

# Tourism: A Modern Synthesis

**Stephen J. Page and Joanne Connell**

**(2nd edn, Thomson Learning, London; 2006; ISBN: 1-84480-198-5; 546 pp; softbound; £34.99)**

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The revised and updated edition of *Tourism: A Modern Synthesis*, this time by Page and Connell, forms an improvement over an already established, high-standard book. Like its predecessor, it covers a variety of thematic areas in tourism and hospitality, and builds a solid knowledge base of the workings of the industry. The title remains apposite, as the book synthesises from a variety of fields to form a good initial appreciation of tourism as a business, but also its interrelationships with wider contemporary issues. Perhaps 'standard' chapters on tourism demand and supply, management, marketing, finance, intermediaries, impacts, etc are enhanced with latest (within reason) theory and case studies. The new edition also includes topical concerns such as the impact of terrorism, epidemics and natural disasters, and covers developments in the low-cost airline sector, online travel, etc. Although written primarily from a UK perspective, the book is supported by international examples. Particularly welcome is the newly added historical overview of the development of tourism, which creates an interest in the subject and serves to contextualise the subsequent discussions.

Equally, the design of the book is commendable. While it is the content and not the packaging that counts, the layout reveals an overall approach towards fostering deep learning. The attractive 'insight boxes', figures and tables contain information that complements the main body of text and help readers to exercise their critical ability and understand the links between different chapters and conceptual

areas. In this light, the book is predominantly targeted at undergraduate students on tourism and hospitality-related courses. As such, it includes fundamental information that builds a bottom-up understanding of the topic. The glossary that forms part of most chapters is a useful source of additional information, while the writing style is accessible by UK and international students alike. However, the book has a lot to offer postgraduate students as well: certainly as a comprehensive reference point, but also as a source of a surprising amount of theoretical knowledge and suggestions for in-depth reading. To top things up, the book is linked to a companion website where students and lecturers can trace further material such as case studies, internet links and PowerPoint slides.

Although the above are welcome features employed skilfully, they are by no means novel or unique. Indeed, in the competitive arena of educational tourism texts, one finds many similarities in the layout, choice of material and add-on services between different publications. This book is therefore positioned against 'classics' such as Cooper *et al.*'s *Tourism: Principles and Practice* and Holloway's *The Business of Tourism*, as well as recent entrants such as Beech and Chadwick's *The Business of Tourism Management* and Weaver and Lawton's *Tourism Management*. The differences between these texts are often marginal and in some cases dependent on the publication date, as some chapters inevitably become dated soon after being produced, given the tourism industry's ever-changing



configurations. However, building on the strengths of the already high-quality first edition, Page and Connell have made a notable contribution to the literature that promises to remain relevant for many years to come. The educational design and content will be deemed intuitive and very useful by students and the text would probably be adopted by lecturers at least as recommended, if not core, reading on many tourism and hospitality courses. Overall,

this is a very successful key textbook that sets a benchmark for similar future efforts.

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