Dr Jason L. Stienmetz
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Emerging Scholar Profile

Dr Jason L. Stienmetz is a Lecturer in Tourism at the University of Surrey, UK where he is developing a program of research in destination management, the digital visitor economy, and big data analytics.

Jason was awarded a PhD in Business Administration from Temple University, USA in 2016. His PhD dissertation "Foundations for a Network Model of Destination Value Creation" involved deconstructing visitor experiences using social media postings (over 4 million photos posted on Flickr) in order to model destinations' value creation processes and identify characteristics of destination systems that maximize economic impact and improve destination competitiveness. This research made contributions to both the academic literature and the practical management of destinations in a number of ways. First and foremost, the study established that network principles hold true for tourism destinations and validates the "value network" paradigm of destination value creation. This work also suggests that destination systems can be managed through an understanding of their network structures and that tourism destinations should not be considered as amalgams of independent touchpoints, but instead as dynamic systems where outcomes are dependent on the relationships between touchpoints. The network model of destination value creation provides a framework upon which "smarter" destination systems will enable destination managers to gain competitive advantage.

Jason's more recent research looks at the relationship between the structure of tourists' sequence of activities within a destination trip and tourists' expressed sentiment of those activities. Using a moments-based paradigm grounded in the psychology, economics, geography, services management, and tourism literature, Jason continues to use big data methodologies to deconstruct visitor experiences based on social media postings and volunteered geographic information. Results have indicated that some degree of structure exists in terms of how travelers organize their visits, and that trip characteristics and trip sequencing can influence value in terms of visitor satisfaction. This research gains greater importance within tourism as new technologies have enabled the industry to capture moments-based experiences with the goal of designing and managing visitor experiences.

Jason's future research agenda includes continued development of the network model of destination value creation, and, in particular, the next step is to understand the antecedents of destination network structure formation and the ways in which optimal network structures can be managed to achieve competitive, sustainable, and resilient destinations. Future research will also investigate how the sequence of tourist experiences may or may not impact destination value (in terms of visitor satisfaction and visitor expenditures), the influence of discrete experiences on the overall evaluation of a journey, and the degree to which travelers intentionally bundle various types of experiences before and during the trip. Jason also collaborates with colleagues in the Digital Laboratory within University of Surrey's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, where he explores the role of new digital technologies (such as robotics, augmented reality, and virtual reality) in shaping the emotions and experiences of tourists.

At the University of Surrey Jason teaches undergraduate modules in the Business Environment, Tourism Management, and Technology, Media & Data. At the post-graduate level Jason teaches modules in Digital Marketing & Social Media and Tourism Social

Science. Jason also supervises masters and PhD students conducting research related to the digital visitor economy. His other activities at the University of Surrey include organizing weekly School research seminars for the academic staff and PhD students, identifying and working with industry partners to develop research opportunities for post-graduate students, and serving on the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

Jason has conducted numerous research consultancy projects with tourism industry practitioners in the USA, UK, and Peru, and he has published in leading academic journals such as the Journal of Travel Research and Tourism Management. Jason is an active member of the Travel and Tourism Research Association and the International Federation for IT and Travel & Tourism, and serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Travel Research and the Journal of Information Technology and Tourism.

Jason earned an undergraduate degree in Hotel, Restaurant & Tourism Management from the University of Wisconsin, where he graduated with honors. Jason also has over 15 years of experience working in hospitality, including two years as a chef at a boutique country inn.

Jason is extremely proud to have served as a Community Economic Development Specialist with the United States Peace Corps in Costa Rica for two years after completing his undergraduate degree. Living and working in a rural village, he was involved in a number of projects related to eco-tourism, technology education, and micro-finance. His experiences volunteering with his wife in Costa Rica were fundamental in developing his interests in tourism systems and destination management and led to his pursuit of an advanced degree.

After the Peace Corps, Jason earned a Master of Tourism Administration degree from the George Washington University Business School in Washington, D.C. It was while working on his thesis "Usability Factors Influencing the Success of Mobile Optimized Destination Websites" that Jason realised that he had fallen forever in love with research.

While studying in Washington, D.C. Jason also had wonderful experiences as a research intern for both the International Institute for Tourism Studies and the U.S. Travel Association.

After defending his PhD research proposal at Temple University, Jason moved to the University of Florida to work as a Research Coordinator for the National Laboratory for Tourism & eCommerce. At the University of Florida Jason developed and designed numerous tourism and technology related research projects and he also taught Research Methods to both undergraduate and post-graduate tourism students as an Adjunct Lecturer.

Jason enjoys traveling with his wife and son, camping, drinking beer, and playing with Lego.