would affect the perceived value of MTGS. The user benefit includes the functional benefit, the social benefit and the hedonic benefit. Therefore, the MTGS design should enable travelers to obtain useful information, assist them in decision-making and planning, connect them with social communities, help them to share and exchange information with other social community members, and attach importance to items to bring joy to travelers. In terms of the cost of use, in addition to reducing the purchase cost, the operation of the interface should be simple and intuitive. As a result, usage testing should be frequently performed. Moreover, it is necessary to pay attention to privacy. Although consumers hope to share their personal travel information with friends, they do not intent to allow the functions concerning privacy to be abused. As for presence, physical presence can be improved through technologies such as GPS positioning, virtual reality or augmented reality. The social presence can be improved through the integration of MTGS with social community tools. As for self-presence, MTGS aims to improve the travelers' personal experience of use. The accuracy of itinerary planning can be improved through data mining techniques. This study investigated the factors affecting the use of MTGS.

Conclusion. Past studies on the use and acceptance of new systems have focused on many different aspects, such as the technology acceptance model. Future studies can explore this topic from different theoretical perspectives, in order to enhance the completeness of relevant studies.

References:

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