

Infusion of the Internet and Indigenous Tourism: An Australian Framework

Hosein Gharavi

School of Business Administration,
American University in Dubai,UAE.

Alfred Ogle

School of Marketing, Tourism & Leisure,
Faculty of Business & Law
Edith Cowan University,Western Australia.

Patricia Berwick

RAK Medical and Health Sciences University,UAE.

Abstract : Innovations in the fields of ICT, Transport, and HRM have transformed the structure of the global tourism and travel industry. The Internet has enabled tourism and travel companies to tap into new domestic and international markets while availing regions in developing countries the opportunities to publicize their unique tourism products and services. The premise of this article refers to the dual nature of IS. Firstly, IT results in unification of practice as standards are integrated when users employ the technology. After the initial unification of practice as standards are integrated in the operations, technological institutionalism posits that managers can make strategic choices in the scale/scope of adoption of global tourism practices. The economic possibilities of the Internet and IT are proposed to be the catalysts of strategic differentiation in tourism planning which improves managers' ability to develop strategic niches. Indigenous tourism operators and entities engaged in developing tourism can introduce, publicize and promote their unique characteristics via Internet. Increased exposure enables development of a truly indigenous experience. Initially Internet-assisted entry into global tourism is seen as the process of mimicking tourism practices established by developed regions. Later the adopters' practices evolve to include indigenous strategies to develop region-specific tourism initiatives.

Key words: Institutionalism, Indigenous Tourism, Internet, Strategic choice, Australia.

Introduction

Information Technology (IT) and the Internet are developments that have created access to new local and international markets. Although the use of the Internet in developing countries has affected the way travel agents perform their functions, the core functions have remained unchanged.

Instead of a change in process the Internet has been used mainly as a tool to communicate more effectively and to provide service information to the end customer.

The Internet has, however, allowed National Tourism Organisations (NTO) and the private sector in developing countries to adopt "best practices" of international travel companies thereby resulting in unification of global tourism practices. As the global model of tourism matures and tourism providers become more skilled at managing and developing their own tourism resources, then differentiation occurs. Thus it is proposed that a major event like the advent of the Internet may appear to have had a homogenizing affect on industry practices but it may in fact act as a catalyst for the development of indigenous tourism models highlighting the unique characteristics of the region and the cluster of tribes that inhabit the said regions. Rather than changing core functions the Internet may unify "best practice" tourism models, whilst at the same time permit differentiation as, for example, in regional and/or tribal-specific tourism. This differentiation may also create a barrier to protect the competition for indigenous tourism companies from mainstream tourism companies.

Theoretically speaking, the uptake and infusion of innovation can be explained by Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory (1983), where the process of change is seen as the outcome of a multi-level and sequential communicative practice across an industry. The adopters basically mimic the "best practices" from the first movers and this in turn results in unification of practice across an industry. However, as will be explained later in the paper, the process of infusion of innovation, at least as far as the case of local and indigenous tourism companies are concerned, should be seen as a process of selective infusion after an initial stage of unification. The new technology allows companies to select from a variety of innovative options. This approach is significant for indigenous tourism companies where differentiation is based on the uniqueness of tribal and regional attributes as opposed to mainstream tourism products. The paper explores both classical diffusion of innovation (DOI) and institutionalist approaches. A framework is developed that outlines the dynamics of infusion and form selection in the tourism industry as companies go through a multiple of change levels. These levels create a unification of practice which later evolved to encompass differentiation and niche specific market growth.

Literature Review

Rogers (1983) defines DOI as the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system. Rogers (1983) also states that patterns of adoption of an innovation are influenced by characteristics specific to that innovation and the adopter. Adoption is also influenced by opinion leaders. The Individual Innovativeness Theory (Buhalis 1998; Burgess et al. 2001; Rogers 1983) states there are three conditions for an innovation to be adopted. These are:

1. A critical mass of adopters is needed to convince the "mainstream" to adopt the new change;
2. A regular and frequent use of the innovation is necessary to ensure success of the diffusion effort; and
3. The communication technologies need to be able to be accessed.

These conditions are essential because they can be applied in different ways and for different purposes and are part of a dynamic process that involves change, modification and reinvention by individual adopters,

In the case of the indigenous tourism, the trajectory of growth and uptake of innovation is seen as a combination of various steps. These steps start from a generalised unification of practice as outlined by traditional DOI model (Buhalis 1998; Burgess et al. 2001, Rogers 1983). At the preliminary stages of the diffusionary process, companies, in order to be allowed to exist in the industry, are forced to adhere to a set of rules and regulations imposed by the governing bodies of the industry which in this case are the various tourism and travel bodies in Australia (e.g. International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Australian Federation of Travel Agents Limited (AFTA)). Upon adherence to the prescribed rules and regulations, companies are allowed to differentiate themselves when it comes to sales and promotion of their product and services. The choice and extent of differentiation is directly proportional to the level of financial resources available to the indigenous tourism companies and the benchmark, or the accepted norm that acts as an institutional base for the travel companies. As far as the financial resources are concerned, this means the greater the amount of available resources, the higher the chance of

proliferation of indigenous tourism companies. In Australia, various Commonwealth and State authorities support initiatives for Internet and communication technology from indigenous communities for community-based tourism ventures based on the unique tribal and regional characteristics.

Once the institutional benchmark has been selected all tourism regional companies enter into a web of strongly complementary technical relationships thus reinforcing the uptake of the benchmark. This reinforcement of the benchmark gives rise to networks where issues such as compatibility and standardisation become relevant. Such a process is continuous and infuses through the mimicking of the practices of others. This is in line with the institutional approach of Havemann (1993a) where diffusion of global tourism practices occurs at two levels; firstly at the national economic level where the emphasis is on the macro aspect of industry change and secondly at the company and independent entity or micro level where tourism services are offered through the network to the consumer. From this perspective, organizational innovation is strongly influenced by the environment in which the organization is set. In the environment not only are competitive forces and efficiency-based forces at work, socially constructed belief and rule systems exercise control over companies and influence the way they are structured and how they carry out their work (Scott 1990). National economic concepts and global values influence regional business practices. These practices may later evolve into more localized processes utilizing localized values and norms which encourage differentiation amongst regional indigenous tourist companies.

Global Tourism Potential

Trade in tourism services and tourism activities have the potential to become engines for growth and economic development. Tourism can also be a driving force to combat poverty. But it is also a highly vulnerable economic activity affected by serious risk factors. These include international politics, health issues and climatic events. Apart from these global processes a major challenge for developing tourism initiatives is the growing control by a few global tourism operators of travel distribution networks throughout the world. These include organized travel, international bookings, and the marketing and sales of tourism and related activities. This concentration of

power reduces the benefits that developing regions can reap from the liberalization and expansion in world tourism (OECD 2002a, 2002b).

The Internet, as far as developing regions is concerned, has increasingly been incorporated into cultural, educational and outdoor tourism "good practices" and processes. Therefore the tourism sector is offered an important opportunity to better exploit the Internet in building customer relationships by gathering information from customers and potential clients to create customer profiles to identify customer interests. This type of assistance would help to increase niche identification, development and maintenance.

Indigenous Tourism in Australia

Indigenous performers and graphic images representing or suggesting Aboriginal culture were central aspects of the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympics and Para-Olympics in 2000. These and other examples like these have encouraged the Commonwealth Government of Australia to develop an indigenous tourism scheme. The aim of the scheme is to enable:

- a) A choice for indigenous people to be involved in the tourism industry thus promoting community involvement and ownership, and
- b) The development of community ownership of the indigenous tourism products by the indigenous peoples with appropriate support from the mainstream tourism industry (ATSIC 2003).

The indigenous population of Australia is made up of two groups. These are Aboriginal Australians and Torres Strait Islanders. Within each main group there are a number of tribes and communities, each distinct and offering unique experiences. These differences among groups of indigenous Australians are a promising opportunity for developing specific market niches. To enable this opportunity the Internet will be used not only to promote indigenous tourism but also to educate, train and develop the international profile of indigenous tourism in Australia. To date, promotion has typically relied on indigenous themes which portray a single indigenous culture - one where boomerangs, didgeridoos, dot or X-ray style painting, and stereotyped

imagery has predominated. Indigenous cultural industries, particularly arts and crafts, are popular with tourists. The value of these arts and crafts sales exceeds the current value of indigenous cultural tourism, and represents the main form of contact most tourists have with indigenous cultures at present. Thus, indigenous arts and crafts represent a considerable economic strength that can be built on to benefit both tourism and cultural industries (ATSIC 2003).

A fundamental undertaking of indigenous tourism authorities in Australia is the provision of basic training and skills necessary to develop a skills base in aboriginal areas. The indigenous peoples can in turn form contractual relationships with mainstream tourism companies to promote their unique tourism experience. Indigenous entrepreneurs are encouraged and supported to attend a Technical and Future Education (TAFE) Aboriginal Tour Guide Program. One aim of the program is to encourage indigenous Australians to form businesses and cooperatives specializing in indigenous tourism. The course also familiarizes the participants with basic tourism management skills. As a starting point, to increase national and international awareness, some cultural tours have been developed. These tours include the Upper Hunter Valley, based on four main sites. For example, Gringai Cultural Tours offer full and half day tours of Aboriginal sites which provide a distinct contrast to the wineries, fine food and arts and crafts venues of the region (ATA 2004a, 2004b).

Training and support of the indigenous businesses and cooperatives is complemented by exposure to the mainstream tourism industry. There are growing linkages with regional tourism bodies. Mainstream tourism providers see this as an opportunity to provide authentic indigenous experience by cooperating with the indigenous entities in marketing the packages worldwide and therefore new cooperative linkages are formed. Finally the indigenous tourism providers are assisted with international marketing campaigns where promotion is actively pursued through schools and existing tourism businesses in the region such as the vineyards and the mineral mines (ATA 2004a).

In addition to the above training schemes the Australian State and Federal tourism authorities provide financial and logistical support to indigenous tourism companies. Financial assistance includes audits and

performance evaluations to maintain a standard quality (ATSIC 2003). Since the introduction of the Internet and especially after the Sydney Olympics, indigenous tourism companies have used the Internet to a larger extent to establish a presence in global tourism trade whilst at the same time most have used this medium to communicate with potential customers. As pointed out by Anckar and Walden (2001), companies offering tourism services in a region learn about the effectiveness of the Internet in promoting their tourism services globally and subsequently acquire the Internet to integrate it in their sales and marketing portfolio as a strategic move to transform their businesses into entities offering services to very distinct groups of customers. To achieve this, the first move is to offer the big suppliers (e.g. the international travel and tourism providers, wholesalers, and local partners) services as a middleman. By doing this, companies have to acquire and infuse certain globally recognized practices in order to be compatible with the requirements of the wholesalers in the developed world. The Internet becomes a very cheap tool in searching and acquiring ideas and practices that companies normally use. It also allows exposure and so the company in the developing region, either in the context of a cluster or by itself depending on its size and uniqueness of its offering, can also negotiate with all the new suppliers of products and the other services offering them access to new clients. Secondly, it can take advantage of communicative abilities of the Internet in allowing connectivity in geographically dispersed locations by allying itself with a tourism hub that serve small regional communities and in return provide the technological platform for the regional tourism hubs thereby offering them access to information and resources that they need to continue their previous operations. Therefore it is safe to assume that IT and the Internet provide a number of options as far as partners and the potential customer base are concerned. As the company links with each of the partners, each partnership is a structural option where the company is allowed to focus on a specific niche; therefore each of these options is a way for each company to differentiate itself from the rest of the companies offering the same type of service.

Besides the direct intervention of the Federal and State Governments,

local and national indigenous support bodies play a key role. As far as travel and tourism is concerned, one of the examples of the regions specific indigenous hubs is the Aboriginal Tourism Australia (ATA). It is the foremost national organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tourism within Australia working to benefit the community and build cultural, environmental, and economic sustainability whilst maintaining cultural values. In addition to developing and promoting indigenous tourism, it works with non-indigenous operators and publishes numerous brochures which help visitors understand how to respect indigenous communities (ATA 2004a, 2004b, 2004c). Besides providing exposure ATA provides training and infrastructure support for its members and uses the websites as a source for exposing companies specialising in Aboriginal tours. ATA also provides assistance to existing tourism companies to promote the uptake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island tourism.

Three regions have taken the initiative to promote indigenous tourism. Gringai Aboriginal Cultural Tours is one of these regions. This region is developed and maintained by the New South Wales (NSW) Tourism Commission and the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS). By working together these two government bodies are responsible for developing and maintaining the parks and reserve systems, and conserving the natural and cultural heritage of the state. Although indigenous tourism is being promoted as a means to develop self-sustainability of the indigenous populations of the Gringai Aboriginal areas, nonetheless the Government of the NSW acts as a monitoring mechanism in maintaining a specified standard of service via enforcement by the Tourism Commission of NSW. The mandate of the Tourism Commission is to safeguard protected native flora and fauna in NSW, and also to protect and manage Aboriginal sites, objects and places of special significance to Aboriginal people (NPWS, 2004).

The other two areas are both in Western Australia (WA). These are the Karijini National Park Visitors' Centre in the Pilbara region and the Kimberley Regional Tour in the Kimberley region. The Industry Development and Visitor Servicing Division of the West Australian Tourism Commission ensures that the appropriate product is in place for visitors to enjoy and that

destination and product information services and booking facilities are provided throughout WA to enhance visitor experiences and increase the likelihood of them increasing their length of stay. In addition this body facilitates the dynamic development of indigenous tourism through raising the profile of nature-based tourism and developing niche sector products, such as indigenous, cultural, educational and health tourism as well as cruise shipping. In addition it provides the managerial framework for visitor servicing to operate efficiently and effectively throughout the State, enabling the provision of information and bookings to be made using telecommunication and Internet technology. This includes data collection and data distribution (KBT 2004).

The activities of the Kimberley Regional Government provide a good example of how the Government Agencies have acted to provide service and training whilst at the same time encouraging differentiation based on cultural and tribal backgrounds. In partnership with the West Australian Tourism Commission, the Kimberley Board of Tourism manages the training and development of regional tourism and also promotes indigenous development and economic self-sufficiency by focusing on the unique attribute of the tribes that inhabit the Kimberley region (KBT 2004). Each of these national parks acts as a tribal area where tribal or community specific tourism is developed. The packages highlight unique aspects of the region where the national park is located and the tribes that inhabit the parks. The tours focus on:

- Indigenous cultures of each region;
- Unique flora and fauna of the region;
- Food and beverages unique to the region;
- Plants and herbal remedies specific to the region; and
- Tribal oral history, songs and dances that signify the differences between each individual tribe.

This specific differentiation based on regions coupled with the Internet-enabled communication can allow indigenous tourism not only to promote indigenous tourism but also to enlighten tourists and highlight the diverse facets of indigenous life in Australia and to enhance the tourist pull factor.

Thus the indigenous tourism in Australia lends itself well to the following proposed framework.

The Proposed Framework

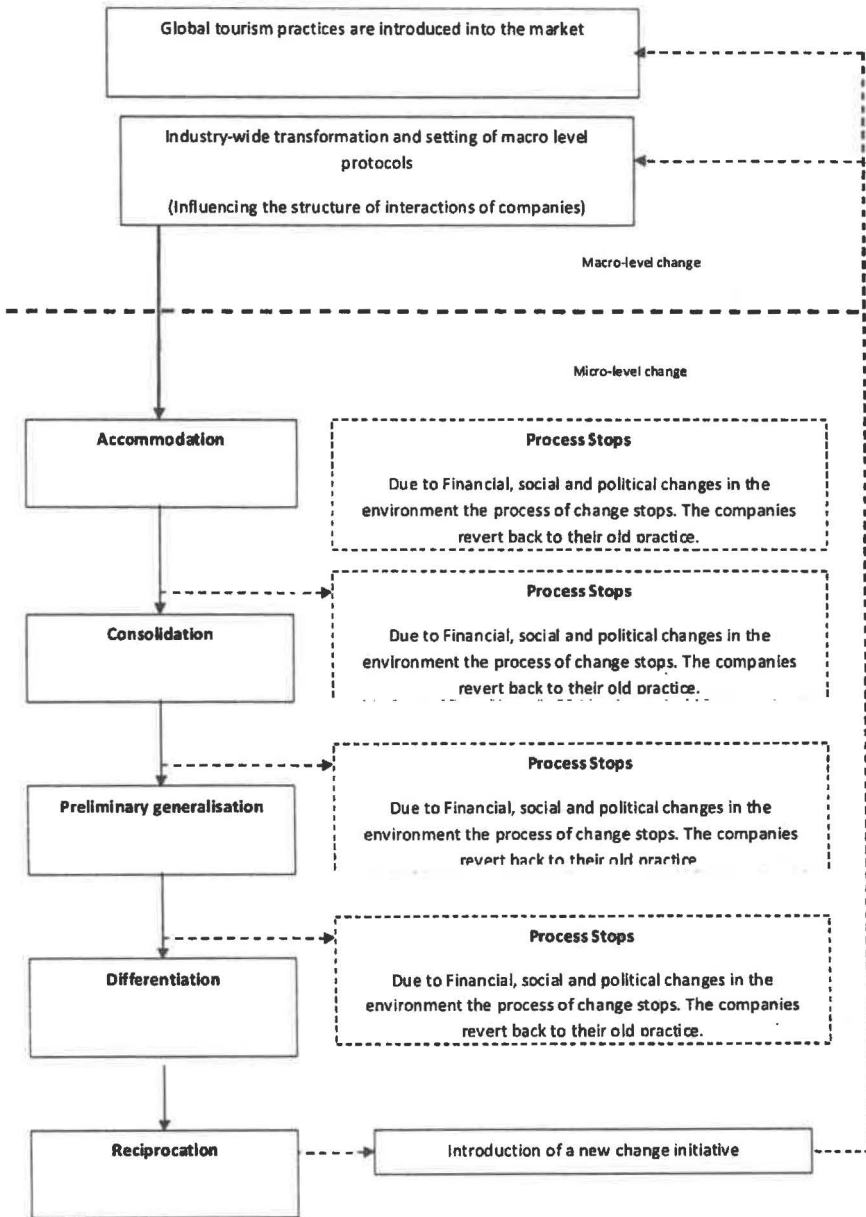
The literature review suggests that industry factors affect the uptake of innovation in the global tourism industry and positively influence innovation in developing countries (Anckar and Walden 2001; Bloch, Pigneur and Steiner 1996; Buhalis and Main 1998; Buhalis and Licata 2001; O'Brien 1998, Van Rekom, Teunissen and Go 1999, Wober and Gretzel 2000). These factors include:

a) The trigger for the introduction of the ICT. This is because Internet is a cheaper tool to learn about other regions in terms of tourism development and for marketing individual services; and

b) The enhancement of inter-company relationships. This is because an organization's ties to other organizations can either broaden or restrict its awareness of environmental trends and may also expose it to various adaptive responses employed elsewhere in the industry.

The above factors both contribute to the extent and scope of uptake of innovation. In general, becoming members of the tourism industry requires a close adherence to rules and regulations of the governing authorities in the industry. Figure 1 is a framework indicating the dynamics of macro level change and micro-level strategic choice. Figure 1 also shows the change in the industry starts with unifying infusion of new technology at the macro level where the newcomers potentially mimic or are forced to duplicate the practices of the incumbents so as to be allowed to operate and survive. At the micro level, however, where each company is viewed in terms of its value chain, after accommodation, and generalisation, the companies aim to differentiate themselves based on the type of service and the experience which they bring to their customers.

Figure 1: The proposed ICT innovation uptake framework showing dynamics of uptake at macro and micro levels.



At each stage a company may be able to go on and develop further but since the financial resources of indigenous companies are rather limited, depending on the availability of resource, companies go to the next stage or back out. Companies that have backed out will either be deemed illegitimate by the industry or forced to move out of the industry, or they carry on with their previous business practice they will know, however, they are running their business at the risk of being set aside, taken over, or operated at lower margins of profitability. After setting the macro protocols tourism companies usually go through five processes. These consist of:

1) Accommodation: In order to be able to operate, each tourism company must conform to the regulations set out by the local travel authority plus the regulations of IATA. If a tourism company does not comply with these regulations, it cannot operate and therefore cannot exist as a tourism company in the industry;

2) Consolidation: This refers to the structural changes that tourism companies make in order to mainstream their operations to ensure compatibility with the industry regulations and norms, and in the case of travel agents, system infrastructures. For example, if the tourism companies all use a certain system, it make sense to use that system to be compatible with suppliers. Other agents are, of course, part of one's value network;

3) Preliminary generalization: The above compatibility will undoubtedly lead to similarities in operations and unification in practice. At this stage technology has not evolved to meet this process and therefore tourism companies and agents are more generalists than specialists;

4) Differentiation: Technology will undoubtedly mature. Therefore it is possible for tourism companies to carve out specific niches in the market and to focus solely on specific populations within that niche;

5) Reciprocation: This refers to the strengthening of relationships between agents and also the tourism companies' own value systems as the Internet allows cooperation amongst partners at a high speed and with improved effectiveness. Bonds between companies will become stronger and thus strengthen the institutional grip on the inter-organizational networks.

Discussion

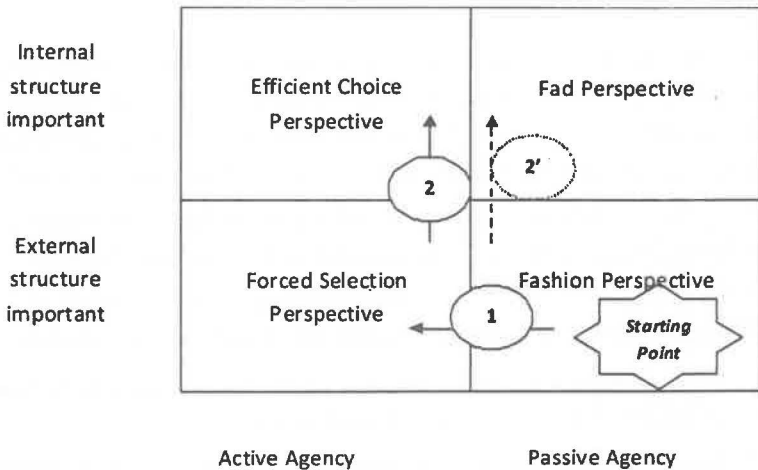
As the framework in Figure 1 illustrates, from a macro perspective,

the initial trigger for change results in setting a uniform working platform as a boundary within which change can take place. In the case of the developing indigenous tourism companies, the government has the responsibility for initial training and development in the sector and acts as a primary networking platform between the indigenous focused tourism companies and the mainstream tourism providers. By doing this the government agencies in charge of promoting and developing tourism become the unifying agents between this new service and traditional mainstream tourism providers. Through alignment of the indigenous tourism companies with mainstream tourism companies, established tourism practices are replicated in the indigenous tourism companies. This isomorphic change imposes quality controls that are standardised throughout the industry. In terms of cluster level change, diffusion occurs in a predetermined set of norms. In a sense the industry has already chosen the "right path" for the companies, and the "right way" of operating is predetermined for all tourism companies involved. However, within these predetermined norms, companies have a strategic choice in selecting their points of differentiation from other participants in the industry.

Dobson (2002:39) developed an alternative model with regard to the legal and professional regulations on the way the indigenous companies are structured. In this model the change and final "structuration" and form selection of indigenous companies describes a difference in outsourcing and the role of State Government in the outsourcing decision. This approach has been used and further developed to show the process of structuration across all indigenous tourism companies in Australia. As the framework indicates, from a macro perspective the initial trigger for change results in the setting of a uniform working platform that acts as a limit or a barrier to being different. This platform is a component of the technology provided. Thus the external structure is standardized and members of the tourism industry have no say in the scope and extent of the uptake of innovation. This is highlighted by an initial shift from fashion perspective to forced selection perspective. However, once the macro trace or the standardized technology is in place, companies actively seek to differentiate themselves. One way is to develop a cluster-like cooperative system where the companies offering indigenous tourism packages act as a go-between among the players in the industry by providing services at a lower cost. In the past such services had to be developed in-house at a high price by the brokerage houses.

These brokerage houses may be large tourism companies or companies dealing specifically with packages that are out-sourced. The inter-company cooperation and networking by companies offering indigenous tourism can later give rise to mutualism and a new paradigm of interaction among organizations. This is different from the competitive paradigm. This is often referred to as pooling of resources (Thompson 1967) where companies cooperate at the macro level in order to compete for a bigger share of their niche market. This paradigm is equivalent to the shift from a forced selection perspective to an efficient choice perspective as indicated by arrow number 2 in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Development of the model proposed by Dobson (2002).



The uptake of the innovation is based on an experimental short-term basis in which companies are not sure about the future of an innovation. Thus the uptake takes the form of the dotted arrow 2 in Figure 2 and could be said to be 'pushed' by the external agent/s. However infusion of innovation is not always a push mechanism because the way the industry is structured is not always a push down the chain of command which is adhered to by all the members. Rather, in some cases especially where IT is used, smaller companies can shift the balance of power to themselves and thus the players in the network change their role and strategy from a push to pull (McMaster et al. 1997).

In the case of indigenous tourism companies the evolution of a new business model can be traced as a primary move from "fashion perspective" to "forced selection perspective". At this stage the Commonwealth Government, through financial and managerial support and training of potential managers in the communities, set up layers of limit or normative boundaries where the initial modelling of business is based on a standardised prescription. However once the initiative starts, indigenous groups such as the ATA provide training and support for the communities whilst having in mind the unique cultural and regional and linguistic characteristics of those communities. Therefore the initial push to the "forced selection perspective" is later followed by a pull or a move to "efficient-choice perspective" as illustrated in Figure 2 above.

In 2004 the ATSIAC was disbanded by the Commonwealth Government of Australia and was replaced with the National Indigenous Council as an appointed advisory body to the Australian Government through the Ministerial Taskforce on Indigenous Affairs. The functions of this regulatory body are:

- To be the primary source of advice on Indigenous issues to the Minister for Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs;
- To coordinate and drive whole-of-government innovative policy development and service delivery across the Australian Government;
- To develop new ways of engaging directly with Indigenous Australians at the regional and local level, including through:
 - Regional Partnership Agreements (where there is local interest) to customise and shape Australian Government interventions in a region; and
 - Shared Responsibility Agreements at community/clan/family level;
- To broker relations with State and Territory Governments on Indigenous issues;
- To evaluate and report on the performance of government programs and services for Indigenous people to inform policy review and development
 - To communicate government policy directions to Indigenous people and the community generally; and
 - To manage a number of Indigenous programs.

As the functions indicate with the change in the sector authority, the

technological platform and the aim of the said body has not been any different from the previous body.

Currently, unlike the mainstream tourism companies' services, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island tourism services are intended to be enriched by indigenous culture, values, spiritual connection to the land and the people inhabiting the community. These cultural factors result in the promotion and development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' employment and training within all facets of the tourism industry and also ensure representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples on key industry bodies. At the same time continuous support from the indigenous bodies means that the Federal, State and Local Governments are pursuing a responsive strategy to accommodate the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples with domestic Australian and inbound tourism. The role of technology then is to facilitate the above processes and act as a catalyst for future community involvement in developing regional potential and promoting this potential worldwide.

Conclusion

This paper investigates the consequences and opportunities created as a result of IT infusion into global tourism development, from a specific institutionalist perspective. IT creates an environment where the old ways of operating no longer apply and new rules or norms have to be developed. These new rules and norms set the conditions within which tourist companies can operate and within which management can make strategic choices. The framework used examines the structure and governance mechanism of the industry by looking at the role of the Internet as a facilitator in learning, a unifier of practice, and as a tool to differentiate sector specific practices from more powerful competitors. It also acknowledges the social context (i.e. role of technology and change in the niche marketing) and the economic outcome of change where competition forces differentiation as a tool for survival. It is suggested that the IT infusion framework for the tourism development in the global market can be used by the industry leaders to actively shape the adaptive trajectory of their companies. These industry leaders can in turn define the way the industry is and should be. They provide blueprints for organizations by specifying the forms and procedures an organization of a particular type should adopt if it is to be seen as a

member-in-good-standing of its class.

References

- Anckar, B., & Walden, P. (2001). Introducing Web technology in a small peripheral hospitality organization. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 13(4/5), 241.
- Aboriginal Tourism Australia (ATA) - (2004a) About ATA Source visited on October 2004 at: <http://www.aboriginaltourism.com.au/about.asp?data=060801074D4C4F497557584C434D4C>
- Aboriginal Tourism Australia (ATA) - (2004b) About ATA Goals, Source visited on October 2004 at: <http://www.aboriginaltourism.com.au/about.asp?data=060801044D4C4F497557584C434D4C>
- Aboriginal Tourism Australia (ATA) - (2004c) About ATA Partnerships Source visited on October 2004 at: <http://www.aboriginaltourism.com.au/about.asp?data=0608010B4D010407050C4B7043545D4E4878555D44444F785158555C4542585B44197B5B42444F66445A594A5843>
- ATSIC (2003) Development of Indigenous tourism in Australia. Source visited on Oct 2004 at: http://www.atsic.gov.au/Programs/Industry_Strategies/tourism_industry_strategy/appendixc.asp
- Bloch, M., Pigneur, Y., & Steiner, T. (1996). The IT-enabled extended enterprise: applications in the tourism industry. Unpublished manuscript, Ecole des HEC- Universite de Lausanne Working Papers. Lausanne, France.
- Buhalis, D., & Licata, M. C. (2001). The future of eTourism intermediaries. *Tourism Management*, 23, 207-220.
- Buhalis, D., & Main, H. (1998). Information technology in peripheral small and medium hospitality enterprises: Strategic analysis and critical factors. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 10(5), 198-202.
- Burgess, L., Cooper, J., & Alcock, C. (2001). The Adoption of the Web as a Marketing Tool by Regional Tourism Associations (RTAs) in Australia, Coffs Harbour, NSW
- Dobson, P. J. (2002). Innovation Diffusion from a Structure/Agency Perspective. In D. Bunker, D. Wilson & S. R. Elliot (Eds.), *The Adoption and Diffusion of IT in an Environment of Critical Change - IFIP TC 8 International Working Conference on Diffusion, Adoption and Implementation of Information Technology*, 1st-3rd August 2002. (pp. 34-44). Sydney, Australia: Pearson Publishing services on behalf of International Federation of Information Processing (IFIP).
- Haveman, H. A. (1993). Follow the Leader: Mimetic Isomorphism and Entry into New Markets. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 38, 593-627.
- KBT (2004) Kimberley Board of Tourism and regional development. Site visited at: http://www.kimberley.wa.gov.au/index.cfm?menu=131&page=kdc_act_econ27
- McMaster, T., Vidgen, R. T., & Wastell, D. G. (1997). Technology transfer -- diffusion or translation? In T. McMaster, E. Mumford, E. B. Swanson, B. Warboys & D. Wastell (Eds.), (pp. 64-75). London: Chapman and Hall.

Infusion of the Internet and Indigenous..... Hosein Gharavi, Alfred Ogle, Patricia Berwick

NPWS (2004), About NPWS-The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services and the conservation of Australian Heritage. Site visited at: <http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/>

O'Brien, P. (1998). Electronic Commerce, The Internet and Travel Cybermediaries. Paper presented at the Australian Conference on Information Systems, Sydney.

OECD, (2002a), HOUSEHOLD Tourism Travel Trends: Environmental Impact and policy responses. Paris.

OECD, (2002b), Global Industrial Restructuring. Paris.

Rogers, E., M. (1983). Diffusion of Innovations (Third Edition). New York: The Free Press.

Scott, R. W., & Backman, E. V. (1990). Institutional Theory and the Medical Care Sector. In S. S. Mick (Ed.), (pp. 20-53). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Thompson, J. D. (1967). Organizations in Action: Social Science Bases of Administrative Theory. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Van Rekom, J., Teunissen, W., & Go, F. (1999). Improving the Position of Business Travel Agencies: Coping with the Information Challenge. *Information Technology & Tourism*, 2(1), 15-30.

Wober, K., & Gretzel, U. (2000). Tourism managers' adoption of marketing decision support systems. *Journal of Travel Research*, 39(2), 172.

About the Authors



Hosein Gharavi is PhD, Edith Cowan University; MBA, Edith Cowan University; BSc (Hons), London School of Economics. Gharavi's research interests are in Critical-longitudinal account of the manner by which mandated standardization in regulated sectors co-evolve with strategic choices of individual firms in sectors such as finance, banking, health, and education. Development and diffusion of Electronic Government initiatives in the Middle East.



Alfred Ogle is PhD, Edith Cowan University; MSc, Leicester University; BS, University of Houston; DipHM, Hotelconsult; CHE. Ogle's Research interests are in hotel guest-management interfacing, hotel product and service innovation, hospitality facilities management and design, and HRD and training in the hospitality industry.



Patricia Berwick is PhD, Canterbury University; MA, University of California, Davis; BA, University of Minnesota; Advanced Diploma of Teaching. Patricia Berwick's research interests are in Business Ethics, International Business Relationships, Miscommunication in research & business, Radio frequencies - the radio industry.