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Abstract

The utilization of Information Technology (IT) is spreading in tourism industry with explosive growth of Internet, Social Network Service (SNS) through smart phone applications. Especially, since intensive information has high value on tourism area, IT is becoming a crucial factor in the tourism industry. The smart tourism is explained as an holistic approach that provide tour information, service related to travel, such as destination, food, transportation, reservation, travel guide, conveniently to tourists through IT devices. In our research, we focus on the Korea Tourism Organization's (KTO's) smart tourism case. This research concentrates on the necessity and effectiveness of smart tourism which delivers travel information in real-time base. Also, our study overview how KTO's IT operation manages each channel, website, SNS, applications and finally suggests the smart tourism's future direction for the successful realization.

Keywords: Information Technology, Social Network Service, Smart phone application, Smart Tourism, Korea Tourism Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

In November 2012, Korea has welcomed the 1,000th foreign traveler. The phenomenon that 3 millions of travelers were increased in just 3 years since 2009 isn't shown well in any count ries. The Korea's increase rates of foreign travelers in last 3 years was the most highest in O ECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) members, 12.5%. The increas e rates of France was 1%, United States of America 2.9%, and China recorded 2.9% (UNWT O: United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2011). In term of type of travel, the rate of Free Independent Traveler (FIT) account for 52.7% followed by 'Random (24.3%)', 'Airtel[1] (14.9%)' and 'Group tour (8.1%)'(KTO, 2012).The Korean wave such as K-pop, Korean soap opera, and Kor ean movie contributes to improve the image of Korea and attract the number of foreign trave ler (Choi, 2012). For example, as the "Gangnam Style" not only named YouTube's top trendin g video of 2012 but also hit 1 billion Youtube views (Metro News, 2012).

A recent report stated more than 80% of leisure travelers searched the information regarding t o the tour by various type of social media, webpage for travel decision (PhoCusWright, 200 8). The availability and popularity of online and social media is rapidly growing and changes the way of communicating, making decisions, socializing. Also, this influences the relationship to user behaviors are transforming travel and tourism (Yoo and Gretzel, 2012). In this perspe ctive, foreign travelers who want to visit the Korea would collect information in the internet, especially in the KTO's webpage (www.visitkorea.or.kr) or SNS. Hence, the KTO provides valuable information about the Korea tour through website and social media. In fact, other co untries, Singapore, South Australia, famous for tourism, offer various services in nation level and boost the nation brand power by their internet system (Choi and Park, 2009). On the oth er hand, in business level, travel application, for example Google Maps, Foursquare and Instagr am, are getting popularity as a means of contributing tour experience (Chung and Buhalis, 20 08).

In the Korea tourism, the KTO is performing a central role since its foundation.Due to the g rowing of Information Technology (IT) importance, the role of KTO's web-based system is the most crucial than ever. As for the intangibility and experiential nature of tourism products an d lowering of technological barriers for travelers, Real time experiences sharing with people is one of fascinating activities in hospitality and tourism industry (Pan and Crotts, 2012). With th at background, KTO interacts with travelers all around the world as a tourism basement with IT platform. They implement webpage, SNS, and smart phone application services. In 2007, KT O was highly acclaimed about the integrating online and offline campaign and awarded 'Ad of the year' from the Korea Advertising Society (Seo et al., 2007).

Surprisingly, not only local, regional government have tremendously interested in tourism projects such as festival, event activities & convention program but also public and private organizations get involved in such activities directly or indirectly on behalf of economic benefits. In doing so, KTO i s advising local and regional tourism projects for the Korea tourism. KTO promote inbounding t ourism, overseas office managing, overseas advertising, and international event/convention, that was about 120 billion dollars 16.9% of KTO's total capitals in 2011 (KTO, 2012). As a matter of fact, the KTO plays a crucial part in country's tourism policy, strategy, and operation. For t hese reasons, we target on a case study of KTO, which give an understanding of smart tourism in Korea tourism.

The purpose of this study is 1) to suggest the overall framework of tourism information servi ce implemented by the KTO; 2) to investigate the providing of information service by the K TO and the major effect of Korea tourism marketing research; 3) to examine the interaction among the KTO's web, SNS, and the smart phone application and users' satisfaction toward t

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[1] A kind of tourism product, like group tour, consists of airplane ticket and hotel accommodation.

o tourism information. The organizing of this study is as in the following. In section 2, the in troduction of the KTO and research of the web, SNS in tourism industry will be conducted t hrough the literature review. The framework about the KTO's smart tourism will be tested in section 3 and the foreign travelers' demand pattern in the KTO's website will be analyzed in section 4. Finally, in section 5, it will be discussed study's theoretical and practical meanings, improvements and future study plan.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)

KTO's IT service has started from late 1980s when the PC communication was leading the w eb market. In 1989, KTO began to provide tourism information service in KETEL (Korea Ec onomic Prestel), one of the Korea major PC communication web network. Also, they serviced the free tourism information database in several Korea major Personal Computer communicatio n sites such asChollian, HiTEL from January 1996. As the 1990s, the internet generation, has come KTO established their internet web site (www.knto.or.kr) and KTO's in-company intrane t in 1996. In 1999, they formed the website (www.2001visitkorea.com) for the year of visitin g Korea. In 2000s, the internet service and marketing have rapidly developed. The KTO has t ransformed their website from www.knto.or.kr to www.visitkorea.or.kr in 2000. In 2001, forei gn users' site, www.TOUR2Korea.com, was opened and serviced for Japanese, Chinese, Engli sh, Spanish, French, German, and Russian. From the 2004, the mobile service has appeared i n the market. The LBS (Location Based System)2 for tourism information based on mobile pl atform has started to service and through this system travelers could use the mapping service. In 2007, digital map service practicable in both the online and mobile platforms has opened Figure 1.
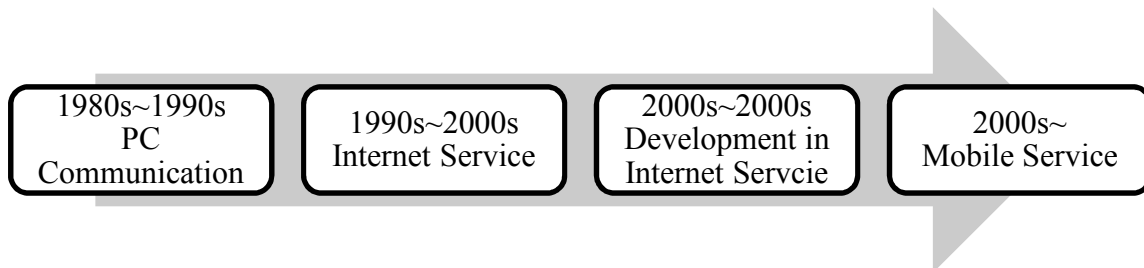

Figure 1.The history of KTO's IT service

2.2 Social Media in Tourism

Based on a review of the prior studies, a few researches were studied about the web and soc ial media in tourism to investigate the concept or propose application method of IT related to the tourism and hospitality because social media, web, and smart phone are becoming increa singly important to tourism and hospitality enterprises.. In summary, only a few studies focus on the integrated IT system and suggest the smart tourism framework for the future tourism and hospitality industry. These studies are presented in the Table 1.

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[2]Location-based services are a general class of computer program-level services used to include specific controls for location and time data as control features in computer programs. (http://en.wikipedia.org/)

Author	Context	Findings
Sigala (2012)	Tourism associated with web	It provides a framework based on which tourism firms can identify the ways in which theycan exploit the feature of web.
Pan and Crotts (2012)	Tourism associated with social media	It focuses on the review of the implications for hospitality and tourism marketing research through social media.
Volo(2012)	Tourism associated with web (Blog)	It analysis the role and the contribution of tourism information from the web especially from blog.
Gutierrez-Taño et al. (2012)	Tourism associated with social media	It sets out the results of research conducted to analyze the extent to which motivation, opportunity and ability are determining factors in intentions to use social media to organize travel.
Yoo and Gretzel (2012)	Tourism associated with social media	This study seeks to provide an examination ofonline social media use and creation by tourist.
Nusair et al. (2012)	Tourism associated with SNS	The purpose of study is to examine the primary online social network that used for travel purposes and users' experience and attitude towards the use of online social network.

Table 1. Prior research on social media in tourism and hospitality

3. CASE STUDY: KTO'S SMART TOURISM

The practical model of KTO's IT platforms outlined in Figure 3 which proposes that three channels, webpage, SNS, and smart phone application. These channels enable the users to get webpage's detail information recognized briefly from SNS or smart phone application. However, the KTO internal IT system's relationwith external channels, like private homepage, blog, news, didn't appear. Although there is close interworking connection between internal platforms, especially SNS, and external channels in the South Australia and Singapore tourism organization's IT system, the users of KTO's IT system have difficulty in moving to other various channels in Figure 2.
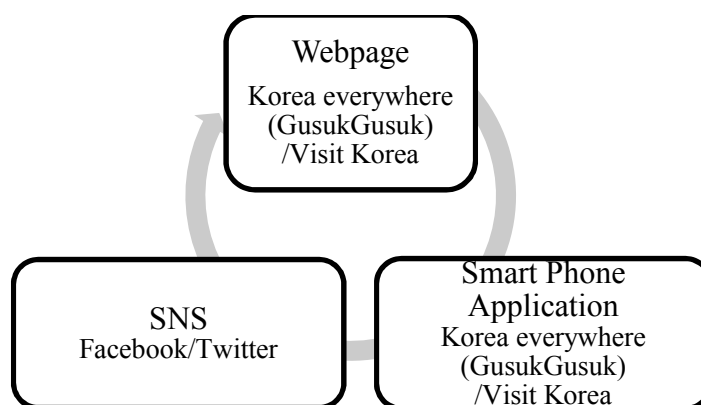

Figure 2.The interconnection of KTO's IT platforms

3.1KTO's Visitkorea.or.kr

Korea Everywhere, GusukGusuk (http://korean.visitkorea.or.kr), offers domestic users with infor

mation of tour destinations, accommodations, festivals in Korea to provide tourism and hospitality information to domestic people and to promote the domestic tour industry. This webpage has performed a crucial role as a hub of KTO's IT system, thus, users can move to facebook, twitter, smart phone application and use RSS (Really Simple Syndication)3 service. These days, KTO's domestic webpage recorded 680,000 PV (Page View) in a day (KTO, 2011). In case of the Visitkorea (http://english.visitkorea.or.kr/enu/index.kto), there are 11 websites for 1.5 million foreign users and KTO operates these websites in 10 language services, English, Japanese, Chinese, French, German, Spanish, Russian, Thai, Arabic, and Turkish to provide various information of tour in Korea and attract inbound tourists (KTO, 2011). Through these websites, users can collect practical Korea tour products and information, in other hand, KTO enhances foreign users' loyalty to Korea tourism and sets marketing strategies by understanding foreign users'behaviour demands.

3.2 KTO's SNSs(Facebook; Twitter)

Facebook (Korea everywhere Live), Twitter (@Kor_Visitkorea) are being serviced as major domestic SNS channels of KTO and these platforms give event information, introduction of destination in Korea and also play a role as bridge to KTO webpage for the users want more details. Above 50,000 users click *'like it'* in KTO's facebook page and about 470 people are using actively. In case of twitter, it has the most followers among the Korean government office twitters (Koreantweeters, 2011). As for the overseas SNS service, one or more channels are operated to give tourism information for foreign travelers, especially Korean wave, famous destinations, and transportation, and function as bridge to KTO's foreign language webpage. The English facebook page, Korea Tourism Organization, receives more than 92,000 users'*'like it'* and the Chinese SNS channel, Sinaweibo4(http://weibo.com/visitkorea), mainly focuses on the Korean wave news, has above 130,000 users.

Introduction of K-pop singer

I like it: 97,238
Active User: 3,259

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[3]RSS(Really Simple Syndication) is a family of web feed formats used to publish frequentlyupdated works—such as blog entries, news headlines, audio, and video—in a standardized format(http://en.wikipedia.org/).

[4]SinaWeibo (literally "New-wave Microblog") is a Chinese microblogging (weibo) website. Akin to a hybrid of Twitter and Facebook, it is one of the most popular sites in China, in use by well over 30% of Internet users, with a similar market penetration that Twitter has established in the USA (http://en.wikipedia.org/).

Figure 3 .KTO's English facebook (Korea Tourism Organization) and Chinese sinaweibo

(http://weibo.com/visitkorea)

KTO has opend a range of SNS channels for 8 countries. In accordance with the countries' trend and major channels, one or more SNS pages are being serviced for foreign users. For example, for Chinese, KTO operates their service through Sinaweibo, the most popular SNS channles in China.

Language	SNS	Opening date	Number of users
Korean	Facebook	May.2011	I like it: 51,000
	Twitter	Nov.2009	Follower: 138,563
	Me2day	Jun.2011	10,178
English	Facebook	Mar.2010	I like it: 97.238
	Twitter	Jul.2009	Follower: 34,578
	Youtube	Oct.2007	-
	Tripadvisor	-	-
Chinese	新浪微博(Sinaweibo)	Apr.2011	Following: 142,874
	Tripadvisor	-	-
Japanese	Twitter	Mar.2011	Follower: 7,342
	Ameba	-	-
	Youtube	-	-
Spanish	Facebook	Aug.2010	I like it: 12,669
	Twitter	Feb.2011	Follower: 5,608
	Google Plus	Mar.2012	822
	Youtube	-	-
French	Facebook	Apr.2010	I like it: 5,402
	Twitter	Jan.2010	Follower: 911
	Blogger	-	-
	Youtube	-	-
	Tripadvisor	-	-
German	Facebook	Jul.2010	I like it: 2,470
	Twitter	Nov.2011	Follower: 517
	Youtube	-	-
	Tripadvisor	-	-
Russian	Facebook	-	I like it: 921
	Youtube	-	-

<Source: Korea Tourism Organization, 2013>

Table 3. KTO's domestic and overseas SNS channels

3.2 KTO's GusukGusuk App (Korea Everywhere in English)

Travelers usually search and collect any tour information, such as route, transportation, food, accommodation, not only before the tour but also during the tour. In this respect, smart phone application can be considered as efficient tourism tools because it enables the tourists to find information anywhere and anytime in accordance with where the users are and what situation is

through latest technology, including applications, Augmented Reality (AG)[5], and Location-based Service (LBS)[6]. Korea Everywhere, domestic application service and Visit Korea, English application focus on promotion of Korea tourism by providing introduction of Korea destination, advertisement of inbound tourism, local event, and also meet the tourists' standard demands through giving basic tour information, restaurants, transportation, accommodation, mapping service. In summary, while domestic application, Korea Everywhere emphasizes where to go travel, the English application Visit Korea places stress on the how to travel.

Figure 4. Korea Everywhere

Also, there are special applications which function as a tour guide for travelers in only specific sites, famous historical destination, museums, trails, mainly with storytelling information thr

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[5]Augmented reality (AR) is a live, direct or indirect, view of a physical, real-world environment whose elements are augmented by computer-generated sensory input such as sound, video, graphics or GPS data (http://en.wikipedia.org/).

[6]Location-based services (LBS) are a general class of computer program-level services used to include specific controls for location and time data as control features in computer programs. As such LBS is an information and has a number of uses in Social Networking today as an entertainment service, which is accessible with mobile devices through the mobile network and which uses information on the geographical position of the mobile device. This has become more and more important with the expansion of the smartphone and tablet markets as well (http://en.wikipedia.org/).

ough smart phone's audio service and AG. Given the foreign language services, theses applica tions are useful especially for Foreign Independent Tour (FIT) thus, KTO plan on expanding t he language service for increasing foreign travelers. Korea Everywhere and Visit Korea applic ation have been downloaded by 2.37 million users (Korea Everywhere: 2.15 million, Visit Ko rea: 0.22 million) and awarded the grand prize in IT department of information culture prize under the auspicious of the Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS) and Nat ional Information Society Agency (NIA) in 2012. In the same year, these applications were el ected an outstanding government's smart phone application by MOPAS and won a prize three times in Korea Mobile App Award (KTO, 2012). See Figure 4.

4. SURVEY RESULTSFROM INTERNATIONAL TOURISTS

4.1 Demographic results

This survey was conducted to improve the KTO's foreign site operated for 9 languages speak ers in terms of webpage users. Hence, this research almost is related to webpage. By investig ating webpage users' demands, behaviors, and tendency, the foreign travelers' satisfaction and current state of KTO's smart tourism can be understood indirectly. Only KTO website's foreign users could participate in this survey, also all the participants volunteered to take part in this research. Thus, we could get to truthful results in Table 4.

Survey Outline	
Survey target	The foreign members of visitkorea.or.kr, KTO's foreign website
Number of samples	6,544
Survey method	Web survey by structured questionnaires
Sample design	The site's members who volunteered to take part in survey during event period
Survey Period	December, 2011

Table 4.KTO's website survey outline

About the composition of samples, Female 80.8% and male 19.2% and 20s has 43% ,the hig hest ratio in age, followings are 30s 24.2%, 40s 12.6%, over 50s 12.3% and under 20 7.9%. In case of the country, Chinese was the first rank in ration, 51.1%, and Japanese 20.9%, Eng lish 17.5%, French 2.9%, Spanish 2.9%, German 2.6% and Russian 2.1% are following. As for 'Type of Travel', while over the half of foreign tourists (52.7%) travel on their own, only about 10% of foreign users go abroad through group tour (8.1%). Also, there are more respondents of this research who have been to Korea (66.5%) than those haven't (33.5%) in Table 5.

Total		Number of samples	%
		6,544	100
Language	English International	905	13.8
	English Asia	245	3.7
	Japanese	**1368**	**20.9**
	Chinese	**3344**	**51.1**
	French	187	2.9
	German	168	2.6
	Spanish	192	2.9
	Russian	135	2.1

Gender	Male	1259	19.2
	Female	5285	80.8
Age	Under 20	520	7.9
	20s	2812	43
	30s	1585	24.2
	40s	822	12.6
	Over 50s	805	12.3
Type of Travel	Free Independent Tour(FIT)	**3446**	**52.7**
	Group Tour(GT)	**531**	**8.1**
	Airtel	974	14.9
	Random	1593	24.3
Korea Visit Experience	Yes	**4349**	**66.5**
	No	**2195**	**33.5**

Table 5.KTO website survey target outline

4.2 Recognition Route Channel and Usage

Most users, 37%, recognize the visitkorea site by the 'Search engine' and the 2nd highest route was 'Contact with KTO's branch offices' 30.1%. Also, SNS such as Facebook and Twitter took high percentage 20.1%. If the users have experience to visit Korea before and if the users are older, they tend to use search engine or contact with KTO's branch offices directly. On the other hand, the people selected the SNS were almost haven't been to Korea ever and much younger.

		Number of samples	Serach engine	Contact with KTO's branch Offices	SNS	Online ad	Printed media	Offline event	Other
Total		6,544	32.7	30.1	20.1	6.8	3.4	1.4	5.5
Age	Under 20	520	25.0	15.4	▲37.9	8.8	2.5	2.9	7.5
	20s	2,812	30.2	27.6	27.7	5.7	2.2	1.4	5.2
	30s	1,585	33.4	32.4	15.5	7.8	4.4	1.1	5.5
	40s	822	36.9	33.7	8.6	7.4	4.7	2.1	6.6
	Over 50s	805	40.4	39.9	3.2	7.0	5.2	0.4	4.0
Korea Visit Exp.	Yes	4,349	35.1	36.3	13.6	5.3	3.7	1.0	5.0
	No	2,195	27.8	17.7	33.0	9.9	2.9	2.1	6.5

Table 6. Recognition route channel to visitkorea

Similar to the recognition route results, 'Search engine' was answered the most, 35.3%, from the users and the next channel was 'Related site's link' 21.4%, 'SNS' was 17.2%, and 'Type the site's address directly' was 15.4%. About half of users, 49.1%, said they visit the KTO website at least once a week and 25.4% of users 'Sometimes' check the website when it is necessary. Female users are more frequently use the site than male users and as for the age, approximately 40% of 'Under 20' visit the site once in 2 days.

91.4% of foreign users choose the 'Usefulness of contents' as the most important part when using the website, followed by 'Easy to find information desired (89.4%)', 'Speed of Update (89.1%)' and 'Rate of movement and stability (87.4%)'. Figure 5 reported by multiple choices that 91.4% of foreign users choose the "Usefulness of contents" as the most important part when using the website, followed by "Easy to find information desired (89.4%)", "Speed of Update (89.1%)" and "Rate of

movement and stability (87.4%)". In matters of overall satisfaction about the KTO's website, 83.7% of total respondents said "Generally satisfied", also 33.7% of among these respondents checked "Absolutely satisfied". In contrast, only 0.6% of total users stated "Not satisfied". In fact, female users and younger people are more satisfied than male users and older people.
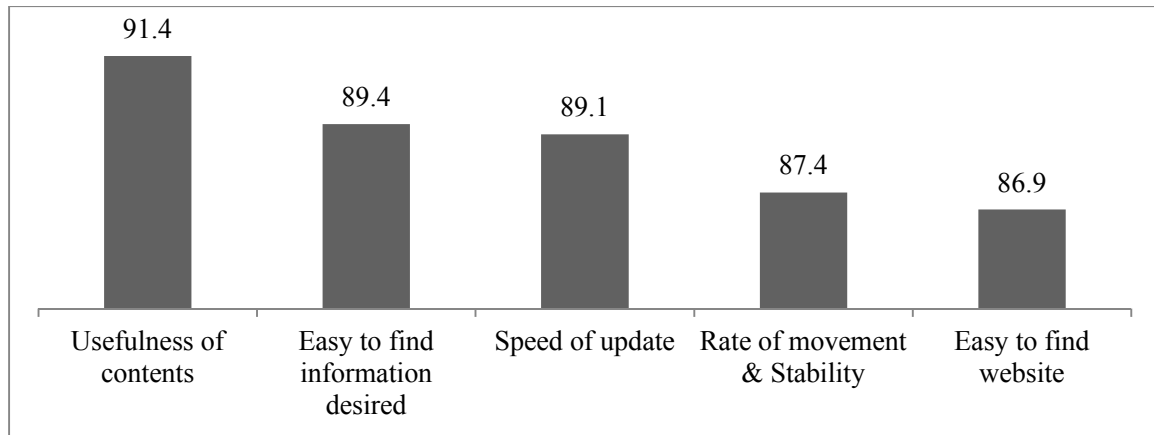

Figure 5. Important part of website

The purpose or motive of travel is influenced by not only internal motive, also external motive (Shi, 2011). In this respect, this phenomenon can be explained that external factors, like promoting of Korea travel, giving huge Korea information through IT, popularity of Korean wave, cause internal motivation and these motivated to have interest in Korea or come to Korea. In summary, foreign travlers got interested in Korea by the mixture of overflowing Korea information through Korean wave boom and IT resources.

5. CONCLUSIONS

By conducting this study, we identified the smart tourism's concept, layout, and future direction of development through KTO's system. We analyzed each platforms' role and relation each other in KTO's smart tourism process. During the analysis, we found that an interest of young generation, Spanish users and fans of Korea wave is in transition, in other words, the demand, behavior, and satisfaction of potential users are different depends on which channels are used in tourism. As tourists' trends have changed, we should make good use of latest platforms, especially SNS in Figure 6.

IT has already been the source and motive of making travel experience, also involved in all part of tourism generation process. For example, according to Korea Tourism Organization (KTO)'s research, above 90% of foreigners who watched the "Gangnam Style" video reported "I want to visit the Korea" (KTO, 2012). At this situation, IT platforms, like Youtube, Titter, played crucial role in having the foreigners interested in K-pop, Gangnam, and finally Korea travel. In fact, tourism cycle is in progress with IT and that makes the emergence of smart tourism. Of course, economic, social and cultural effects are generated spontaneously.
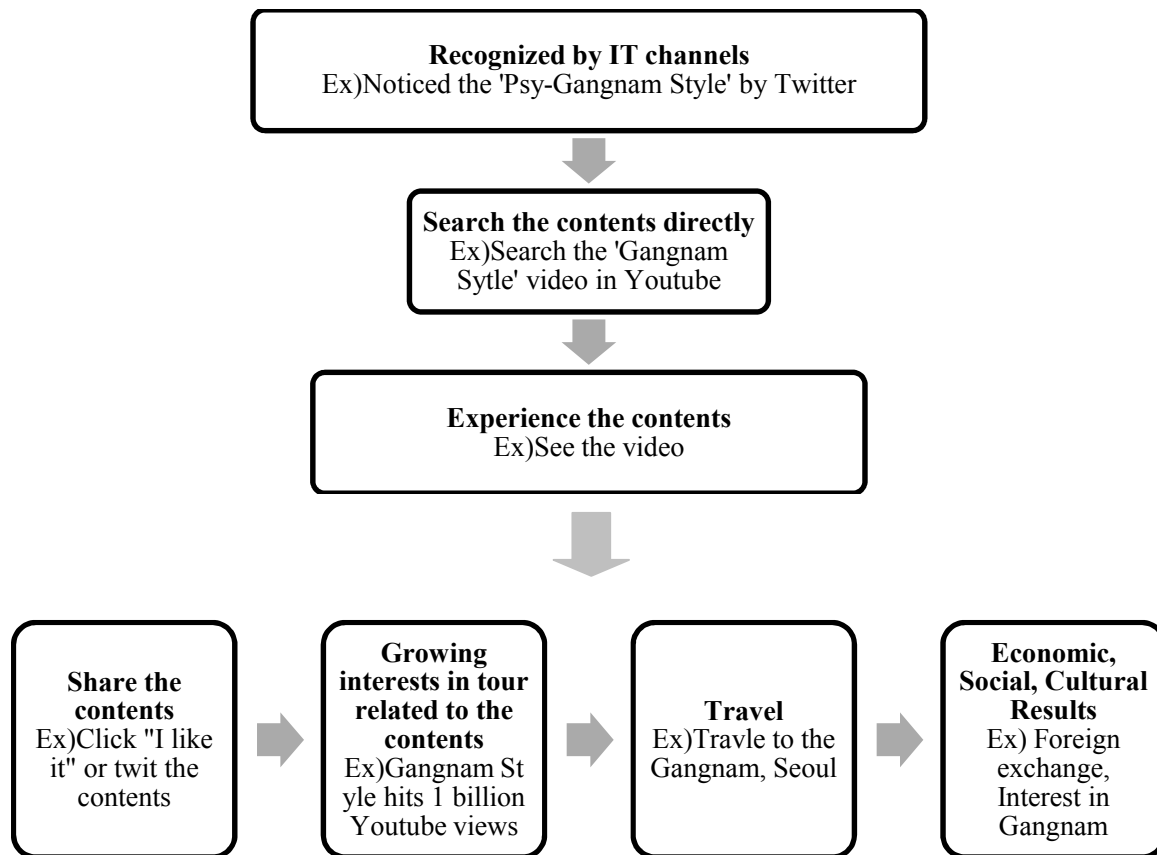
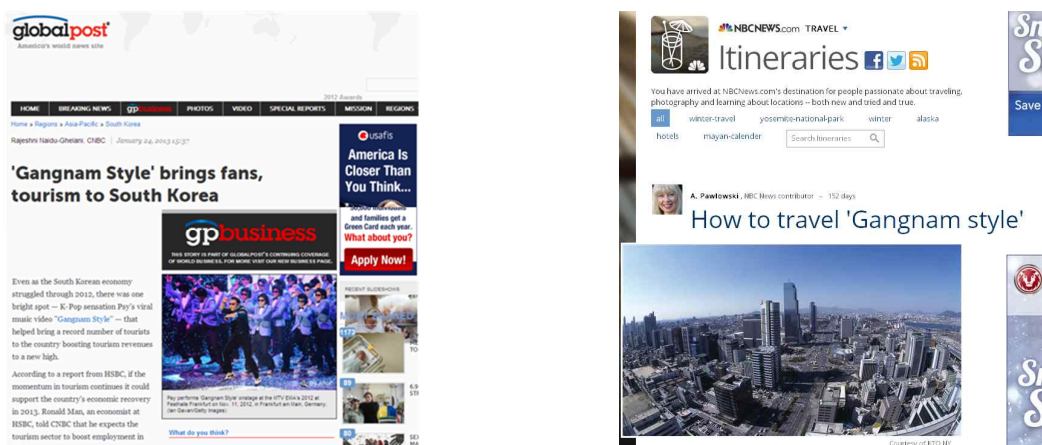*Figure 6.Process of travel generation with IT*

Figure 7. Practical example of process of travel generate with IT

As the interest about real tour in Gangnam, various events, contents provided information and finally people travel to the Korea caused by "Gangnam Style" and IT platforms. Today, several internet systems, such as tourism virtual reality mapping, location-based tourism services, have implemented the transmission of information on tourism. Especially, the social media communication increasingly affects almost whole business areas (Insap et al, 2012). With these channels, tourists share information

about products, countries and their travels. These tourists engagement with online social media is influencing their behaviour in online platforms and also in destination (Rosemann et al., 2011).

Keeping pace with this trend, KTO has established smart tourism systems which consists of website, SNS and smart phone application and serviced all these platforms to domestic and foreign users. Each station of smart tourism system has different advantages and weaknesses. Through the website, an internet channel, users easily acquires massive information in a brief and also understands materials just at a glance. But due to the limit of portability, it's difficult to access the information in anytime and everywhere. In contrast, SNS and application of smart phone can be used wherever you are thanks to high mobility. However, those platforms have difficulties in carrying amount of information and figuring out easily because of compatibility or screen size. For being efficient system, all the components of smart tourism system must achieve mutual complement, in other words, website, SNS and application of smart phone have to trade off their functions cooperatively. In this process, nurturing the strengths and making up for the weak spots of each channel, this smart system is able to create a synergy effect. In fact, this is the smart tourism system's direction of future development.

Figure 8. Seoul Convention Bureau and Advertisement in CNN

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