Measuring tourists’ emotions

Dr. Ondrej Mitas
Lecturer, Tourism, NHTV
emotions are feelings

brief, intense reactions to specific things
complex (mind, body, behavior)
emotions are important

embody value in tourism, fuel memory, (re)purchase decisions, loyalty, reputation, health
emomission: a management decision
Which emotions do you want which customers to feel when?

emonalysis: research
Which emotions do which customers actually feel when?

emovention: design
Change the experience to match your goals

emotions are manageable
to design for your customers’ emotions, quality measurement is crucial
emotions are measurable
measuring emotions is useful and necessary
every method has strengths and limitations
Self-response questionnaires

• Ask customers how strongly they feel each emotion from a list (electronic or paper)

• Using emoticons also possible

• Quality of list/scale is crucial

• Very inaccurate if you ask for recall over a holiday; measure daily or more
Advantages of self-response questionnaires

• Simple, inexpensive, flexible
• Distinguish between different emotions well
• Can measure in context

Disadvantages

• Biased by thoughts and social desirability

Use when

• Mostly want to know “which” and “how much”?
• Need to balance budget against validity and reliability
US Civil War battlefield tour

Daily booklet questionnaires revealed emotion peaks and growth for specific emotions.
Narrative interviews

- Ask customers to tell the story of their holiday/service encounter one episode at a time

- Transcribe and code interviews for patterns

- Uncovers great detail in what emotion was felt and what triggered it
• Advantages of narrative interviews
  • Extremely detailed emotion definition
  • Explains personal meanings, how, why
  • Surprising/unexpected findings

• Disadvantages
  • Out of context, can be severely biased by recall

• **Use when**
  • Your questions are “which” and “why” not “how much”
  • Specific kinds of experiences are important; not representing all your customers
Happiness compass

CELTH and Land van ANWB uncovered processes that create moments of happiness on day trips
Facial coding

• Record customers in context
• Code which emotions they feel when based on movement of muscles in face
• Gives an objective view of which emotions are expressed, also if they are brief or unconscious
• Advantages of facial coding
  • Quite objective
  • Records customers in context

• Disadvantages
  • May be biased by culture or hidden emotions

• **Use when**
  • Reducing bias is worth the extra cost
  • Good visual data are easy to get
  • Emotions you are interested show up in your customers’ faces
Neuromarketing

• Measure customers’ bodily reactions to marketing materials or the experience itself

• Analyze signals from the body for signs of emotion

• The most immediate, objective, and accurate measurement that someone feels something
• **Advantages**
  
  • Very objective
  
  • Emotions show up immediately/as they happen

• **Disadvantages**
  
  • More is possible in a lab than in context/mobile
  
  • Not good at distinguishing between different emotions

• **Use when**
  
  • Reducing bias and seeing instant reactions are worth the extra cost
  
  • Comparing effectiveness of potential marketing campaigns
Film *In Bruges* as a source of positive destination image for Brugge

A short clip from *In Bruges* predicted stronger emotional reaction to photos of Brugge than a similar, unrelated clip.
looking forward to hearing about your customers’ emotions