

Smart Tourism & Big Data Solutions

Talking Points

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UNWTO Tourism Tech Adventures
Big Data Solutions in Tourism

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HE Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili,
Secretary-General, World Tourism Organization
HE Mr. Zayed R. Alzayani,
Minister of Industry, Commerce & Tourism of Bahrain
Distinguished Guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

- I am very pleased to be here today among the elite and experts whose presence is dedicated to discuss the impact of Big Data in the ever-challenging sector of Tourism and I thank you for giving me the opportunity to address such a great audience and allowing me to learn from you; I have been passionate about the role of technology in developing the tourism sector for such a long time and I strongly believe that technology is the key for building knowledge –based societies in the world.
- I consider myself a Bahraini at heart. Our presence as TAG-Org here in Manama, in addition to my being personally continuously resident for more than half a century in Bahrain, contributed to the growth of our global businesses and various activities in education, Intellectual Property in addition to others and we owe it to the leadership of this great Kingdom HM Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and I thank His Majesty and his great father the late Sheikh Issa for their support and guidance.

- Allow me to thank HE Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili for his vision and dedication for building a better future through the use of technology.

Ladies and Gentlemen

- I am proud of being a Special Ambassador to this great organization and in addition to other UN positions such as a member of the United Nations Social Impact Fund High Level Advisory Board (UNSIF-HLAB) and Chair of CSU Honorary Council concerned with the UN SDG 11, I have been planning to benefit from the development in the ICT sector to serve the sustainability of the tourism sector as this crucial sector employs tenth of the working force and responsible for the tenth of the GDP in the developed countries.
- The industry of tourism thrives on information and Big Data is one of the most representative paradigms of the “knowledge economy”.
- Big Data is labeled as a key source of value creation that makes it possible to gain invaluable insights about customers' views, preferences, needs, attitudes, etc.
- Tourism big data has changed from expert’s views and surveys to information produced by travelers themselves.
- Big Data’s emergence is a common trend for all industries however, it becomes especially relevant for the tourism industry given its information-intensive nature and the reliance on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). I served on the United Nations Information and Communication Technologies Task Force and I have always stated that the power of ICTs is necessary to promote the development needed to deliver greater equality of opportunity for citizens in developing countries.
- From an information based view, tourism is a complex phenomenon in which data, information and knowledge, from and about tourists, is the essential basis for destinations’ competitiveness and innovations and how tourists play a substantive role as key source of knowledge.