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Conceptualising customer-to-customer co-creation in socially dense tourism contexts

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Title

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For Peer Review

Introduction

Tourism consumption often takes place in socially dense, experiential settings, such as guided tours, cruise holidays or events and festivals. Tourists come together to spend time with significant others and to meet other tourists (Brown *et al.*, 2002; Huang and Hsu, 2010; Packer and Ballantyne, 2011; Prebensen and Foss, 2011). In the course of their social experiences tourists bond, cement social relationships, and enhance their social skills (Arnould and Price, 1993; Wilks, 2009); thus co-creating 'value'. Nonetheless, not much is known about what this value is and how it is co-created in socially dense tourism contexts. A small number of tourism marketing studies explore the concept of value co-creation (e.g., Binkhorst and Den Dekker, 2009; Sfandla and Björk, in press). These studies are, however, limited to co-creation of value between the tourism organisation and the tourist. More in-depth insights are needed that would acknowledge the ability of tourists to co-create value with each other, as opposed to with the organisation.

Looking at more closely at the notion of value, tourism marketing literature is dominated by the outcome oriented 'features-and-benefits' value perspective. This approach focuses on how the tourism provider can design and deliver value or valuable experience through service attributes, so that it is perceived by tourists as benefits. This does not, however, sufficiently acknowledge the active role of tourists as value co-creators. Recently, a move toward the 'value-in-' perspective is evidenced in tourism marketing research, building on the concept of the service-dominant [S-D] logic in marketing (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; 2008). A number of scholars present S-D logic as a new paradigm that offers interesting opportunities for tourism marketing research, and the study of value co-creation in particular (Li and Petrick, 2008; Sfandla and Björk, in press; Shaw *et al.*, 2011).

This conceptual paper aims to contribute theoretically in tourism marketing research and specifically to the study of value and co-creation in three ways. Firstly, the paper argues that the principles of S-D logic do not go far enough in acknowledging the complexities inherent in socially dense tourism settings, and puts forward the recently emerged Customer-Dominant [C-D] logic (Heinonen *et al.*, 2010) in marketing as an alternative orientation. Secondly, this paper engages in a debate of the paradigmatic and epistemological foundations of the experience- vs. practice-based value perspectives in C-D logic, in order to build a robust theoretical basis for C2C co-creation research in tourism. Finally, a conceptual framework is posited that conceptualises C2C co-creation in socially dense tourism contexts. This is done by presenting value as a complex, multi-layered construct that takes into account

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3 the social structures inherent in many tourism consumption setting. The framework not only
4 represents a new theoretical contribution within value and co-creation research in tourism
5 marketing, but also offers a novel methodological and epistemological basis for future C2C
6 co-creation studies in a variety of shared tourism experience contexts.
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10 11 12 **Value perspectives in tourism research** 13

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15 The notion of 'value' is central in the context of this conceptual paper. However, within
16 marketing and consumer research the term is rather ambiguous (Woodall, 2003). Before
17 proceeding to discuss C2C co-creation in socially dense tourism contexts, two perspectives
18 on value are critically reviewed that appear in consumer and marketing research, and tourism
19 marketing literature specifically: The more traditional *'features-and-benefits' approach* as an
20 outcome-oriented value ontology grounded within a positivist paradigm (Tronvoll *et al.*,
21 2011); and, the *'value-in-' perspective* that primarily draws on the principles of S-D logic and
22 corresponds with a more reflexive, interpretive paradigm that can increasingly be found in
23 tourism experience research (Arnould and Price, 1993; Ryan, 2002; Uriely, 2005).
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33 ***Delivering value for customers: the 'features-and-benefits' approach*** 34

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36 In consumer research 'value' is mostly viewed as customers' personal evaluation of the trade-
37 offs between the benefits they receive and the sacrifices they make (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1988).
38 More recently, 'customer-perceived value' (Kotler *et al.*, 2009) or 'value for the customer'
39 (Woodall, 2003) is conceptualised as judgment perception of the potential economic,
40 functional and psychological benefits customers attribute to, or expect to receive from, the
41 marketer's offering (Kotler *et al.*, 2009; Woodall, 2003). Approaching value from a
42 rationalist, cognitivist perspective, researchers are concerned with how customers
43 (sub)consciously evaluate, assess, reason about, judge, and balance against the value of
44 something, allowing for calculated predictions to be made as to customers' purchase and
45 consumption choices. In contrast to the cognitivist approach, the 'experience economy' (Pine
46 and Gilmore, 1999) moves toward the more symbolic, emotional aspects of consumption.
47 The focus is on experiences as a vehicle for delivering positive customer value.
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56 Both the cognitivist and the experience economy approach are predominantly oriented
57 at value as service attributes or experiential features that realise some positive outcomes or
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3 benefits for customers. For instance, researchers aim to pinpoint specific types of value
4 (value outcomes) that tourists expect to derive from their experiences (Turnbull, 2009). In a
5 similar way, tourists' needs and motivations are studied as an indicator of value sought (e.g.,
6 Pegg and Patterson, 2010), with findings used to aid tourism marketers' decisions regarding
7 effective design and delivery of 'memorable' service experiences (Oh *et al.*, 2007).
8 Alternatively, tourists' 'quality experiences' are scrutinised as an important mediator between
9 service performance factors, tourists' overall service/ experience satisfaction, and their future
10 behaviour intentions (Cole and Chancellor, 2009). Outcome-oriented measures, such as the
11 expectancy disconfirmation approach, are adopted in service evaluation studies, with authors
12 measuring tourists' perceptions of service quality (Baker and Crompton, 2000; Thrane,
13 2002).

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Ontologically, the features-and-benefits value perspective distinguishes clearly between
the subject (the tourist) and the object of consumption (the tourism service experience), with
researchers focusing predominantly on how the subject perceives and evaluates the object.
While such approach can lead directly to operationalisable solutions for tourism
organisations, it assumes that the organisation acts as a 'producer' or 'enabler' of tourists'
value outcomes. It promotes value creation *for* the tourist, who passively and uncritically
accepts the organisation's offering at its 'face value'. Yet, as some authors (Goulding and
Shankar, 2011; Kim and Jamal, 2007) point out, tourists often look for more authentic ways
in which to construct and manifest their experiences. For Selby (2004, p. 191), tourists are
'dynamic social actors, interpreting and embodying experiences, whilst also creating meaning
and new realities through their actions'.

Moreover, the features-and-benefits approach becomes problematic when considering
tourists' social experiences, particularly at festivals. Festival experiences arise from
'extraordinary', non-routine social occasions set apart from every-day life (Getz, 2007). They
have a dynamic, socially dense, and interaction-rich nature. They involve a range of rituals
laden with emotion, creativity and imagination, participation in which can lead to the
emergence of temporary shared social structures and communities (Kim and Jamal, 2007;
Larsen and O'Reilly, 2005; Mackellar, 2009; Morgan, 2007; Wilks, 2009). Value creation in
such circumstances often takes place purely in the customers' sphere, without much regard
for marketer-provided service features (Grönroos, 2011; Heinonen *et al.*, 2010).
Consequently, aiming to objectively determine and design value or valuable experiences so
that through various attributes they realise benefits to tourists can represent a somewhat

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3 prescriptive, reductionist paradigm. Tourism marketers benefit from more holistic value
4 perspectives that not only recognise the autonomous role of tourists as value creators, but also
5 address the complex and dynamic nature of experiences in socially dense tourism contexts.
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10 11 *Co-creating value with customers: the 'value-in-' perspective*

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13 The above critique of the features-and-benefits perspective builds on conceptualisation of
14 value and re-definition of the relationship between the provider and customers as proposed
15 within the S-D logic in marketing. Introduced by Vargo and Lusch in 2004,
16 S-D logic focuses on customers' role in co-creating value and valuable experiences with the
17 service organisation. Vargo and Lusch (2004) argue that by viewing value as attributes that
18 are embedded in a service and can be 'exchanged' to realise benefits for the customer
19 marketers subscribe to a static, outcome-oriented *goods-dominant logic*. Instead, in the
20 increasingly dynamic, process-oriented context of experiences marketer's role is limited to
21 offering 'value propositions' to customers (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). Co-creation in S-D logic
22 is viewed as a joint value-realising process that occurs as the organisation and its customers
23 interact (Payne *et al.*, 2008). 'Value-in-use' (Vargo and Lusch, 2004) or '-in-context' (Vargo
24 and Lusch, 2008) emerges as a dynamic, situational, meaning-laden, and phenomenological
25 construct when customers use, experience, or customise marketers' value propositions in
26 their own experience contexts.
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37 In S-D logic the process of value co-creation involves all social and economic actors
38 drawing on and integrating various 'operand' (tangible resources that can be allocated or
39 acted upon) and 'operant' resources (those that act on other resources and over which the
40 actors has 'authoritative' capability) (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). In tourism marketing research
41 the resource-integrating approach is adopted to explore how tourists cooperate with others to
42 achieve some goal, in this case the creation of positive value or positive experiences. This
43 approach is applied in the context of group co-creation in physical tourism contexts, such as
44 white-water rafting (Arnould and Price, 1993). It is noted that co-operation, participation in,
45 and identification with group goals play an important role in co-creating positive outcomes
46 for the individual group members, but also in co-creating shared value for the group
47 (Finsterwalder and Tuzovic, 2010). Tourists' co-creation in virtual contexts is also explored
48 using the resource-integrating approach (Binkhorst and Den Dekker, 2009; van Limburg,
49 2009).
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3 From tourism organisation's perspective, tourists who adopt participatory and active
4 co-creation roles are viewed as particularly useful. While contributing to a better service
5 experience for other tourists, these individuals are more likely to be satisfied with their own
6 experiences, and consequently become loyal to the organisation (Bendapudi and Leone,
7 2003; Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2004). As a result, interacting and resource integrating
8 tourists can become a source of innovation for the service organisation through their own
9 value co-creation (van Limburg, 2009). Tourists-producers who co-create value for other
10 tourists become essentially an operant resource from which the organisation can learn and
11 develop their offering. The boundaries of the tourist's 'consuming' role become blurred in
12 reaching toward a more 'productive' role, even adding value to the tourism organisation's
13 offering though their immaterial labour (Cova and Dalli, 2009).

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22 The strong focus of the resource-based approach in S-D logic on tourists' work-like
23 activities is criticised by some as too mechanistic (Korkman, 2006). It assumes that value is
24 embedded in activities carried out by the customer who is *always* a co-creator of value, not
25 only for him/herself, but also for the organisation as well as other customers. This, however,
26 may not be the case; as a small number of authors (Harris and Reynolds, 2003; McColl-
27 Kennedy and Tombs, 2011) point out, in some customers can in fact through their co-creation
28 socially dense settings diminish value for other customers. These studies view value creation
29 through customer wellbeing outcomes as "the enhancement of customer benefits" (McColl-
30 Kennedy and Tombs, 2011, p. 4), thus veering toward the features-and-benefits value
31 perspective. Nonetheless, the authors rightly ask whether value is or is not always co-created
32 in the course tourists' resource-integration, and for whom it is in fact co-created. For
33 instance, co-creation does not necessarily result in the emergence of *service-related value*
34 where customers are not interested or involved in the company's value offering (Grönroos,
35 2008).

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46 A small number of researchers based around the Nordic School of Services criticise the
47 resource-based view, and S-D logic in general, as too provider-oriented (Grönroos and
48 Voima, 2011; Heinonen *et al.*, 2010; Voima *et al.*, 2010). Introducing the term *customer-*
49 *dominant (C-D) logic* to reflect a truly customer-centric focus, these authors argue that rather
50 than treating their customers as partial workers or partners in co-creation and co-production
51 (a B2C co-creation focus), service organisations should strive to find out of what customers
52 actually do with the service to accomplish their own goals. Marketing researchers would
53 therefore benefit from a more 'holistic understanding of customers' lives, *practices and*
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3 *experiences*, in which service is naturally and inevitably embedded' (Heinonen *et al.*, 2010, p.
4 533 emphasis added). Consequently, such contextual enquiry into tourists' co-creation sphere
5 could be converted into specific ways for tourism organisations to support and participate in
6 tourists' co-creation (Grönroos and Voima, 2011).
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10 It is therefore argued here that C-D logic offers a more suitable basis for C2C co-
11 creation study, as it allows for focused enquiry into the social context in which tourists co-
12 create. It represents a move away from the participatory, work-like value co-creating role of
13 tourists in the organisation's experience delivery activities, on to co-creation that takes place
14 exclusively in the tourists' sphere, without the organisation's direct control (Grönroos and
15 Voima, 2011). To further elaborate on how the C-D logic in marketing could contribute
16 theoretically in the context of C2C co-creation research, the following section looks in detail
17 at two perspectives through which C2C co-creation is studied in socially dense tourism
18 contexts: the experiential perspective and the practice-based approach.
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28 **Illuminating customer co-creation: social experiences and practices in tourism contexts**

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30 The C-D logic in marketing suggests that in order to remain competitive in a volatile
31 marketplace, organisations should focus solely on the customer (Heinonen *et al.*, 2010). In
32 this vein, C-D logic emphasises customers' experiences and practices, in which the service
33 offering often plays a relatively small part. Nevertheless, there is still little clarity around the
34 differences between the ontological and epistemological assumptions inherent in C-D logic's
35 perspectives on co-creation (Helkkula and Kelleher, 2011). Paradigmatic foundations of
36 value creation through social experiences and practices are therefore critically discussed.
37 Finally, a C2C co-creation framework is proposed, to help form a holistic epistemological
38 and methodological basis for the study of how and where value is co-created by tourists in
39 socially dense contexts.
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50 ***Co-creating subjective value through social experiences***

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52 Holbrook (1999, p. 9 emphasis in original) views value as something that 'resides *not* in the
53 product purchased, *not* in the brand chosen, *not* in the object possessed, but *rather* in the
54 *consumption experience(s)* derived therefrom'. This notion is inherent in Vargo and Lusch's
55 (2008) highly subjective, idiosyncratic, and phenomenological value-in-use, and expanded
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3 on within C-D logic as ‘value-in-the-experience’ (Helkkula *et al.*, 2012). Building on
4 Husserl’s ([1936] 1970) phenomenology and the concept of lived experiences, the value-in-
5 the-experience perspective views as data customers’ mental processes and highly personal
6 interpretations of value that emerge from these experiences (Helkkula and Kelleher, 2011;
7 Helkkula *et al.*, 2012). Unlike the notion of experiences as value outcomes that add value to
8 the organisation’s service offering (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), the phenomenological view of
9 value assumes that only the tourist himself or herself can make sense of his or her internal,
10 subjective experiences.
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17 This approach is in line with the experiential-phenomenological orientation adopted in
18 tourism experience studies (Arnould and Price, 1993; Ryan, 2002). In order to better reflect
19 the subjective nature of tourism experiences and the meanings attached to them, authors
20 explore them as ‘extraordinary’ or ‘flow’ experiences (Getz, 2007; Morgan, 2007). Based on
21 the psychological study of individuals’ autotelic activities such as art making, rock climbing,
22 or dancing, Csikszentmihalyi (1997) conceptualises flow as a (positive) state of ‘wholeness’,
23 complete involvement and total immersion/ absorption. Csikszentmihalyi (1997) and other
24 authors (e.g., Walker, 2010) note that flow occurs when individuals interact with each other.
25 (Social) flow is often presented as the ‘ideal state’ through which interacting tourists realise
26 value in the form of positive emotional outcomes (Arnould and Price, 1993).
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34 As a result, parallels can be drawn between (social) flow theory and the resource-based
35 perspective on co-creation in S-D logic. Balancing tourists’ personal antecedents (skills) and
36 the experiential conditions (challenges) in order to achieve positive psychological outcomes
37 for individuals is very much in line with S-D logic’s focus on resource configurations.
38 Tourists co-create value by integrating their personal skills (operant resources) with the
39 challenges (operand resources) posed by the service setting (including the social aspects of
40 that setting in the sense of C2C interactions). Flow results in positive emotional states, while
41 value creation is viewed, on a general level, as a process which increases the customer’s well-
42 being in some way (Vargo and Lusch, 2008). Nevertheless, adoption of a phenomenological
43 ‘value-in-the-flow’ theory could lead researchers to focus too much on the inputs (resources/
44 skills) and outcomes (positive emotions/ positive value), resulting in somewhat simplified,
45 bipolar, and dichotomous representations of the value construct.
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54 An additional limitation of the experiential approach within C-D logic lies in its
55 epistemological assumptions. Individual’s inner mental processes and subjective sense
56 making may not be evidence of what actually ‘happened’ in social contexts (Löbner, 2011),
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3 and therefore, purely phenomenological representations in value enquiry can only partially
4 illuminate C2C co-creation. For instance, festival tourists' narratives of the subjective
5 meanings they associate with extraordinary, emotional experiences may not reflect value
6 creation in the more mundane social practices of dinner sharing or camping (Begg, 2011).
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8 Marketers would benefit from more holistic approaches that would also allow for exploration
9 of the more mundane and routine social practices, as these are also embedded with value
10 (Helkkula and Kelleher, 2011; Holt, 1995; Holttinen, 2010; Korkman, 2006; Schatzki, 2001).
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12 Thus, the notions of flow and purely subjective value perceptions offer a somewhat limited
13 epistemological basis. An alternative, more holistic focus on the inter- and intra-subjective
14 and socially constructed nature of value as represented in the practice-theoretical is needed.
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23 ***Social practices and co-creation of socially constructed value***

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25 Consumption of tourism experiences takes place in socially dense environments and as such,
26 is often shared and collective (Brown *et al.*, 2002). While subjective perceptions may vary,
27 social consensus among the majority will shape the development of how individuals
28 communicate and understand what is valuable (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011). Consequently, value
29 assessments become more than individual and subjective. A number of authors therefore
30 draw on social construction theories (Berger and Luckmann, 1967), to help shift emphasis
31 away from customers' subjective perceptions and to focus on value that is socially
32 constructed within various consumption contexts (Helkkula and Kelleher, 2011; Holt, 1995;
33 Korkman, 2006; Warde, 2005).
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41 Social constructionists (e.g., Berger and Luckmann, 1967) believe that knowledge and
42 meaning are created, realised and reproduced by social actors in an inter- and intra-subjective
43 manner. By extension, value must also be understood on an inter-subjective (mutual) and
44 intra-subjective (shared) level (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011; Voima *et al.*, 2010). Co-creation as a
45 phenomenon embedded in the social world can then be understood by interpreting shared
46 social structures (i.e. norms, rule and role structures), and their interaction and reproduction
47 by individuals (Edvardsson *et al.*, 2011). Conversely, however, it is difficult to get away
48 completely from the individual. While the shared, collective social forces are dominant, the
49 needs, preferences, and habits of individuals still play a part in value co-creation and
50 assessment.
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3 To reconcile the conflict implied in the last point, researchers can draw on the notion of
4 *social practices*. As Schatzki (1996, p. 13) notes, ‘both social order and individuality [...] result from practices’. Practices are not simply bodily actions or behaviours in sociological
6 sense. Rather, they are ‘ways of doing’, or contexts in which these bodily actions, tasks and
7 behaviours that the practice requires are carried out (Schatzki, 2001). In C-D-related research
9 social practices are viewed as a ‘context-laden arena for value creation’ (Holttinen, 2010,
10 p.102). The tourist as subject, the object of consumption, and the context in which value is
11 co-created, are no longer separate entities. Instead, practices combine these elements in an
12 assemblage of images (mental states, meanings, symbols), tools/skills (resources, ‘know-
13 how’, previous experience), and the physical space (consumption context), performed
14 through actors’ routine-like bodily actions (Korkman, 2006; Warde, 2005). Tourists actively
15 use their skills and know-how to negotiate various practices. At the same time, however, they
16 are mere carriers of social practices, performing the various acts and tasks that the practice
17 requires.

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27 Korkman (2006) argues that by identifying and understanding in depth the anatomy of
28 tourists’ value-creating practices performed in specific consumption contexts organisations
29 can enhance tourists’ value through positive interventions. This can be done by facilitating
30 and supporting existing value practices, reducing those practices that are not as attractive to
31 carry out, or creating new practices by transferring them from other, similar contexts. Instead
32 of ‘exploiting’ tourists’ competences (operant resources) as in the resource-integrating view,
33 knowledge of their social practices allows organisations to ‘grow’ and enhance tourists’ co-
34 creation capability. As such, the practice-based view on value co-creation presents a
35 perspective that could reveal useful theoretical and practical insights. The following section
36 therefore looks more closely at social practices in socially dense tourism settings, and begins
37 to relate them to value and C2C co-creation in the proposed conceptual framework.

48 *Using practices to explore C2C co-creation: conceptual framework*

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51 There are some examples of the application of practice theory in consumer research, and to a
52 lesser extent, in tourism. For instance, observing social interactions among baseball
53 spectators, Holt (1995) identifies through observation a number of consumption practices
54 through which customers co-create value, including playing through communing and
55 socialising. In his doctoral thesis focusing on family consumption practices in a leisure cruise
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3 setting Korkman (2006) identifies a total of 21 social practices. He categorises these
4 according to actors who carry out these practices (i.e. family/ parents/ child), emphasising
5 ethnography and situated observation as essential for embodied understanding of practices.
6 Rantala's (2010) account of tourist-guide practices observed during forest tours is particularly
7 useful in highlighting the importance of the context, both physical and symbolic, in
8 understanding how practices are enacted.
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13 Unlike the studies outlined above, this paper does not aim to identify the co-creation
14 practices of tourists in specific socially dense contexts, but rather, to emphasise the dynamic,
15 multi-dimensional and contextual nature of C2C co-creation. To this end, it is important to
16 understand the nature of the tourism setting; not simply its physical or service aspects, but
17 rather, its socially constructed elements. Drawing on Turner's (1982) work, Cohen (1988) and
18 other authors (MacCannell, 1976; Ryan, 2002) conceptualise tourism experiences as a
19 *liminoid* phenomenon. Tourists separate themselves from their everyday lives into "socially
20 sanctioned periods of play and relaxation" (Ryan, 2002, p. 4). Upon return, tourists are re-
21 integrated back into their ordinary environments, the reversion often accompanied by a sense
22 of change, transformation, or even feelings of loss (Getz, 2007). This three-stage ritual
23 process (Turner, 1995) is reflected in the conceptual framework presented below (Figure 1).
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33 The framework represents an alternative, holistic approach to study of C2C co-creation
34 through situated value-creating social practices of tourists. Going beyond the more traditional
35 features-and-benefits value approach, as well as the phenomenologically determined
36 experiential value-in- perspective, the framework highlights the importance of understanding
37 and supporting tourists' C2C co-creation practices, focussing particularly on the 'liminoid
38 stage' of tourism experiences. Tourists' on-going co-creation practices are depicted on the
39 left hand side. *Value-in-social-practice* (Holttinen, 2010) emerges not as a subjectively
40 determined outcome of individual tourists' co-creation, but rather, as an inter- and intra-
41 subjective construct that reflects the context-specific nature of C2C co-creation in socially
42 dense tourism settings. The role of tourism organisations on the right hand side is then limited
43 to indentifying, understanding and learning from tourists' co-creation practices, so that those
44 that appear valuable can be supported and facilitated (Grönroos and Voima, 2011; Korkman,
45 2006).
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5 In the 'pre-liminoid' stage, tourists with their needs, motivations and a sense of
6 anticipation embark on a 'pilgrimage'. A process of separation from normality through
7 'valorisation rituals' takes place, which Falassi (1987, p. 4) describes as 'the framing ritual
8 that [...] modifies the usual and daily function and meaning of time and space'. The transitory
9 stage that precedes travel may also be full of 'rites of separation', through which tourists
10 detach themselves from their ordinary, everyday reality. While much of tourism literature
11 tries to determine tourists' motivations for travel, co-creation practices related to dreaming
12 about, imagining and preparing for travel with friends and relatives, may just as valuable
13 (e.g., Clarke, 2013). Tourism marketers can target pre-liminoid practices through marketing
14 communication, e.g. through social media platforms (Neuhofer *et al.*, in press). At festivals,
15 for instance, symbolism and artefacts such as bright and colourful gateways help to mark
16 clearly the point of transformation and entry into the next stage (Getz, 2007).
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26 Once they enter the liminoid phase, tourists find themselves in a special temporal and
27 spatial dimension, a 'time out of time', or 'place out of place' (Falassi, 1987) that is subject
28 to rule structures different from everyday situations (Cohen, 1988). Tourists on holiday then
29 perform various social practices with their significant others; for instance eating, shopping
30 and playing together (Korkman, 2006). Additionally, tourists engage in social practices that
31 involve complete strangers; such as providing help and information to less experienced
32 travellers (Prebensen and Foss, 2011). Within the confounds of the liminoid, a degree of
33 homogeneity, togetherness, and belonging develops among tourists who share their
34 experiences to which Turner (1995) refers to as *communitas*. 'Rites of integration' are
35 performed, e.g. through conforming and ludic practices (Begg, 2011; Morgan, 2007).
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43 In the above framework tourists' co-creation practices are therefore represented on
44 three interlinked levels: 'Tourist'; 'Social Bubble' and 'Communitas'. Importantly, the
45 degree to which social practices are performed at these levels is influenced both by personal
46 and contextual factors. Individuals' *personal resources* - the stock of skills, tools, knowledge
47 or know-how, can determine whether a more or less participatory role in co-creation practices
48 is adopted (Prebensen and Foss, 2011). For instance, Levy and Getz's (2012) research
49 indicates that personality, perceived similarity and mood impact on the degree to which
50 outdoor tour participants engage with strangers.
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3 At the same time, as argued above C2C co-creation is guided by the ways in which
4 tourists interpret and negotiate the socially constructed *shared images* and *social (rule and*
5 *norm) structures* inherent in the liminoid context. Tourism marketers' role in the liminoid
6 stage is then, again, in recognising and supporting valuable social practices that are
7 performed on the various co-creation levels. For example, at folk music festivals, 'jamming'
8 sessions or various workshops are organised to facilitate the sharing and performing of
9 singing practices among groups of friends (Begg, 2011). Tour guides can try to foster
10 interactions among tourists through various group activities (Arnould and Price, 1993).
11 Furthermore, as Getz (2007) suggests, designing tourism settings using symbolism and
12 artefacts that help facilitate the sense of liminoid could arguably lead to more social practices
13 on the communitas level. For instance, escapism and practices of confusing of gender roles,
14 or wearing of masks or costumes that are commonplace in liminoid contexts (e.g., Morgan,
15 2007) could be facilitated by providing various programming features that allow for such
16 practices to be performed freely.
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27 As tourists enter the '*post-liminoid*' stage, they are re-incorporated back into the
28 ordinary, everyday life. Getz (2007) notes that the reversion is often accompanied by a sense
29 of change, transformation, or even feelings of loss. Social bonds that form in the liminoid
30 space may result in the emergence of 'small social worlds' (Gainer, 1995), or neo-tribes
31 (Cova, 1997). Tourism marketers could then facilitate such ongoing sharing practices by
32 helping to create social communities centred on specific tourism experiences, again using
33 technology to give tourists an opportunity to engage with each other and nurture relationships
34 on-line (Neuhofer *et al.*, in press).
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43 **Conclusion**

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45 Tourism marketing literature is currently dominated by a position that advocates design and
46 delivery of valuable tourism services and experiences that aim to realise benefits for tourists.
47 In contrast, S-D logic in marketing shifts our attention away from creating value *for* tourists,
48 toward co-creating value *with* tourists. S-D logic's value-in- perspective then promotes co-
49 created value as dynamic, contextual, and subjectively perceived. Yet, the stance proposed in
50 this paper implies that S-D logic does not go far enough in addressing co-creation as a set of
51 tourists' ongoing value-creating social processes and experiences in which the organisation's
52 role may be only marginal. Viewing tourists as active co-creators of service experiences who
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3 engage in work-like value-creating activities is viewed as a step back toward a reductionist
4 concern for the specific resources – inputs - that tourists need in order to create positive value
5 – outputs – for themselves and for others.
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9 Moreover, this conceptual paper does not subscribe to the view of value in a
10 phenomenological sense as something that is perceived by tourists in the course of their
11 social experiences. As the discussion is centred on co-creation in socially dense tourism
12 contexts, subjective value is replaced by its shared and mutual forms. Following the logic
13 contained in the recent C-D logic purported by a small number of researchers in the Nordic
14 School of Services, this paper views value-in-social-practice as inter- and intra-subjective and
15 embedded in tourists' social practices. And as social practices de-centre value from the
16 individual and position it into the practice per se, tourism marketing researchers need to
17 explore in depth the specific contexts in which practices are performed. As seen in Figure 1,
18 the notion of the 'liminoid' images and rule/ role structures of socially dense tourism contexts
19 therefore becomes fundamental for a full understanding of C2C co-creation, as it reflects the
20 shared, socially constructed nature of reality in which tourists' practices are embedded.
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30 With regards to the methodologies needed to undertake C2C co-creation research based
31 on the practice-theoretical approach, qualitative methodologies grounded in an interpretivist
32 (as opposed to positivist) paradigm are necessary to understand these issues in more depth.
33 As highlighted above, in order to understand value that is co-created on the mutual and
34 shared levels, researchers need to recognise the unique social structures and shared images of
35 the tourism social systems in which C2C co-creation takes place. A social constructionist
36 epistemology is therefore a useful starting point. Research methods such as participant
37 observation grounded in the ethnographic tradition allow for evidence to be gathered of
38 tourists' participation in social practices on various levels. By observing naturally-occurring
39 social acts, actions, and behaviours that constitute a specific practice, and by asking questions
40 about the personal and contextual aspects of that practice, researchers can to link the action
41 and meaning of the action into a credible account of tourists' co-creation.
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50 The conceptual framework builds on literature specific to the somewhat unique nature
51 of liminoid tourism settings in which a sense of togetherness and 'communitas' (Turner,
52 1995) emerges. Nevertheless, future research could apply the notion of social practices as a
53 source of value co-creation in other socially dense contexts, provided that the socially
54 constructed situational and contextual elements of social practices are fully acknowledged.
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3 Researchers could, for instance, illuminate the nature and appeal of shared consumption of
4 various tourist groups or subcultures that emerge in specific tourism situations, such as
5 guided tours, clubbers in island destinations, or families visiting heritage tourism attractions.
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7 Similarly, the proposed framework may be of interest to researchers looking at co-creation in
8 the context of conferences and business events. Additionally, future studies could break down
9 the framework and look in detail at the specific elements/components of tourists' social
10 practices in the pre-, during, and post-liminoid stages of tourism experiences. Empirical
11 testing of the framework in a variety of socially dense tourism and leisure contexts is also
12 desirable.
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19 In conclusion, the tourism industry is full of experiences of a social nature and settings
20 in which people with similar interests, motivations and goals meet together and interact.
21 Rather than striving to persuade socialising tourists that the service offering is valuable to
22 them in some way, tourism organisations benefit from recognising how they can potentially
23 play a role in facilitating tourists' ongoing C2C co-creation processes. The conceptual
24 framework proposed in this paper highlights different perspectives that exist in more holistic
25 value paradigms, thus presenting a novel approach to tourism marketing research. By
26 drawing on empirical studies built on frameworks such as this tourism organisations can
27 begin to design their value propositions based on more in-depth and all encompassing
28 knowledge of what tourists actually do with their service.
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Figure 1

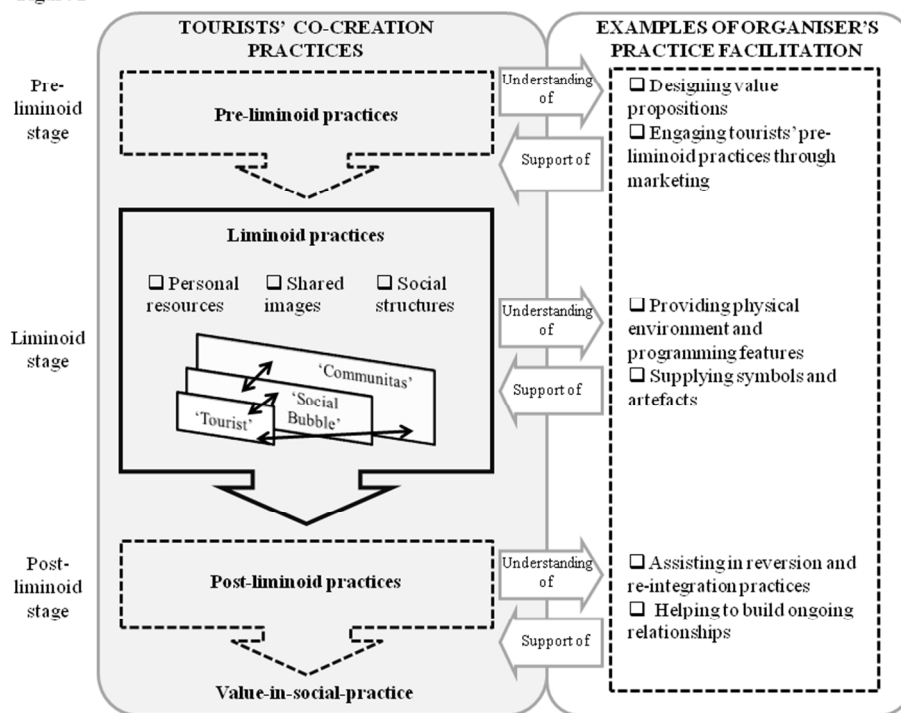


Figure 1: C2C co-creation framework
254x190mm (96 x 96 DPI)

Review