

Tourism Architecture as Future Science from Media to Culture

In the twenty-first century, tourism has moved beyond being a purely economic and service-oriented activity. It is gradually emerging as an advanced, interdisciplinary, and future-oriented field of study. A field formed at the intersection of economics, entrepreneurship, culture, technology, communication studies, psychology, data science, artificial intelligence, and related domains. Profound global transformations—ranging from climate change and geopolitical instability to digital disruption and artificial intelligence—have demonstrated that tourism could no longer be adequately analyzed through linear or single-dimensional models. It now requires innovative scientific frameworks grounded in soft power theory, systems thinking, and qualitative research methodologies. Within this emerging tourism paradigm, media is no longer merely a tool for information dissemination or destination promotion. It has become a strategic infrastructure that connects layers of meaning, culture, experience, knowledge production, and technology. Without media, future tourism could neither be narrated nor perceived, nor effectively transferred across cultural and spatial contexts. Media constitutes the space in which tourism experiences are translated, reconstructed, and multiplied. In classical tourism approaches, media played a passive intermediary role. In contemporary tourism generations, however, media has evolved into the architect of experience. What tourists imagine before travel, encounter during the journey, and narrate after returning is shaped within mediated environments. From visual imagery and audiovisual storytelling to digital platforms, artificial intelligence, immersive technologies, and the metaverse, media does not merely reflect tourism experiences—it actively reconfigures them. Within this framework, the boundary between “media” and “destination” becomes increasingly blurred. The destination itself could function as a medium, while media operates as the invisible extension of place-based experience. Culture is inherently immaterial, layered, and meaning-oriented. Media enables culture to move beyond static and localized representations and become a dynamic, interpretable, and globally accessible experience. Without media, culture in tourism could either be reduced to stereotypes or transformed into a museumized artifact. Through narrative construction, semiotic systems, visual language, and interactive design, media transforms culture into a living and participatory experience. Consequently, successful cultural tourism depends less on physical assets and more on media literacy, narrative competence, and communication engineering. Every tourist could become a medium. Every experience could become a message. Every narrative could constitute part of a country’s or culture’s invisible diplomacy. One of the key roles of media in the future of tourism lies in its contribution to transforming tourism into a data-driven and analytical discipline. Digital media, social networking platforms, and smart tourism systems generate vast volumes of behavioral, emotional, and cultural data. These data represent the raw material of future tourism science—a field capable of analyzing and predicting patterns of experience, preference formation, meaning-making, and human interaction. Without media, such data could not exist; without data, tourism would remain descriptive and could not evolve into a rigorous scientific domain. In the era of artificial intelligence and smart tourism, media acts as a translator between humans and technology. Technology without media could appear cold, abstract, and dehumanized. Media provides technology with language, narrative structure, and affective resonance, placing it in service of human-centered experience design. In contemporary tourism, media determines how technology is perceived, accepted, and meaningfully integrated. From intelligent guiding systems to immersive and metaverse-based experiences, it is media that preserves the human dimension. Media remains the most significant carrier of soft power in tourism. Mediated narratives shape destination image, perceived safety, cultural attractiveness, and even global trust. Media is not merely a reflection of reality; it is an integral component of the political and cultural realities shaping the contemporary world. Tourism without a coherent media architecture could not generate sustainable soft power. Likewise, media practices that lack a deep understanding of tourism logic would inevitably collapse into superficial promotion. Only by transforming tourism into a living, experience-based medium could effective and enduring soft power be created and reinforced. If culture represents the soul of tourism and technology its instrument, media constitutes the nervous system of this organism—a system that transmits emotion, processes meaning, and enables responsive interaction. The future of tourism does not lie solely in destination development, but in the intelligent mediation of experience. In today’s complex and multilayered global environment, tourism media could meaningfully connect science, culture, technology, and humanity—thereby transforming tourism from a purely economic activity into a civilization-shaping force.

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