The influence of tourism website on tourists' behavior to determine destination selection: A case study of creative economy in Korea

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A B S T R A C T

The winds of Korean pop culture swept across China, Japan, and other South Asian countries, and this leads to a variety of economic and socio-cultural impacts. The Korean wave exemplifies the creative economy; creativity becomes an economic activity. Similarly, many Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) cater intangible products regarding the destination (e.g. information and images) via websites, and become a major information channel for the destination. Assuming that the official website of DMO positively affects the potential tourists' decision-making process, this paper will consider the co-relation between the qualities of the destination website and the intention to continuous use, and the subsequent effects on the intention to visit the destination. To prove the hypotheses, the modified IS success model was developed combining the information system (IS) success model with the expectation–confirmation model, and conducted a survey with the potential tourists who already have used the destination website, but have never visited Korea. The results show that all the hypotheses were supported, and that information quality, in particular, has the greatest effect on confirmation. Based on these findings, we present the theoretical and practical implications from the perspective of creative economy with suggestions for future research.

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1. Introduction

The wave of South Korean popular culture, called Hallyu by the Chinese mass media in 2002, refers to the pace of Korean culture's impact on neighboring countries (Kim et al., 2007). Ten years later, the Korean wave continues to have economic ramifications for the drama, music, and film industries (Jeong, 2014; the Hankyoreh Report). The winds of Korean pop culture swept across China beginning in 1996 and transferred to Japan. Following that, a fever was created by a Korean TV drama series, which led to a variety of economic and socio-cultural changes. Today, the effects of Korean popular culture have tremendously affected visitors from other Asian countries interested in visiting Korea. The millions of tourists from Asian countries have grown rapidly since 2008, and spent nearly three times as much money from US$3.3 billion in 2007 to roughly US$9.7 billion in 2012 (Jeong, 2014). Not only the tourism multiplier effects, but also important synergies with other industries (e.g. cultural heritage sites, festival, museums, galleries, music, dance, theater, opera performance, media, entertainment, international meetings, exhibitions, sports, and others) have been emerging. As the tourism economy continues to grow to be significant, the government of Korea notifies tourism as a major driving force of creative economy.

The concept of the "creative economy" first proposed by John Hawkins (2001), in his study on the relations between creativity and economy, has rapidly grown in the last ten years to be a multidisciplinary concept (Duisenberg, 2011) including economy, technology and business, and has become a focus of the potential economic development.
Creative economy in Howkins’ sense does not necessarily cater the economic activity but it should convey economic implications with creative ideas. To put it differently, creative economy bases the capital of ideas rather than the physical capital (Snieska and Normantiene, 2012:1424); it offers considerable potential to growth, and development of new, creative, intangible products, service experiences, and markets. However, as Howkins (2007: 17) points out, “creativity on its own has no economic value”; only when an idea is transformed into substance, creativity becomes an economic activity. The link between creativity and activity interplays on the line of the so-called information and communication technologies. The social networks, in the creative economy, have become a new channel to facilitate connectivity and collaboration among the people. Howkins (2010: 11) defines it as a creative ecology, that is, “the study of relationships between organisms and their environment, which probably includes other organisms”, and “found in both physical places and intangible communities”.

The DMOs, the official websites for tourists have positioned themselves in the middle of the creative ecology and work as a distribution channel for information on the attractions and destinations. Korean wave as an intangible cultural abstraction created the economic benefits with in-bound tourists. This new link shifts the conventional models of tourism (e.g. mass tourism) to new models (e.g. cultural tourism) in creative economy. The tourists attracted by cultural abstraction (e.g. cultural ambience and traditions) are classified as cultural tourists, and they are “individuals who visit cultural institutions or places such as museums, archeological and heritage sites, operas, theaters, festivals or architecture while away from home” (Stylianou-Lambert, 2011, p. 405).

From the creative economy, mass tourism is characterized as high-volume but low-yield, whereas cultural tourism features low-volume but high-yield (UNCTAD, 2010). In the digitally connected global community, the Internet as a medium of the business marketing and channel for creative products has played a role to spread cultural values; cultural tourists as active participants in creative ecology take significant sectors to enhance economic benefits in creative economy.

Thus, cultural tourism can be one of the significant segments for creative economy, especially when economic, cultural, and social elements are combined with intellectual property, science & technology as well as tourism itself (UNCTAD, 2010, p. 10). In this vein, Destination Management Organization (DMO) is regarded as the significant channel of creative economy, providing potential inbound tourists with cultural ambience; thereby it can increase the number of inbound cultural tourists and ultimately contributes to the national economy.

The aim of this study is to examine the effects of the Korean wave, particularly those effects produced by Korea’s website on foreign and non-experienced tourists’ perceptions and behavior regarding Korea. More specifically, this study identified the website impacts on foreign potential tourists through examination of the systems and the information on the website. Along with this growing interest in South Korea, South Korea’s website, which was built by the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO), was grappling with how to improve their website design, usage experience, and lead to an intention to travel to the destination (Pallud and Straub, 2014). The unique trait of the tourism industry is handling intangible products, such as experience or services, which renders intensive information that has greater value compared to other industries. This has made the Internet, as a source of information, a central element of tourism (Wang et al., 2009; Koo et al., 2013a,2013b). The Internet, mostly online travel agency websites, supplier sites, search engines, and destination websites is the most frequently used in gathering information during the planning stage (Xiang et al., 2014).

This study, employing DeLone and McLean’s updated information system (IS) success model (2003), first measures the qualities of the destination website, and hypothesizes that website qualities such as system, information, and service contribute to the formation of expectation, which is preceded by the user acceptance of the destination website. IS success model is widely used to research satisfaction on a website as well as the use of technology at the individual level.

Then, by using the expectation–confirmation model (ECM) (Bhattacherjee, 2001), it assumes that confirmation of the destination website influences website usefulness and satisfaction. Lastly, under the assumption that constant use implies a positive attitude not only toward the website, but also to the destination itself, a hypothesis is postulated that the constant use of the website positively influences the actual visit intention to the destination. The purpose of the study is twofold:

First, by combining DeLone and McLean’s IS success model with ECM, a more integrated model of the tourist decision making process is constructed to measure the relationship between the quality of the destination website and the potential tourists’ belief, attitude, behavioral intention, and actual visitation intentions.

Second, based on the proposed model and using empirical data, the paper examined the quality of the destination website, how the potential tourists’ beliefs and satisfaction affect the continued intent to use the website, and the intention to visit the destination. This study, along with the current trend whereby the newly emerging information source of UGC (User-Generated Content) (Xiang et al., 2014), is relevant to the stakeholders of the destination website in order to understand the potential tourists’ expectation, cognition, and behaviors, and to explore the ways that lead to the actual visit intention.

2. Literature review

2.1. Destination Management Organizations websites

Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), as a part of web-based marketing services, invest considerable amounts of time and money in the development of websites (Park and Gretzel, 2007). By developing user-friendly websites, Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) provide tourists with various travel information such as images of sightseeing and cultural or historical attractions to induce them to travel the destination.

The information provided by DMOs is considerably reliable and trustworthy than those from User Generated Content (UGC), which is provided by a blend of amateur, semi-professional,
and professional entities, and is easily manipulated or abused (Ayeh et al., 2013; Burgess et al., 2011; Dellarocas, 2003).

The fact that the official website created by the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) had over 100 million visitors in 2013 signifies that the destination website serves as an essential information source for the potential tourists to consider Korea as a tourist destination, and proves that Korea has been successfully positioned as a smart tourism destination. As the Internet has become easily accessible media, the potential tourists tend to determine their travel destination by the information or images of the advertising website (Wang et al., 2009; Santos, 1998).

Information, in particular, has played a role of shaping destination images (Govers and Go, 2004; Mridula, 2009), and Mridula (2009) found that tourists are not simply a receiver of destination image information, but actively construct and share their own images via the Internet. Comprehensively, image is a reference of beliefs and impressions arising from information processing, which results in an internally accepted mental construct of a product (Assael, 1984; Crompton, 1979; Gartner, 1993; Mackay and Fesenmaier, 2000; Choi et al., 2007).

The destination image has been extensively researched in the tourism sectors, because images projected by the destination have a substantial impact on tourist's decision-making processes, that is, the travel behavior. A research showed that the images conceived prior to actual visiting the destination affect the tourists' general satisfaction of the travel (Jani and Hwang, 2011; Jenkins, 1999; Papadimitriou and Gibson, 2008; Sussmann and Unel, 1999). Lawson and Baud-Bovy (1977) also mentioned that the image of destination not only represents the destination itself but also influences the overall impressions of the destination. Thus the destination image has become an integral part of destination marketing (Santos, 1998).

There are a few studies to research the relationship between special features of destination website and tourists’ tendency to visit the destination (e.g., Pallud and Straub, 2014). However little attention has been rendered to the studies regarding how tourists’ perceived values (belief, satisfaction, and continuous intention to use the destination website) affect the actual visits to the destination. Most of the prior studies focus on the functionality of the website (Kaplanidou and Vogt, 2006). Recently, Romanazzi et al. (2011) proved that the more tourists consider the website informative, the higher the quality of the website becomes, and that it positively influences tourists’ selection of the tourist destination. However, there still need empirical studies on whether the potential tourists’ positive attitudes (e.g. belief, attitude, and intention to use the destination website) actually influence the intention to visit the destination.

2.2. DeLone and McLean’s IS success model

As information technology advances, the successful application of Information Systems (IS) onto customers becomes a crucial factor in corporate marketing performance. Despite a large amount of research on IS, different scholarly approaches and diverse views make it too elusive and complex to define the critical IS success factors (DeLone and McLean, 1992). DeLone and McLean (1992) introduced an integrated model for conceptualizing and operationalizing IS success factors, namely, the DeLone and McLean’s IS success model. According to DeLone and McLean’s IS success model, two independent variables, “system quality” and “information quality” affect “use” and “user satisfaction” singularly or jointly, each of which has a subsequent effect on “individual impact” and “organizational impact.”

Since then, more than 300 studies have been produced on the framework of the DeLone and McLean’s IS success model, and the modifications or limitations of the model have been suggested. Pitt et al. (1995) pointed out the service component in DeLone and McLean’s IS success model, and argued for the inclusion of “service quality” in the identified six measurements to determine the efficiency of IS success, and focus more on services rather than on IS related products. Seddon (1997), to overcome the limits of DeLone and McLean’s IS success model, attempted to modify it by using “importance” of the system as the independent variable, and “usefulness” as a mediating variable. DeLone (2003), reviewing theoretical and empirical inquiries of research, and reflecting the changes and advents of IS practices over the last 10 years as well as the progress of the study on IS, updated their original IS success measurements and the updated model is presented in Fig. 1.

In the updated IS success model (DeLone, 2003) in Fig. 1, the service quality as a new independent variable and the intention to use for measuring attitude as a moderating variable are added to the exiting IS success measurements. The “impacts” of IS, which originally constitute the two parts of “individual impact” and “organizational impact,” have combined as a net benefit, and evolved into one independent variable.

Of those six measurements of the updated IS success model, let us take three independent variables of the quality dimension, and delineate them. System quality of IS refers to the desired characteristics of technology, and it is measured by ease-of-use, functionality, reliability, flexibility, data quality, portability, integration and importance. Information quality is measured by accuracy, timeliness, completeness, relevance, and consistency, which are the characteristics of the output provided by IS. Service quality includes the components of up-to-date hardware and software (tangible), dependability (reliability), prompt service (responsiveness), knowledgeability (assurance), and having the user’s best interests at heart (empathy). User satisfaction is related to the approval and likeability of an IS and its output and information. Use refers to the recipient’s consumption of the output of an IS. Net benefits are the combined concept of individual impact and organizational impact in the original IS model, and they capture the successful or positive outcomes or gains while excluding negative outcomes (DeLone and McLean, 1992; DeLone, 2003).

As Table 1 shows, much research from various studies of social sciences has been actively employed by the IS success model for measuring the quality of IS, users’ satisfaction, use, and net benefits. However, only a few studies in tourism have adapted the IS success model into tourism research: Jung (2009) framed the low cost carrier’s eAirline system on the IS success model measuring quality, satisfaction and net benefits, and found that all three qualities positively influenced usage and satisfaction, whereas usage did not affect net benefits.

Tourism, in its nature, presupposes the importance of the intensive information, and its sensitivity to IS is critical enough to affect the industry’s success. However, only a few studies on whether IS quality in tourism affects tourists’ satisfaction or behaviors have been conducted under the framework of the...
DeLone and McLean model. Destination websites, in general, are the venues for the potential tourists to generate their first impression on the travel destination, and are, simultaneously, convenient channels to access destination information. If the website quality is low, it is highly estimated that the potential tourists would leave the low-quality website, seek another information source, or even change their travel destination. To substantiate the potential tourist’s behavior toward Korea’s destination website, the official website of KTO was chosen and the qualities of the website were measured on the framework of DeLone and McLean’s IS success model.

Table 1
Previous studies in DeLone and McLean IS success model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pitt et al. (1995)</td>
<td>Provided theoretical and empirical grounds for adding an independent variable of service quality to DeLone and McLean IS success model.</td>
<td>Proved the importance of service quality for probing IS success factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeLone (2003)</td>
<td>Suggested updated IS success model for reviewing changes and advances of IS roles and reflecting research limitation proposed by researchers</td>
<td>Added service quality as an independent variable, use intention for attitude as a moderating variable, and net benefits for a dependent variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wu and Wang (2006)</td>
<td>Supposed that system quality and information quality affect perceived benefit and user satisfaction, which subsequently influences IS use. This particularly assumed that IS use in return affects perceived IS use. Research was conducted with employees using Knowledge Management System.</td>
<td>Found that system quality and system use did not affect perceived IS benefits. Information quality influences perceived IS benefits.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jung (2009)</td>
<td>Using updated DeLone and McLean IS success model, college students experienced low cost carrier (LCC) sampled, and quality, satisfaction, and net benefits in LCC eAirline system were examined.</td>
<td>Found that three qualities positively affect usage and satisfaction, but usage did not affect net benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shin et al. (2011)</td>
<td>Conducted an experiment with 10 universities in Korea, using Smartphone at class.</td>
<td>Found that perceived content quality and perceived service quality positively affected confirmation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3. Expectation–confirmation model

In customer behavior studies, consumer satisfaction and post-purchase behavior have been a major concern (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982), where the most extensively used research model has been expectation–confirmation theory (ECT) proposed by Oliver (1993). ECT hypothesizes that a consumer’s level of satisfaction with a product/service determines a re-purchase intention, where the consumer’s level of satisfaction is determined by the comparison of initial expectations on a product/service. Only when performance exceeds expectation are consumers satisfied, which subsequently affect post-purchase intentions (Thong et al., 2006).

The concept of technology has an increasing importance in the consumer market as seen in terms of technology–customer, employee, and company (Parasuraman, 2000). The concept of ECT from consumer behavior studies is integrated into the technology acceptance model (TAM) in the information system, and with further refinements to complement its theoretical weakness, expectation–confirmation model (ECM) is envisaged by Bhattacherjee (2001). ECM, as a theoretical mode of IS continuance, hypothesizes that expectation followed by an initial acceptance of specific information leads to confirmation by comparison of the anticipated consequence. When the actual performance is confirmed, consumer satisfaction is followed by, and potentially leads to, continued use. Unlike the other consumer acceptance models (e.g. TAM) that focus on first time use of a new IS, ECM focuses on the customer’s continuance to use after acceptance of IS, and thereby, it provides a solid explanation, and a long-term scale projection with consumers’ behavior (Bhattacherjee, 2001).

ECM is designed on the basis of ECT, but it has three distinct characteristics. First, ECM prioritizes expectation after acceptance rather than pre-adoption expectation about the information system. The reason is that users constantly update their expectations about IT while using it, and such accumulated experiences make the users’ expectations on IT different from the expectations before accepting IT (Thong et al., 2006), and that the variables (that measure initial acceptance of IT) are considered to be already included in ECM’s confirmation and satisfaction (Bhattacherjee, 2001).

Second, ECM posited ECT’s perceived usefulness instead of post-adoptive expectation because ECM is designed by combining ECT and TAM (Bhattacherjee, 2001). Expectation in
consumer behavior is defined as consumers' belief on attributes of products/services (Churchill and Surprenant, 1982), the perceived usefulness, one of the most influential cognitive factors for IT acceptance, is a reasonable surrogate for expectation (Thong et al., 2006). Third, the fact that ECM does not include any variables related to performance of the information system, assumes that confirmation already takes the influence of performance into account (see Fig. 2).

Fig. 2 shows that most studies involving ECM have taken extended models that combine ECM with TAM, TPB, or UTAUT (unified theory of acceptance and use of technology), etc., and investigated how certain factors (e.g. consumers' confirmation, perceived pleasure, concentration, and familiarity) influence the satisfaction, and the use intentions in utilizing the online platform of the Internet setting such as the government service, education, shopping, and portal sites (see Table 2).

The tourism industry, managing tourists' experience as the major intangible products, has not granted enough attention to the ECM in spite of the essential fact that the information and images of the destination website consistently influence decision-making processes by forming an expectation before actual visits (Wang et al., 2009). Furthermore, there have been very few previous studies to investigate the destination website on the frame of ECM. Particularly, studies on determining factors relating to the potential tourist's cognitive process that associates the destination website quality with continuance to visit the website at the travel planning stage, and the subsequent influences of website quality-continued usage association on the intention to visit the destination are almost none.

Fortunately, researchers in public or education fields have already developed a study model of IS research combining ECM with IS success model. Roca et al.’s (2006) e-learning class model is based on the ECM with the IS success model, TAM, subjective norm, etc. and studies the users' cognition, attitude, behaviors, etc. Results verify that information, service, system quality of e-learning, influence satisfaction directly/indirectly with confirmation as a moderating variable; confirmation influenced perceived usefulness and satisfaction; and satisfaction eventually affected e-learning continuance intention. Shin et al.’s (2011) observation on smart phone users proves that the perceived content quality and perceived service quality influenced confirmation, and confirmation using perceived usefulness as a moderating variable, directly and indirectly influenced satisfaction.

From these studies, it may be inferred that the quality of the destination website affects the potential tourists' expectation before travel. If the destination website quality does not satisfy the potential tourists’ expectation, the potential tourists may form a negative image of the destination website as well as of the destination itself. As a result, they may select another information source or choose another destination. Therefore, by referring to the preceding studies, this study tries to measure and examine how the quality of the destination website (measured by using DeLone and McLean’s IS success model) influences tourists’ confirmation, perceived usefulness, and satisfaction (using ECM), and consequently, how this influences the continuous visitation to the destination website, and solidifies the actual intention to visit the destination.

3. Research model and hypothesis development

Combining the IS success model with the ECM, we explored the official website of the KTO to see how tourists' satisfaction with the website qualities is related to confirmation, usefulness, satisfaction and continued usage intention of the destination website, and how a series of cognitive processes influences their intention to visit the actual destination. Fig. 3 illustrates the proposed research model and hypotheses.

3.1. Destination website quality and confirmation

Confirmation in ECM is a construct to show the cognitive accordance between the customers’ expectation, and the performance after the actual use. If the performance of the initial IS usage is positively associated with the expectations, the customer will be satisfied enough to maintain the continuance intention, whereas if the performance confirms the expectations, the customer’s dissatisfaction leads to discontinuance of IS (Bhattacherjee, 2001). Confirmation is a stronger predictor of satisfaction to affect the IS continuance. The perceived usefulness of the product purchase regards the performance of the product or service in relation to the expectation, and constitutes itself as an important predictor of satisfaction in the customers' cognitive process. Similarly, the quality of the destination website is related to the potential customers’ expectation toward the destination: only when the consumer's perceptive quality on the destination website is confirmed in relation with expectation, the positive output, the satisfaction, will be derived. Regarding the website (similar to mobile websites) quality in relation to the confirmation, Roca et al.'s (2006) study on the e-learning class shows that the service quality, the system quality, and
especially the information quality, have a positive effect on the confirmation of the class. Shin et al.’s (2011) experiment on smart phone classes finds that the perceived content quality and the perceived service quality are positively related to the confirmation.

In tourism, the destination website is to be the IS in that it provides destination information and pictorial images through the Internet. The potential tourists, by using the website, form a destination image in their mind prior to their travel, which corresponds to the pre-travel expectation. The destination website quality has an effect on the confirmation; thus, we can hypothesize that the higher the quality of the destination website, the higher the performance of the destination website.

In the field of destination marketers, a similar proposal has been made by Sussmann and Unel (1999) arguing that they should decrease the gap between the destination image and the post-visit image to satisfy the tourists. In the context of ECM, the destination image can be related to the expectation, and the post-visit image to the performance.

Lee and Chung’s (2009) study on mobile banking quality evaluation has previously measured the interface design quality instead of the service quality, and finds out that the interface design quality affects the satisfaction with trust as a moderating variable. In a similar way, the detrimentally designed information on the website might cause unnecessary hassles or negative effects on the utilization environment; thus, a relation between the design quality and the system quality is induced. With this logic, in measuring the destination website quality, the existing system quality will be replaced with the design quality in this study.

Tang et al.’s (2012) study also ensures the destination design character: regardless of the tourist’s involvement level toward the tourist destination, the destination design has a great influence over the website cognition. Supposing that the customers form an impression of the product based on the initial information, the allocation of the information has great importance (Everard and Galletta, 2006). Similarly, the potential tourists form the destination image at the destination website, where the initial information and the image are provided; thus, it is important to measure the visual factors. With reference to the study models of Roca et al. (2006) and Lee and Chung (2009), this study hypothesizes that the information quality, the service quality, and the design quality affect the confirmation of the destination website.

### Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thong et al. (2006)</td>
<td>Perceived usefulness and pleasure were added to ECM. Research on e-government service with people who used the service in Hong Kong.</td>
<td>All hypotheses were taken. Confirmation greatly influences pleasure and the perceived pleasure subsequently affected perceived usefulness, satisfaction, and continuance use intention to IT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roca et al. (2006)</td>
<td>ECM combined with TAM, DeLone and McLean IS success model. Research on e-learning class sampling with people taking e-learning at least one time</td>
<td>All hypotheses were taken except subjective norm (interpersonal influence, external influence), which did not affect satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee (2010)</td>
<td>Perceived usefulness and concentration were added in extended model of combining ECM, TAM, and TPB. Research with students who received e-learning service.</td>
<td>All hypotheses were taken, and perceived usefulness had strong influence on satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lee and Kwon (2011)</td>
<td>Added familiarity and intimacy to ECM. Research on-line shopping service, sampled from on-line shopping users</td>
<td>All hypotheses were taken, and confirmation greatly influenced perceived usefulness, satisfaction, and familiarity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Proposed research model](image-url)
Hypothesis 1. Information quality of the destination website has a positive impact on the potential tourists’ confirmation.

Hypothesis 2. Service quality of destination website has a positive impact on the potential tourists’ confirmation.

Hypothesis 3. Design quality of destination website has a positive impact on the potential tourists’ confirmation.

3.2. Confirmation, destination website usefulness, and satisfaction

Bhattacherjee (2001) proposed ECM to apply ECT to the IS environment with alterations of TAM. In ECM, the post-adoption expectation was replaced with the perceived usefulness, and the perceived usefulness that was affected by confirmation subsequently influences the satisfaction and continued IS usage intention. Thus, confirmation is a stronger predictor affecting either the perceived usefulness or the satisfaction phases. When users recognize the performance of a new technology to meet their expectation, the instrumental satisfaction phases. When users recognize the performance of a new technology to meet their expectation, the instrumental usefulness is perceived, and users feel satisfaction with the technology insofar as that it assists their personal productivity. Bhattacherjee (2001) explains this phenomenon by the term cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957). This means that if the perceived usefulness of IS users, who accept the technology, is not consistent with the actual performance, the users feel mental anxiety or cognitive dissonance. To resolve this dissonance and keep an adequate expectation, users lower their expectation level consistently with the actual performance. In case of the disconfirmation between the performance and expectation, the user’s perceived usefulness will be decreased; contrastingly, in case the performance fulfills or exceeds their expectations, the users will consolidate the usefulness of the new technology, leading to a positive effect on satisfaction.

ECT posits that customer satisfaction is determined by whether the performance of IS is in relation with confirmation with the expectation. Confirmation, particularly in customers’ behavior, is positively related to satisfaction with IS because customers realize the expected benefits of IS use (Bhattacherjee, 2001). The prior studies (Lee, 2010; Lee and Kwon, 2011; Roca et al., 2006; Shin et al., 2011; Thong et al., 2006) empirically prove that confirmation has a positive influence on satisfaction.

In keeping with these observations, if the performance after using the destination website meets or exceeds the pre-visit expectations, the potential tourists planning a trip will find the destination website’s usefulness to be satisfactory, whereas an unsatisfactory performance with regard to pre-expectations leads to dissatisfaction. Therefore, the confirmation of IS users will have an influence on the potential tourists’ perceived usefulness and satisfaction. Subsequently, there could be a positive correlation between the usefulness and the satisfaction.

Hypothesis 4. The potential tourists’ confirmation has a positive impact on usefulness of the destination website.

Hypothesis 5. The potential tourists’ confirmation has a positive impact on their satisfaction with the destination website.

Hypothesis 6. Usefulness of the destination website has a positive impact on the potential tourists’ satisfaction with that website.

3.3. Usefulness of destination website, satisfaction, and continued usage intention

According to the TPB, personal belief or attitude is the reason behind most people’s behavioral intentions and actual behavior (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). When a customer has recognized the usefulness of certain IS, he or she forms a positive or negative attitude toward it, which consequently derives the behavioral intention or actual behavior. Though usefulness—intention association is a concept based on a one-time event in an acceptance context, human tendencies for subconsciously pursuing instrumental behaviors or pursuing rewards are independent of the time or stage of such behaviors (Bhattacherjee, 2001, p. 357). Actually, it has been proven by numerous studies that perceived usefulness and satisfaction greatly affect the intention to continue to use. There are cases in the extended models combining ECM with UTAUT that even when perceived ease of use (TAM) or the effort expectancy (UTAUT) only slightly influences or even fails to influence satisfaction or the continued usage intention. The perceived usefulness (TAM) or the performance expectancy (UTAUT) still devotes a major part to the satisfaction and the continued usage intention (Lee, 2010; Lee and Kwon, 2011; Recker, 2007; Shin et al., 2011). This leads to the hypothesis that the potential tourist’s perceived usefulness of the destination website influences the continued usage intention to the sites either directly or indirectly using satisfaction as a mediator variable.

Hypothesis 7. Usefulness of the destination website has a positive impact on that website’s continued usage intention.

Hypothesis 8. Satisfaction with the destination website has a positive impact on that website’s continued usage intention.

3.4. Continuance use destination website and intention to visit destination

About 15 years ago, Santos (1998) studied holiday brochures for DMOs as a major source to strengthen the destination image and to distribute information to the potential tourists. Internet and information technology in the 21st century shift the paradigm of DMOs from brochures into web-based services, where the destination website or mobile app distributes the images and information. With regard to successful positioning in the severely competitive market environment, researchers and DMOs took an interest in the evaluation and efficacy of a destination website (Han and Mills, 2006; Park and Gretzel, 2007; Tang et al., 2012). Tang et al. (2012) used the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) to study attitude-involvement association, where the attitude toward the destination website is associated with the attitude toward the destination either by the central route or by the peripheral route. The result shows that the potential tourists with only high involvement with the destination recognize the website’s design, and the information quality to form an attitude toward the website. With the destination cognition as an antecedent, tourists form an attitude
toward the destination (central route), which eventually creates a travel intention. Pallud and Straub (2014) stated that museum sites aiming at advertising and providing information to visitors drew more visitors to the museum. Therefore, future visits would be an important goal of museum websites. They found that website design influences intention to visit a physical place. Based on this logic, a hypothesis is developed.

**Hypothesis 9.** The destination website continued usage intention has a positive impact on visitor intention to visit the destination.

4. Research method

4.1. Data collection

To validate the proposed research model, we conducted a survey with the assistance of KTO. Referring to the increasing inbound tourists, Korea received over 100 million visitor arrivals in 2013. The KTO's destination website (www.visitkorea.or.kr) has become a representative platform for Korean Tourism, and has successfully provided information and images to the potential tourists (see Fig. 4).

A research team at KTO electronically distributed a questionnaire using KTO's website to randomly selected potential traveler groups who were interested in Korea from December 20 to December 30, 2012. This study was conducted on a sample base of individuals who had previous experience using KTO's websites in the last one year, and had never visited Korea before. Based on the screening question, 169 out of the 938 respondents were selected.

Table 3 summarizes the characteristics of respondents. As shown in the table, 134 (79.3%) of the overall respondents were females, and 35 (20.7%) were males; 146 (86.4%) overall respondents were married, whereas 23 (13.6%) were single. Overall, 45 (26.6%) were under 20 years old, 86 (50.9%) were between 20 and 29, 24 (14.2%) were between 30 and 39, 6 (3.6%) were between 40 and 49, 4 (2.4%) were between 50 and

![Fig. 4. Snapshot of VisitKorea website.](image-url)
59, and 4 (2.4%) were over 60. Most of the respondents were located in America & Europe 87 (51.5%) and other Asian countries 37 (21.9%).

4.2. Measures

Most measurement items were adapted from prior literature. All items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale with strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (7). To measure service quality (4 items), design quality (4 items), and information quality (4 items), we revised the measurement items based on the three quality dimensions of IS success by DeLone and McLean (2003), Lee and Chung (2009), Kim et al. (2013), and Koo et al. (2013a,b). Website usefulness items (4 items) were adapted and modified from Koufaris (2002) and Lee and Lee (2003). Confirmation items (3 items) were adapted from Bhattacherjee (2001) and Bhattacherjee and Barfar (2011). Destination website satisfaction items (3 items) were adapted from Bhattacherjee (2001) and Bhattacherjee and Barfar (2011). Destination website continuance use intention items (3 items) were adapted from Koo et al. (2013a,b). Website satisfaction items based on the three quality dimensions of IS success were developed and validated by other researchers.

To analyze our data, we adapted a confirmatory approach using PLS (partial least squares) as our analysis method. PLS has been widely used in theory testing and confirmation. PLS regression analysis has several advantages including small sample size, and few assumptions about measurement scale and normal distribution (Ahuja and Thatcher, 2005). The measurement model and structural model testing were conducted using PLS-Graph 3.0.

Table 3
Demographic characteristics of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profile category</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤20</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–29</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>50.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30–39</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40–49</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–59</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian countries</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America and Europe areas</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>51.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Analysis and results

To analyze our data, we adapted a confirmatory approach using PLS (partial least squares) as our analysis method. PLS has been widely used in theory testing and confirmation. PLS regression analysis has several advantages including small sample size, and few assumptions about measurement scale and normal distribution (Ahuja and Thatcher, 2005). The measurement model and structural model testing were conducted using PLS-Graph 3.0.

5.1. Measurement model

Self-reported data on two or more variables collected from the same source have the potential to lead to common method variance. Therefore, Harman’s single-factor test is used to test for such bias (Lee et al., 2012). It assumes that if a high level of common method variance is present, then when all of the variables are entered together, they will load onto one factor, accounting for a majority of the variance. In this study, exploratory factor analysis results in eight factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The results did not indicate that the single-factor structure accounts for most of the variance, suggesting that common method bias is not a concern in the data.

To validate our measurement model, we undertook validity assessments of content, convergent, and discriminant validity. First, the content validity of our survey was established from the existing literature, and our measures were constructed by adopting constructs validated by other researchers.

Second, convergent validity was established by examining composite reliability (CR), Cronbach’s alpha, and the average variance explained (AVE) (Bhattacharjee and Sanford, 2006). As shown in Table 4, Cronbach’s alpha (greater than 0.5), CR (greater than 0.7) and AVE (greater than 0.5) indicated that all of the constructs that were used in the model satisfied the requirements. Thus, the results established that the items demonstrated convergent validity.

Finally, the discriminant validity of the measurement model was checked by comparing the square root of the AVE for each construct with the correlations between that construct and other constructs. If the square root of the AVE was greater than the correlations between the construct and another construct, then it indicated discrimination. As shown in Table 5, the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeded the correlations between that construct and the other constructs. Thus, the discriminant validity of the instrument was established (Chung et al., 2014).

5.2. Structural model

To evaluate the structural model’s predictive powers, we calculated the R² values for the confirmation, destination website usefulness, destination website satisfaction, destination website continuance use intention, and intention to visit the destination. Interpreted similarly to the multiple regression results, R² indicates the amount of variance explained by the exogenous variables (Barclay et al., 1995). Using a bootstrapping technique, the path estimates and t-statistics were calculated for the hypothesized relationships. The size of the bootstrapping sample that was used in the PLS analyses was 500. The results suggest distinct causal relationships among website quality confirmation, destination website usefulness, destination website satisfaction, destination website continuance use intention, and intention to visit destination. Fig. 5 and Table 6 present the results of the hypothesis tests of the proposed model. All paths in the model (Hypothesis 1–Hypothesis 9) were supported. Tests for Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 indicate that KTO website confirmation was significantly influenced by information quality (β = 0.528, t = 6.527), service quality (β = 0.155, t = 2.631), and design quality (β = 0.180, t = 2.299).
Validity, the diagonal elements should be greater than the corresponding off-diagonal elements.

Table 4
Reliability and cross-loadings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Measurement items</th>
<th>Cross loading</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>CR&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>AVE&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destination website usefulness</td>
<td>1. I can find many interesting information on the VisitKorea website. 0.750</td>
<td>20.267</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The information provided by the VisitKorea website is well balanced in terms of quality and amount. 0.738 12.124</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The information provided by the VisitKorea website is enriched with the additional links to related sites. 0.861 23.922</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. The information provided by the VisitKorea website is very useful to me. 0.890 50.748</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation</td>
<td>1. User experience on the VisitKorea website is overall better than expected. 0.883 37.201</td>
<td>0.875 0.917</td>
<td>0.787</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Service level of the VisitKorea website is higher than expected. 0.898 49.044</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Content on the VisitKorea website is better than expected. 0.880 46.400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information quality</td>
<td>Overall quality of website</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. The VisitKorea website is fun to read. 0.838 25.757</td>
<td>0.829 0.907</td>
<td>0.710</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The VisitKorea website is full of things to read. 0.793 18.996</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The VisitKorea website is not boring. 0.862 40.828</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. The VisitKorea website is pleasant to use. 0.875 40.473</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service quality</td>
<td>1. I can get answers by posting a question through the VisitKorea website. 0.885 29.922</td>
<td>0.865 0.913</td>
<td>0.724</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. I can find the latest information through monthly VisitKorea website newsletters. 0.842 27.674</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. I can get answers to my questions in a timely manner from VisitKorea website. 0.828 18.965</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. I can get satisfactory email replies containing all the information I need from VisitKorea website. 0.850 20.374</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design quality</td>
<td>1. The visual graphic on the VisitKorea website is user-friendly. 0.924 72.382</td>
<td>0.862 0.943</td>
<td>0.806</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. The display color on the VisitKorea website is appropriate. 0.914 60.093</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. The VisitKorea website design is easy to understand. 0.907 55.145</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. It is easy to search for information on the VisitKorea website. 0.844 21.880</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information quality, in particular, most significantly affects confirmation. The test for Hypothesis 4 and Hypothesis 5 indicates that confirmation about destination website significantly affected destination website usefulness (β = 0.486, t = 7.806) and satisfaction (β = 0.422, t = 6.249). The path from destination website satisfaction to destination website usefulness is significant (β = 0.439, t = 6.500), so Hypothesis 6 was supported. In addition, destination

Table 5
Correlation and discriminant validity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Correlation of constructs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Website usefulness</td>
<td>4.200</td>
<td>0.718</td>
<td>0.812**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Website quality confirmation</td>
<td>4.168</td>
<td>0.616</td>
<td>0.444**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Information quality</td>
<td>4.220</td>
<td>0.601</td>
<td>0.462**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Service quality</td>
<td>3.805</td>
<td>0.762</td>
<td>0.470**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Design quality</td>
<td>4.191</td>
<td>0.664</td>
<td>0.647**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Website satisfaction</td>
<td>4.266</td>
<td>0.585</td>
<td>0.621**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Website continued usage intention</td>
<td>4.399</td>
<td>0.593</td>
<td>0.657**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Intention to visit destination</td>
<td>3.924</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td>0.503**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Diagonal elements (in bold) in the “correlation of constructs” matrix are the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE). For adequate discriminant validity, the diagonal elements should be greater than the corresponding off-diagonal elements.

Please cite this article as: Chung, N., et al., The influence of tourism website on tourists’ behavior to determine destination selection: A case study of creative economy in Korea, Technol. Forecast. Soc. Change (2015), http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2015.03.004
website continued usage intention was significantly influenced by both destination website usefulness ($\beta = 0.365$, $t = 5.743$), in support of Hypothesis 7 and satisfaction ($\beta = 0.517$, $t = 8.840$), in support of Hypothesis 8. Finally, destination website continued usage intention was found to be an important antecedent of intention to visit destination ($\beta = 0.421$, $t = 6.369$), in support of Hypothesis 9.

6. Discussion and conclusions

Our study examines the growing relationship between the tourism sector and creative sector to guide the development of an effective creative economy in Korea. Drawing on our study, we consider how to strengthen tourism and specific industry linkages, take advantage of the opportunities to generate a creative economic ramification, and add value. The convergence of tourism and other industries have invented unimaginable tourism products, and the potential benefits from linking tourism and creativity have not yet been realized. Korean pop culture and the related websites need to provide more valuable information resources. Today, most tourism websites offer valuable content for attracting tourists to their destination. Consequently, our conjecture that a well-informed website may induce motivation for tourists to visit a certain destination, or even induce tourists to regularly visit a physical place as a future leisure activity (Pallud and Straub, 2014).

We asserted that a destination website has greatly influenced foreign visitors in a variety of fields including economic, social, and cultural facets. This supports the notion that a destination website is a very effective vehicle to attract tourists.

### Table 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Estimates</th>
<th>t-Value</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1</td>
<td>Website information quality $\rightarrow$ website quality confirmation</td>
<td>0.528</td>
<td>6.527</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>Website service quality $\rightarrow$ website quality confirmation</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>2.631</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>Website design quality $\rightarrow$ website quality confirmation</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>2.299</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>Website quality confirmation $\rightarrow$ website usefulness</td>
<td>0.486</td>
<td>7.806</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>Website quality confirmation $\rightarrow$ website satisfaction</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>6.249</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 6</td>
<td>Website usefulness $\rightarrow$ website satisfaction</td>
<td>0.439</td>
<td>6.500</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 7</td>
<td>Website usefulness $\rightarrow$ website continued usage intention</td>
<td>0.365</td>
<td>5.743</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 8</td>
<td>Website satisfaction $\rightarrow$ website continued usage intention</td>
<td>0.517</td>
<td>8.840</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 9</td>
<td>Website continued usage intention $\rightarrow$ intention to visit destination</td>
<td>0.421</td>
<td>6.369</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R² values:
- Website confirmation: 0.573 (57.3%).
- Website usefulness: 0.236 (23.6%).
- Website satisfaction: 0.551 (55.1%).
- Website continued usage intention: 0.643 (64.3%).
- Intention to visit destination: 0.177 (17.7%).

Please cite this article as: Chung, N., et al., The influence of tourism website on tourists’ behavior to determine destination selection: A case study of creative economy in Korea, Technol. Forecast. Soc. Change (2015), http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2015.03.004
to a destination, while boosting the economic impacts and reinforcing positive images of a destination (Kim et al., 2007). The governments of the destinations, as well as the companies in tourism that are developing a website as a part of the web-based marketing service, are utilizing the website as a major distribution channel for travel information and images with the aim of attracting potential tourists. The destination website, as a typical example of IS, represents the destination from the potential tourists’ perspective, allows them to have access to the products, services, and experiences that the destination provides (Luna-Nevarez and Hyman, 2012). The purpose of this study was to identify the destination website including systems, information, service, and its usefulness of Korean content on the potential tourists' attitudes and behaviors through an investigative survey on KTO's website. This empirical study was developed to determine how the potential tourists on KTO’s website formulate their perceptions of Korea, and how they are motivated to actually visit Korea. We measured the perceived image after visiting KTO's website, and the relationship between usefulness of Korea’s content and the potential to visit Korea eventually.

This study adapts the DeLone and McLean’s IS success model and Bhattacharjee’s (2001) ECM to evaluate the destination website's qualities, and to see whether the confirmation preceded by the website quality accomplishments influences the attitude or cognition of the potential tourist (satisfaction, perceived usefulness) toward the destination website and the destination itself. Finally, this study sought to estimate whether the preceding antecedents eventually motivated the actual visit to the destination. The tourists who have used KTO’s destination website were chosen to test the hypotheses; all the hypotheses were accepted. Results show that the information quality was the deciding factor in the confirmation of the destination website. Furthermore, the confirmation influences the satisfaction about the destination either directly or indirectly where usefulness serves as the dependent variable. This result supports previous studies that the quality of IS influences the confirmation as Roca et al. (2006) and Shin et al. (2011). In addition, the potential tourists, only when they perceive the usefulness and feel satisfaction with the website, continuously use the destination website. Finally, the continuance visit to the website positively influences the intention to visit the destination, indicating that the continuous visit to the website is a sign of the positive attitude toward the actual destination. In this sense, this result affirms the previous studies of tourist’s attitude-involvement association by Kaplanidou and Vogt (2006) and Tang et al. (2012) in that the tourist's high involvement with the website positively influences the attitude toward the destination, and subsequently affects their intention to visit the destination.

Furthermore, we examined a synthesis of theories that have been overlooked in tourism website usage, including IS success model and ECM. Several studies have suggested the inclusion of those theories for evaluating websites, and our research confirms prior conceptual work by showing that two theories are as important as usability for the potential tourists. In this sense, noting that the IS success model and ECM is a key combination theory in the tourism context, our research also contributes to a cumulative body of research by integrating a tourism concept into the study of website usability.

The research offers several theoretical and practical implications. As for the theoretical implications, the primary contribution is the successful combination of the DeLone and McLean’s (1992, 2003) IS success model with Bhattacharjee’s (2001) ECM. By making use of the sub-dimensions of the DeLone and McLean’s (1992, 2003) IS success model, this study provides three instruments for measuring website qualities, that is, information quality, service quality, and design quality. Then, the overall website qualities are empirically tested with Bhattacharjee’s (2001) ECM framework to ensure that the confirmation links the user’s pre-expectation and post-performance. This study also contributes by testing the developed model through survey methodology to empirical studies.

Secondly, studies on the destination website or most of the other studies on the IS that provide images of the tourist destinations mainly researched the intention to use. However, this study extends the research model to integrate the continuance of IS usage with the destination visit intention, and empirically measures the cognitive influence of the continued IS usage on the actual performance. This result is significant in that it provides the empirical ground for the implementation of technology and forecasts how new IS (e.g., augmented reality or Near Field Communication) affects the tourist’s intention to visit the destination.

Unlike the previous research on the museum website (e.g., Pallud and Straub, 2014), which investigated the relationship between the usage of destination website and tourists’ behavior to actual destination selection, this paper attempts to consider the destination website not only as a channel of cultural ambience but also as a combination of technology and culture. This paper may be the first to study how the website plays its role from the creative economy perspective.

As for the practical implications, the results of this study offer suggestions on how to manage websites. The postulated hypothesis that the destination website’s quality influences the confirmation by forming a pre-expectation is validated, and of the three qualities, the information quality influences the confirmation on a greater scale. From this context, KTO’s website, as the tourist’s information channel, is likely to presume that the information quality was higher than the tourist’s expectation. It can be inferred that enhancement of the information quality is essential in the DMOs’ destination website. The website recently highlighted the fun activities, and even coined the term gamification. On the practical and managerial level of the destination website, it is expected that the precise information coated with the fun factor will heighten the user’s pre-expectation.

The result that the design quality in the destination website slightly influences the confirmation indicates the importance of design in the website evaluation. Tourists’ increased use of smartphones should be taken seriously as a new trend, and it is advisable to consider a smartphone friendly website design especially for the small screen. Lastly, the research finding that the continuance visit to the destination website positively affects the actual destination visit intention implies that the overall improvement of the destination website quality, as well as other publicizing events, is recommended for the potential tourists’ continuous visits to the website. In addition to the website, it is necessary to stimulate and maintain the tourist’s
interest by utilizing other modern technologies and other fun factors, which will continuously cultivate the desire to visit the destination.

The results of this study should be interpreted in the context of its limitations. The research on the destination website had proceeded mainly based on the information provided by DMOs, the providers of such services. Generalization of the results should be taken with caution, as there can be an overall quality difference in the material provided by social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, and TripAdvisor. Future research may incorporate the official Twitter, Facebook, and TripAdvisor of DMOs, but is more appropriate for smart tourism, where the destination information is provided; the multilateral communication is available to scrutinize the potential tourists’ travel planning, and the cognitive influence of website qualities on the decision-making procedure are better understood.

Acknowledgment

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References


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