

CO-CREATION OF TOURISM SERVICE QUALITY IN VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES
A Study from Guest-hotel Web-based Interactions in Natal, Brazil

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On the way to competitiveness, tourism organizations seek to incorporate innovation processes that allow them to obtain advantages, seeking to improve their information systems. In that regard, user-generated content within the framework of Web 2.0 works as a starting point for interaction processes and value creation. The aim of this research is to identify and analyze, from the perspective of value co-creation, evidence of practices that support the conception of virtual communities as tourism service quality co-creation environments between guests and hotels. This research proposes a study of a qualitative, exploratory and descriptive approach. The study presents an observation of 773 units of analysis from the 15 best-rated four and five-star hotels in the city of Natal, Brazil. The content analysis technique is used from a netnographic perspective, complemented by a literature review to support the theoretical framework adopted. The study allows to corroborate the hypothesis of the existence of a co-creation environment on the virtual community observed, characterized by a relationship process that involves online interactions between guests and hotels, resulting in suggestions and tips for improving determinants of quality, as well as an intention on behalf of the hotels to accept these proposals for the process of design and creation of value.

KEY WORDS: *co-creation, service quality, innovation, web-based interaction, user-generated content.*