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Destination website quality, users' attitudes and the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences

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Abstract

Purpose – An official destination website (ODW) is a key component for tourist's decision-making processes. ODW acts as a direct channel where users may share experiences and opinions about previous or future travels. At the same time, it drives user participation in destination branding activities. In this context, it is crucial to identify how the destination website, using Web 2.0 technologies, could motivate user's participation with the brand. The purpose of this paper is to propose and evaluate a model that posits the destination website quality as a determinant factor to predict users' attitudes toward the website and their willingness to participate in co-creation experiences.

Design/methodology/approach – Using a combined qualitative and quantitative method, this paper provides an exploratory research that examines the role of destination website quality on attitudes toward the website and the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences.

Findings – Findings confirm that there is a direct and significant relationship between website quality, attitudes toward the website and willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences. Moreover, attitudes toward the website partially mediate relationships between destination website quality and willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences.

Originality/value – The literature of value co-creation is trying to identify which factors drive consumer's participation with brands across different consumption contexts. This study provides evidence that confirms, from a tourism destination website point of view, that website quality is one of these key factors that motives user's co-creation with a destination.

Keywords Co-creation, Attitude toward the website, Online co-creation experience, Tourism destination website, Website quality

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

According to the data provided by the ITB World Travel Trends Report 2015-2016 (IPK International, 2015), people, for the most part, search online for information about upcoming trips from three sources: tourist destination websites (35 percent), hotel websites (35 percent) and social networks (30 percent). The official destination website (ODW) has been positioned as a key source of information for tourists (Choi *et al.*, 2012). The technological capacities of modern information and communication systems, as well as the Web 2.0 platforms, have placed the tourist to become actively involved in the creation of the destination's brand (Oliveira and Panyik, 2015). These online users monitor contents, weigh in

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on the context and determine what is transmitted about a given destination (Yeoman and McMahon-Beatie, 2011). For the destination marketing organizations (DMOs), it is crucial to maintaining bilateral communication with online consumers. The natural experience of tourism and the quick development of online networks, together with a greater tendency to share information on behalf of the tourists, have generated a framework where one learns from the experiences of others when deciding on a destination (Volo, 2010). Tourist behavior in terms of creating, sharing, and disseminationg information has been analyzed by platforms such as travel websites (Yoo and Gretzel, 2008), blogs (Volo, 2010) or social networks (Munar, 2011; Oliveira and Panyik, 2015). Nevertheless, there is still a persistent need to look into the impact of contents created by tourists through e-Word of Mouth (e-WOM) (Pan *et al.*, 2007) and their participation in co-creation experiences (Mathis *et al.*, 2016).

Travel destination websites, despite being seen as a vital promotion tool (Choi *et al.*, 2007; Fernández-Cavia *et al.*, 2014) capable of originating virtual experiences that influence the user behavior and intention (Lee and Gretzel, 2012; Luna-Nevarez and Hyman, 2012), have not received enough attention as an analytical unit within the co-creation brand value paradigm.

This work, however, proposes the ODW as a pathway to generate brand value by means of online co-creation experiences. In such experiences, users participate in brand promotion (France *et al.*, 2015) by sharing information, ideas and experiences through the ODW in pursuit of image improvement and desirability toward potential tourists. In this regard, a comparative model of perceived website quality was developed for two competitor travel destinations: The Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands (Spain). The second part of the study examines the relationship between perceived website quality, attitude toward the website and the willingness to participate in the online co-creation experiences. This is achieved using structural proceedings.

Two main and specific objectives have been proposed: identifying the differences between perceived website quality of the destinations examined; and analyzing the role of the perceived destination website quality on attitude toward the website and the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences. By responding to the aforementioned objectives, this study seeks to identify actions that improve destination brand management through its official website.

Perceived destination website quality

In tourism, the importance of assessing destination websites has been pointed out (Luna-Nevarez and Hyman, 2012; Park and Gretzel, 2007) and the same holds true for hotels (Pranic *et al.*, 2014), travel reservation centers (Scharl *et al.*, 2004) and online travel agencies (Park *et al.*, 2007). The methods followed for website assessment have generally focused upon validating concepts such as the quality of the website (Bai *et al.*, 2008; Law and Bai, 2008; Loureiro, 2015; Fernández-Cavia *et al.*, 2014; Tang *et al.*, 2012; Tsang *et al.*, 2010), or the persuasiveness of the site (Kim and Fesenmaier, 2008). The concept of website quality arises from the need to adapt the classic conception of service quality and its modeling to SERVQUAL dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy) in those contexts where consumers interact to a greater extent with technological elements instead of directly with the service staff (Parasuraman and Grewal, 2000). Perceived website quality is defined as customers' overall opinion about excellence and preponderance of a website (Park *et al.*, 2007). Maintaining high levels of website quality facilitates influencing satisfaction levels and consumer fidelity, as well as inducing repurchase behavior, promoting e-WOM dissemination and generating benefits derived from online activities (Bai *et al.*, 2008).

In tourism, website assessment has proven that there are significant discrepancies in the criteria used to decide the best applicable measurement dimensions. Essentially, the

differences between each approach vary in two aspects: according to the analytical context of reference, and how each of the dimensions is defined and grouped. The initial contributions in the assessment of website quality arose from a qualitative meta-analysis by Park and Gretzel (2007). Said authors pose a series of dimensions based on the similarity in their conceptualization and measurement throughout 153 academic works, including studies about tourism. These authors conclude that the key dimension for the success of destination websites are: ease of use (accessibility and ability to seek out information); the responsiveness (quick and effectiveness to solve user problems); fulfillment (extent to which service and product promises are met); security/privacy (confidence in website security); personalization (adaptability to unique user characteristics); visuals (colors, images and font); the quality of the information (variety, consistency and degree to which website information is updated); trust (credibility of the offer and the brand as it appears on the website); and interactivity (elements that facilitate the interaction between the website and other users).

Most of the aforementioned dimensions have recurrently been used by other authors when validating the measurement scales for website quality and performance. Authors such as Tsang *et al.* (2010) and Park *et al.* (2007) used six of these nine dimensions (ease of use/functionality, responsiveness, trust, visual aspect, quality of information and fulfillment) to analyze the effect of website quality on the willingness to use online travel agent website. On the other hand, authors such as Bai *et al.* (2008) and Law and Bai (2008) proposed a model to measure website quality with the main constructs being functionality and usability; these dimensions are used by Park *et al.* (2007). In contrast, Dickinger and Stangl (2013) assessed the performance of a touristic website by using the usability, user-friendliness, enjoyment, design, confidence, content quality, navigation and availability of the system as the dimensions of reference.

These and later studies have failed to reach a consensus regarding the dimensions that allow the quality of a destination website to be measured. The study by Tang *et al.* (2012) uses several sub-dimensions for the analysis: web design (appearance, user-friendliness and functionality); and the quality of the information (relevance, usefulness and amount of information). From another perspective, Fernández-Cavia *et al.* (2014) and Fernández-Cavia and Castro (2015) formulate that the quality of the destination website could be measured using the Web Quality Index. Said index integrates a series of technical, formal and web content indicators, grouped into four categories: persuasive aspects (promotional discourse and travel reservation capacity), technical aspects (web architecture, usability and functionality), interactive aspects (web-based environment and interaction tools) and communication aspects (adaptability of the website to mobile systems and the languages offered).

More recently, Loureiro (2015) applied four dimensions when assessing website quality for a series of islands that are tourist destinations. The dimensions correspond to the visual appearance (level of creativity, multimedia tools and adequate use of colors, images and animation), quality of the information (truthfulness, attractiveness, relevance and degree of maintenance), ease of use (functionality, accessibility, consistency and search capacity) and interactivity (interactive elements and capacity for reservations or contact destination attractions and services). Table I provides a summary of the main studies in the field of website quality applied to tourism.

In this study, the website quality dimensions validated by Loureiro (2015) for tourist islands are used; a combined qualitative-quantitative combination is used to measure consumer perception. In this regard, the Park and Gretzel (2007) recommendations have been followed; these authors note that a significant portion of all research studies focusing on assessing websites in tourism only use the opinions of experts and predetermined indicators as a reference, instead of consumer opinions.

Authors (year)	Dimensions	Application
Park *et al.* (2007)	Ease of use, responsiveness, trust, visual aspect, quality of the information and fulfillment	Online travel agencies
Bai *et al.* (2008)	Functionality and usability	Travel reservation websites
Law and Bai (2008)	Functionality and usability	Travel reservation websites
Tsang *et al.* (2010)	Functionality, quality of the information and content, responsiveness, assurance, appearance and presentation and relationship with the client	Online travel agencies
Tang *et al.* (2012)	Web design and quality of the information	Destination websites
Dickinger and Stangl (2013)	Usability, user-friendliness, enjoyment, design, confidence, content quality, navigation and availability of the system	Tourist websites
Fernández-Cavia *et al.* (2014)	Persuasive aspects, technical, interactive and communicative	Destination websites
Loureiro (2015)	Visual aspects, quality of the information and content, ease of use and level of interactivity	Destination websites

Source: By authors

Table I. Dimensions for website quality

Co-creation experiences and destination branding

Authors Vargo and Lusch (2004) pointed out the importance of incorporating consumers throughout the phases of value generation; in marketing literature, the idea of consumers acting as value co-creators has reigned. The concept of co-creation emerged from the service-dominant (S-D) logic paradigm as a process whereby consumers influence their own service experiences (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo and Lusch, 2004). The co-creation activities include consumer participation by sharing information, ideas and opinions during the developmental, design, marketing phases as well as product and service consumption (Payne *et al.*, 2009). Consumers have evolved from playing a passive role (goods-dominant logic) to one of full interaction (S-D logic) between the relationship with companies and distribution systems.

The S-D logic paradigm encompasses the concept of the brand being part of the interaction between consumers, employees (Berry, 2000), the value in use (Grönroos, 2011) and the experience shared (Brakus *et al.*, 2009) is accepted. In this sense, brand is defined as a social process in which organizations, together with consumers and stakeholders, have added value through co-creation (Brodie *et al.*, 2009; Merz *et al.*, 2009). Following the model by Iglesias *et al.* (2013), the brand's co-creation of value occurs in communication spaces between companies and consumers. This covers what is known as points of contact, both online (websites and social networks) and offline (shops, product and visual identity) which are called "co-creation experiences" (Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009), or similarly, "experimental environments" (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). At these points of contact, the brand allows employees, stakeholders, brand communities and other consumers to create and share information as well as opinions about products making up the identity and perceptions that the brand will acquire on the market (Payne *et al.*, 2009). Authors Nabimsan and Baron (2007, 2009) sustain that the values of learning (cognitive benefits related to the knowledge a consumer has about a brand), social integration (feeling of belonging and identity in communities linked to the brand) and hedonistic (stimulation, motivation and pleasure derived from participating with the brand in creating products, information and services) motivate the consumer to participate with brands during the improvement processes and dissemination of a product online. The value of learning, social integration as well as hedonistic values are all part of the co-creation experience concept (Kohler *et al.*, 2011; Nabimsan and Baron, 2007, 2009),

defined as the consumer's mental state resulting from his/her participation in the co-creation process jointly with the brand.

In tourism, the online portrayal of consumers' travels is one of the best and most extensive sources of information available about experiences. (Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009). The concept of co-creation with the destination brand refers to the opportunity tourists have to create and share experiences and opinions about the destinations; this contributes to describing the brand/destination (Binkhorst and Dekker, 2009). It creates a specific image in the minds of tourists (Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier, 2008; Munar, 2011) and increases interest in visiting that location (Wang *et al.*, 2002). Furthermore, the contents that arise from co-creation establish a source of information that results more credible for consumers than official information (Leung *et al.*, 2013). Co-creation activities throughout the tourist experience could be analyzed before, during and after the visit phases (Buonincontri and Micera, 2016; Neuhofer *et al.*, 2012). In each one of these phases, tourists have the destination website available as a virtual experience. Thus, it helps tourists decide which destination to visit (pre-travel), consume or cultivate real-time information (at the destination) or share memories of the trip (post-travel).

Website quality, attitude toward the website and willingness to participate in online co-creation

Traditionally, co-creation experiences have been linked to consumer satisfaction. In tourism literature, the evidence shows a positive direct relation between co-creation experiences and the global experience of a trip (Mathis *et al.*, 2016; Shaw *et al.*, 2011). However, other studies confirm the moderator role of the co-creation experiences in the perception of value and satisfaction (Sirgy, 2010).

In the recent years, destination website quality has been considered to be significant stimulation in tourist intentions and attitudes. For example, Chung *et al.* (2015) confirm a positive relation between destination website quality, the intention of using the website and the intention of visiting the destination. If users perceive a high-quality destination website, they are able to experience emotions and feel an increased level of control and excitement. Said emotional and cognitive reactions on behalf of user affect their attitude toward the website, and as last resort, the attitudes influence positively in the intention of visiting and recommending the destination (Loureiro, 2015).

The perceived destination website quality has not yet been directly linked to the willingness to participate in the co-creation experiences. While in marketing literature there is evidence of a positive relation between the quality of the online service and users' online co-creation behaviors (Carlson and O'Cass, 2010; Elsharnouby and Mahrous, 2015; Sheng and Liu, 2010). Elsharnouby and Mahrous (2015) state that the seven components of the online service quality (e-SQ) directly and positively affect user attitudes and intentions to participate in online co-creation activities. Therefore, this paper proposes (see Figure 1):

H1. The perceived quality of the destination website has a positive effect on the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences.

Numerous marketing studies have analyzed the influence of different types of online consumer behavior components (Alcántara-Pilar and García, 2015, p. 380). Examples of website design include color, text, screen size or audiovisual elements present (Davis *et al.*, 2008) as well as the website's capacity to contribute importance to the user in terms of perceived usefulness and ease of manipulation (Alcántara-Pilar and García, 2015; Castañeda *et al.*, 2007). In this context, the attitude toward the website is defined as the tendency to react positively or negatively toward a website (Chen and Wells, 1999). Consumer attitudes are key factors when predicting their future intentions and purchase behaviors (Bruner and Kumar, 2005). Specifically, research has positively linked the dimensions for e-SQ to users' attitudes toward it (Carlson and O'Cass, 2010).

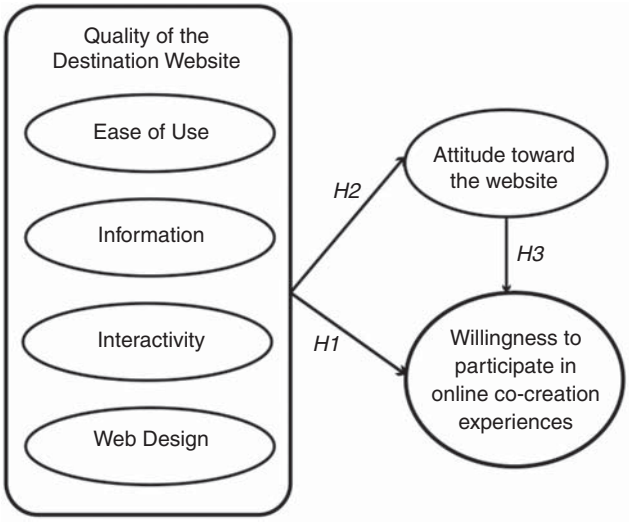


Figure 1.
Conceptual model

Likewise, the attitude toward the website positively influences the willingness to participate in the experience of destination online co-creation:

H2. The perceived destination website quality has a positive effect on the attitude toward the website.

H3. The attitude toward the destination website has a positive effect on the willingness of the user to participate in online co-creation experiences.

Methodology

This study adopts a mixed methodology design (Johnson *et al.*, 2007) with a qualitative-quantitative sequential exploratory focus (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011) having been adopted. First, a content analysis was performed regarding the presence or absence of characteristic elements of the perceived website quality for the official websites of both competitor travel destinations: the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands (Spain). The data were collected in July of 2016.

The starting point of this work has been the dimensions of the perceived website quality by Loureiro (2015) (ease of use, information, interactivity and web design) and the qualitative methodology developed by Luna-Nevarez and Hyman (2012) to analyze web quality. As did Luna-Nevarez and Hyman (2012), the analyzed unit is the first screen of the destination website. This main section must be visited by anyone accessing the destination website; it is also the area where the users' first impression is made, more specifically during the first 50 milliseconds of navigation (Lindgaard *et al.*, 2006). This first impression greatly affects the individual's global judgment of the website (Lim *et al.*, 2000).

For each dimension of website quality, it is noted whether there is a presence or absence of web elements and that, as a whole, allows visitor perception to be established (see Table II). Hereafter, each of the dimensions and categories are described:

(1) the visual design of the website includes these categories: website size (small – smaller than two screens with a 1,024 × 768 pixels of resolution, or big – equal or greater than two screens); website structure (balanced – with elements present on both the right and left side, or unbalanced – only one side); number of images (few – less than ten, or

Variable	Category
Visual design	
Size of pages	Small/large
Structure	Not balanced (left/right)/balanced
Number of images	Few images/lots of images
Videos	No videos on the website/videos on the website
Audios	There are no audios on the website/there are audios on the website
Sliders	There are no sliders/there are sliders
Ease of use	
Website map	There is no web map/there is a web map
Search tools	There is no search tool/there is a search tool
Change the language	Language cannot be changed/language can be changed
Type of scroll	Lack of long scroll/presence of long scroll
Menu categories	Few categories on the website/lots of categories
Information	
Presence of text	Few words/lots of words
Link to the website of each island	There are no links to the website of each island/there are links to the website of each island
Updated content	Outdated contents/updated contents
Interactivity	
Social media	No link to social media/links to social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)
Weather information	No weather information/weather information is provided
Calendar of events	No calendar of events/there is a calendar of events
Reserve accommodations or activities	There is no reservation platform/there is a reservation platform
Space for user participation	There are no interactive spaces/there are interactive spaces
Contact area	There is no contact/there is a contact area

Source: From Luna-Nevarez and Hyman (2012)

Table II. Variables and analytical categories

many – equal or greater than ten); and presence or absence of videos, animated images (sliders) or audios on the website;

(2) ease of use: presence or absence of searching tools, tabs to change languages, type of scroll downward or upward throughout the website and number of categories on the main menu (few – equal or lesser than five – and many – more than five);

(3) text and content information: this category includes the presence or absence of a section related to each of the islands as well as the total percentage of space occupied by words (few – equal or lesser than 25 percent of words or many – more than 25 percent); and

(4) interactivity: said section determines the existence of links to social networks, information about the weather at the destination, calendar of events, accommodation and activity reservation engine, interactive spaces for user participation and a contact section for suggestions.

Second, by means of an online survey, users' assessment of destination web quality, the attitude toward the web and the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences are obtained. To measure the perceived website quality, 16 items are divided into four dimension adapted to the scale developed by Loureiro (2015): ease of use (four items); information (four items); interactivity (three items); and website design (five items). The attitude toward the destination website is measured through three items based on Mazaheri *et al.* (2011). Following Elsharnouby and Mahrous (2015), the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences is measured using three items conditioned

to the destination website's content (Table IV offers a description of each item). The participants making up the sample are residents from Spain, most of them with university studies (89.69 percent) who were encouraged to randomly visit and experience one of the proposed destination websites from their computer. A total of 57.8 percent of the interviewees were woman and 42.2 percent men. Of the sample, 64.8 percent were within the 20-30-year-old range. The instructions include total freedom to focus on those sections of the website that were more attraction (Noort *et al.*, 2012) within a minimal navigation period of five minutes (Loureiro, 2015). In all, 135 surveys were valid.

Results

The analysis of both the Balearic Islands' and the Canary Islands' website contents have revealed: regarding the visual design, the Balearic Islands present a small website with a white background. The number of images is limited and there is no access to videos. The Canary Islands propose a large-sized website capable of completely covering the screen and a background with an island image. As regard to audiovisual elements, there are a number of accessible videos and images. One of the few aspects regarding visual dimension design that both websites coincide is the use of sliders, a series of changing images centered in the upper area, and also in the organization of contents in a balanced central position. When it comes to ease of use, the Canary Islands offer a reduced number of categories on the menu, although they incorporate a search tool and offer the possibility of choosing from among 14 languages. When navigating through the Canary Islands website, users encounter a long scroll to move upward and downward throughout the website. The Balearic Islands present a greater number of categories on the menu and an absence of long scroll; this allows the user to visualize the entire website on just one screen. The dimension referring to the text and content reflect the fact that the destinations do not use a great number of words on the home page. When it comes to the content being updated, there are significant differences. The Canary Islands maintain a current schedule of activities dated the same year as this analysis (2016), while the Balearic Islands present outdated information, from 2014, in the promotional section. Finally, in the interactive section, both destinations provide direct access to social networks and have created a contact area. However, the Canary Islands differ greatly from the Balearic Islands by including direct information about the weather of each island, estimated travel time from major European capitals to the destination and an interactive section where users leave messages in the sand as if they were on the beach.

Table III provides mean ratings obtained from the individual who has visited the website – the Balearic Islands vs the Canary Islands (the visited website is assigned randomly to each individual. Each interviewee only visits one website). First of all, the Canary Islands attained a much higher rating than the Balearic Islands in each dimension of the perceived website quality ($p < 0.05$ for ease of use; $p < 0.005$ for information; and $p = 0.000$ for interactivity and web design). The dimension with the highest average rating was ease of use (3.82) for the Balearic Island and web design (4.30) for the Canary Islands.

In contrast with the theoretical model, a partial least square structural equation model using software Smart PLS 3.2.4 was used, as was the method recommended by Chin *et al.* (2003) and Fornell and Bookstein (1982) for situations where theory is less developed, the researchers are using formative and reflective variables and when the primary objective of applying structural modeling is prediction and explanation of target constructs. The unidimensional constructs were verified by a confirmatory factorial analysis under the parameters of convergence and discriminant validation. Following the procedure by Loureiro (2015), destination website quality is conceptually incorporated as a second-order formation factor. In this sense, the modeling through PLS is useful since it focuses on searching an extensive number of variables manifested and formative factors (Chin *et al.*, 2003).

Table III. Results for the comparative assessment between destinations

Variables	Destination	n	Media[a]	Typical deviation	F	p
Ease of use	Balearic I.	70	3.82	0.81	0.197	0.047
	Canary I.	65	4.10	0.80		
Information	Balearic I.	70	3.78	0.71	0.309	0.003
	Canary I.	65	4.14	0.69		
Interactivity	Balearic I.	70	2.73	1.13	4.993	0.000
	Canary I.	65	3.83	0.86		
Web design	Balearic I.	70	3.15	0.95	2.470	0.000
	Canary I.	65	4.30	0.70		
Attitude toward website	Balearic I.	70	2.83	1.13	8.693	0.000
	Canary I.	65	4.21	0.81		
WPOCE	Balearic I.	70	2.87	0.96	5.137	0.000
	Canary I.	65	3.69	0.87		

Notes: WPOCE, willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences. [a]Scale from 1 to 5 (totally disagree to totally agree)

The results for reliability and validation of the constructs analyzed were favorable and greater than the reference value, 0.8 for CR (Nunnally, 1978), 0.7 for Cronbach's α (Hair *et al.*, 1998) and 0.5 for AVE (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) (Table IV). Likewise, it confirms the discriminating validation of the constructs analyzed (Table V).

The results of the model measured with standardized statistics are presented in Figure 2. Destination website quality offers a positive, direct and significant effect on the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences (*H1*: $\beta = 0.388$, $p < 0.001$), which confirms *H1*. *H2* and *H3* are also confirmed. A direct, positive and significant relationship between destination website quality and the attitude toward it has been obtained (*H2*: $\beta = 0.844$, $p < 0.001$) as well as the attitude toward the website and the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences (*H3*: $\beta = 0.494$, $p < 0.001$). Finally, the model also indicates that the attitude toward the website acts as a mediator variable between website quality and the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences (statistics from the Sobel test = 8.129) (Preacher and Leonardelli, 2001).

The model's goodness-of-fit measurement for the set of the endogenous focal constructs (attitude toward the website and willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences) provide a value of 0.75, which is acceptable regarding the limits (GoF = between 0 and 1) proposed by Henseler and Sarstedt (2013) and Tenenhaus *et al.* (2005). The importance and predictive capacity of the model are calculated through R^2 and Q^2 (Stone-Geisser's Q^2 criterion). Specifically, the R^2 parameter indicates that the constructs integrating the model explain 72 percent of the variance for the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences. On the other hand, the positive values of Q^2 in the attitude toward the website ($Q^2 = 0.653$) and the willingness to participate in co-creation experiences ($Q^2 = 0.490$) indicate the predictive importance of the links between the constructs (Fornell and Cha, 1994).

Discussion and conclusions

Upon reviewing the literature analyzed, the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences had not been previously proposed as a user response to the quality of the destination website. Starting with a website quality comparative model, the results indicate significant differences in the way that the Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands engineer their official websites. The authors' proposed model is able to confirm that the Canary Islands website obtained significantly greater assessments when compared to that of the Balearic Islands, and for all and each of the dimensions for perceived website quality.

Variables[a]	Mean (DT)	Li	AVE	α	CR
Ease of use			0.74	0.89	0.92
It is easy to navigate the website	4.00 (0.90)	0.87			
Once on the website, I can quickly find the sections I want to see	3.94 (0.96)	0.82			
The website has well-organized categories	3.96 (0.93)	0.88			
With a few clicks, I access what I want	3.92 (0.97)	0.88			
Information			0.67	0.83	0.89
Information can be accessed easily on the destination website	3.89 (0.95)	0.81			
The website provides sufficient information	4.02 (0.95)	0.78			
The information on the website seems useful	4.07 (0.81)	0.84			
The website is a good source of information about the destination	3.73 (0.80)	0.84			
Interactivity			0.76	0.84	0.90
The website allows me to see the content from other regarding the destination	3.16 (1.27)	0.91			
I can share my opinions and contact others on the website	3.10 (1.33)	0.93			
From the website, I have access to destination social networks	3.56 (1.34)	0.78			
Web design			0.76	0.91	0.94
The website is attractive	3.60 (1.32)	0.89			
The website is organized	3.88 (1.02)	0.78			
The website correctly uses multimedia contents	3.68 (1.08)	0.86			
The colors used on the website are appropriate	3.64 (1.20)	0.92			
The font used on the website seems correct	3.73 (1.20)	0.89			
Willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences			0.69	0.77	0.87
I am interested in requesting further information directly from the destination website	3.74 (1.10)	0.83			
The destination encourages me to participate by sharing content or information	3.02 (1.28)	0.88			
There is an elevated probability that I will share content or opinions on the website	3.03 (1.23)	0.78			
Attitude toward the destination website			0.92	0.96	0.97
The destination has a good website	3.47 (1.23)	0.96			
My reaction to the website is positive	3.61 (1.16)	0.97			
I like the destination website	3.48 (1.22)	0.92			

Notes: Li, load factor; AVE, average variance extracted; CR, composite reliability. [a]Scale from 1 to 5 (totally disagree to totally agree)

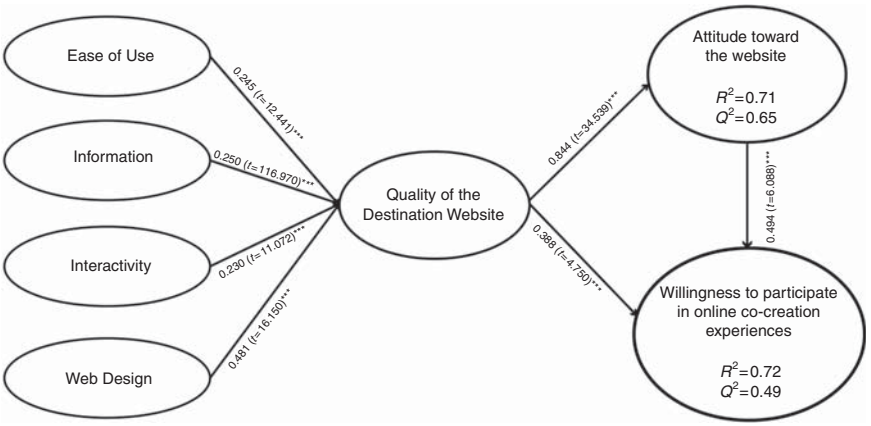
Table IV. Measure model: reliability and validity

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Attitude	*0.961*					
2. Web design	0.876	*0.871*				
3. Ease of use	0.502	0.587	*0.860*			
4. Information	0.582	0.627	0.614	*0.816*		
5. Interactivity	0.662	0.640	0.339	0.424	*0.875*	
5. WPOCE	0.822	0.794	0.490	0.556	0.708	*0.835*

Notes: WPOCE, willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences. The diagonal values represented in italic type correspond to the rotation of AVEs

Table V. Discriminate validity

These results are explained by the content analysis; the Canary Islands website provided users with a higher number of visual impacts (destination images, videos and larger sized web), with interactive areas (co-creation spaces to share travel photos taken at the destination) and updated contents. This evidence is in line with Kaplanidou and Vogt (2006) as it confirms that the visit to the destination website is significantly denoted by the visual aspects associated to colors, image, videos or even the font used. On the other hand, the



Notes: GoF=0.75. ***p<0.001

Figure 2.
Results of the relational model

Canary Islands website obtained higher average scores in the section for interactivity when compared to that of the Balearic Islands. Essentially, this is due to the fact that it has a platform where visitors can upload messages simulating that these are written in the sand, photos and travel testimonials. By comparison, the Balearic Islands only have one contact address and the direct access to social networks. These indications emphasize the importance of supporting website architecture with a high degree of user interactivity, as indicated by Míguez-González and Fernández-Cavia (2015) and Mohd-Any *et al.* (2015).

From the theoretical standpoint of this work, a relationship model between the constructs of perceived destination website, the attitude toward the website and the willingness to participate in online co-creation experiences can be verified. First of all, the dimensions for the perceived destination website construct are satisfactorily validated for measurement, coinciding with the results by Loureiro (2015). Participants in the study showed a keen interest interest in the design, in ease of use and the quality of the information offered on the websites. Second, this confirms that if a destination website has a perceived high quality, users show a more positive attitude toward the website, as well as greater willingness toward participating in online co-creation experiences. On the other hand, the attitude toward the website mediates, in a partial level, between destination website quality and the willingness toward participating in online co-creation experiences.

Implications for management

DMOs have the opportunity to use Web 2.0 platforms to establish relationships with potential and already loyal tourists. The destination website allows narratives from tourists to be collected, thus providing value as a source of information for decision making and travel planning. That said, to get users to actively participate in the generation of value for the destination brand, it is necessary to develop co-creation spaces that are able to motivate tourists and get them to participate. As indicated by the results, two tourist destinations that receive millions of visitors every year (Balearic Islands and the Canary Islands) have yet to implement relative, co-creation-based actions through their websites. In a context where it is essential to seek out differentiating elements between destinations, co-creation experiences present new challenges. Destinations' initial online co-creation strategies are in line with the proposal by the Canary Islands, which provides spaces on their website for tourists to upload their own travel photos. However, there are multiple options, such as the development of areas where locals and faithful tourists act as destination ambassadors by

sharing their itineraries and preferred locations. Management needs – to date unheard of – arise within these proposals. These correspond to those related to content moderation, created by the users. Thus, it would be necessary to protect the brand against possibly inappropriate messages or contents on the website that fail to grant value to users or that are detrimental to the destination image.

Limitations and future lines of research

It is essential to recognize that this work has a series of limitations that must be overcome in future research projects. First of all, the size and representativeness of the sample used needs to be expanded; the same holds true for the control environment, the duration and depth of participant navigation. Second, the measurement scale for the willingness to participate in co-creation experiences needs to be validated in a variety of contexts and scenarios for its conceptual acceptance, although it currently does provide adequate indicators for reliability as well as internal and external validity. Likewise, it is crucial that the work be expanded to apply theoretical models to other and divers tourist destinations. From the standpoint of content analysis, measuring a greater number of indicators per dimension for website quality would facilitate better discrimination of the differences between destinations. It would be enriching for future studies to include the various behavior response types of the virtual visitors in the model in such a way that the implications of online co-creation in the intention to visit could be measured, or even, if the websites receive a greater number of visits based on its ability to make visitors more participative. With more ample samples, it would also be interesting to analyze whether or not there are significant differences in online co-creation with the various destinations in terms of social-demographic variables, for example, gender, age or nationality, or other behavioral variables such as the users' preferred type of tourist offer.

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