
Issues of the integrated development of tourist destinations on the basis of the blockchain : a qualitative survey carried out in Switzerland

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Abstract

The tourism sector was one of the first to fully enter the digital age. Despite this profound change, in order to protect itself against ever-lower margins and ever fiercer international competition, the sector is placing new hopes on Blockchain technology. The Blockchain technology makes it possible to reproduce large quantities of contract registers thanks to many computer scientists (called miners) all over the world, which makes it possible to avoid going through intermediaries.

However, the Blockchain technology poses many challenges for its implementation, as there are still few large-scale applications that provide sufficient feedback to launch the adventure with confidence. Moreover, the Blockchain is still at a very technical level and is finally not very accessible for tourism professionals.

In this context, we conducted a national qualitative survey on the subject among tourism professionals to give them a voice on the subject of the Blockchain, which is widely covered by the media. We wanted to know their perceptions about the integration of this technology into their daily lives. In particular, the starting point of our investigations was the contractual relationship between its tourism professionals and their customers and suppliers, since it is on this precise point in the business relationship that Blockchain's technology is supposed to bring real innovation.

We also wanted to know the hopes and fears, the difficulties encountered by tourism professionals without even first mentioning the Blockchain. Indeed, we believe that it is the Blockchain that will have to adapt to the tourism sector, and in particular related sustainable challenges and not the other way around. We therefore conducted a dozen semi-directive interviews in French and German with a dozen tourism professionals. This study is therefore an exploratory research to develop working hypotheses and managerial recommendations to facilitate the implementation of tourism experiences based on Blockchain technology.

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