

BUSINESS INNOVATION SYMPOSIUM (E6)

Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Investment: The Mesoscopic Perspective (2)

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FROM AVIATION TO SPACE TOURISM – CONSUMER ISSUE: A STUDY OF TOURIST ATTITUDE
TOWARDS THE SPACE TRAVEL AND INNOVATIVE SPACE TOURISM TECHNOLOGY IN CHINA
AND TAIWAN

Abstract

There are many issues to enhance from aviation tourism to suborbital space tourism: consumer attitude, tourists screening and training, space port facilities, suborbital reusable launch vehicles (SRLV), pilots, laws and regulations, marketing, insurance, operations, etc. The major purpose of this paper is to investigate the consumer issue. With increasing global competition in service sectors, innovative technologies have radically changed the tourism industry. To be successful, innovative products/services must have clear, significant points of difference that are related to the need in market place. Further, changes in consumer perceptions that emanate from an innovation are central to its effective product and service design. Space travel is in fact a future probability that will increasingly attract travelers who seek new vacation experiences, and as a result, sustain academic interest. Thus, in initiating space tourism for the purposes of recreation, leisure and knowledge enhancement, an estimation of potential global demand characteristics needs be undertaken parallel to promotion of research and development. This paper investigates both consumer attitudes towards space travel by analyzing the components of Motivated Consumer Innovativeness (MCI) and the interest that potential consumers have in developing space tourism technology innovations across China and Taiwan. The MCI is complex and comprised of four innovativeness components, social, functional, hedonic and cognitive. As product/service innovation development has been relatively unexplored in the mature industry of tourism, business managers would welcome an understanding of which vacation travelers are most likely to be the earliest buyers of such an exciting new product. With data collected from a sample of 500 (250 in each area), this research uses confirmatory factor analysis and mediated regression to examine the influence of the four components of MCI on consumer's attitudes and acceptance of a space tourism technology, and the mediating role perceived novelty plays in the relationship. The findings indicate that all components of innovativeness are associated with improved consumer attitude and that novelty mediates the relationship for those four components of MCI. There are significant differences in MCI and attitude toward space travel across countries. The MCI and attitude toward space travel are more salient in China than in Taiwan. The implications for theory and practice are discussed.