

Designing for Experience-Based Tourism: A Virtual Tour in Tehran

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Abstract : As one of the most significant phenomena of industrialized societies, tourism plays a key role in encouraging regional developments and enhancing higher standards of living for local communities in particular. Traveling is a formative experience endowed with lessons on various aspects of life. It allows us learning how to enhance the social position as well as the social relationships. However, people forget the need to travel and gain first-hand experiences as they have to cope with the ever-increasing rate of stress created by the disorders and routines of the urban dwelling style. In this paper, various spaces of such experiences were explored through a virtual tour with two underlying aims: 1) encouraging, informing, and educating the community in terms of tourism development, and 2) introducing a temporary release from the routines. This study enjoyed a practical-qualitative research methodology, and the required data were collected through observation and using a multiple-response questionnaire. The participants (19-48 years old) included 41 citizens of both genders (63.4% male and 36.6% female) from two regions in Tehran, selected by cluster-probability sampling. The results led to development of a spatial design for a virtual tour experience in Tehran where different areas are explored to both raise people's awareness and educate them on their cultural heritage.

Keywords : ecotourism, education, gamification, social interaction, urban design, virtual tour

Conference Title : ICVTSVT 2017 : International Conference on Virtual Tourism, Simulation and Virtual Tours

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : July 20-21, 2017