Cultural tourism and culture of tourism:
the influence of tourist guidebooks from a generational perspective
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In the context of all the educational elements needed for a whole fruition of cultural and heritage tourism, tourist guidebooks have represented and still represent a tool with an extraordinary communicative power for tourists, insiders and operators. Alongside with the tourism boom in the last decades, a growth of travel publishing did not follow. This is also due to the new technology impact, particularly to the Internet and the increase of blogs, review-based and sharing experiences websites. Getting deep to it, travel publishing decreased by 46% from 2006 to 2012, with a feeble recovery during the last years. From a generational point of view, the use of digital information is particularly common among the Millennials and the following generations. Even though no studies about the willingness to make purchases of tourist guidebooks from the young generations have been published yet, it is clear how the drop in the market is linked, at least in part, to new habits in the process of gathering travel information from the new generations. Credibility is one of the most important element for travel publishing. Indeed, these publishing products are mostly recognizable from

their label (like Lonely Planet, Routard, Touring Club) instead from the author, emphasizing the work of a competence-based team, which is shown, at last, into a systematized product. On the contrary, credibility and systematization are the two biggest Internet-based information faults. These contents' authors are mostly unknown and, if made explicit, they rarely have the competences to face a travel topic with an holistic approach thought for the different needs of the tourists and the places. Should this happen, these contents will not be systematized into a structured project, following the search engine criteria instead, by which the single article matches with the key words searched by the user. Furthermore, the Internet research assumes that tourists already know what they are looking for, while flipping through the guidebook could be inspirational and could get the future tourist to know more about the region they are about to visit. The long-term period crisis of the tourism-based publishing needs to be faced structurally, with a new look to the challenges the Internet is setting before. Following the most recent best practices examples in the travel publishing, the paper will highlight the value of tourist guidebooks in relaunching cultural and heritage tourism with a new perspective, based on the tourists needs and on the places' diversity. The paper will particularly highlight the most effective approaches that are able to combine the Internet fugacity with the solid needs of the cultural tourism. On the contrary, some other less effective approaches will be compared in order to have a better understanding of the future challenges the tourist guidebook industry is facing. The two case studies are the Lonely Planet website and blog, and the Touring Club Italiano apps.

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