

SmartState Center of Economic Excellence in Tourism



IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL

I was telling my students this week about the billion-dollar investment Disney has made in its MagicBand – a tech-studded wristband that connects visitors at Disney World to a vast and powerful system of sensors within the park. It occurred to me that this past year more than ever, technology has impacted every aspect of my academic life – from what I teach, to how I teach, to the research I conduct – as it continues to disrupt the way travel is searched for, purchased and experienced. I think nearly every member of my research team is involved in one project or other that directly relates to travel technology, and some of those efforts are highlighted in this year's newsletter.

Another topic that I have been acutely sensitive to this year is the significance of the tourism industry worldwide. I spent the first four months of last year teaching on Semester at Sea, a floating university that circumnavigates the world, docking at a number of emerging tourism markets. It was

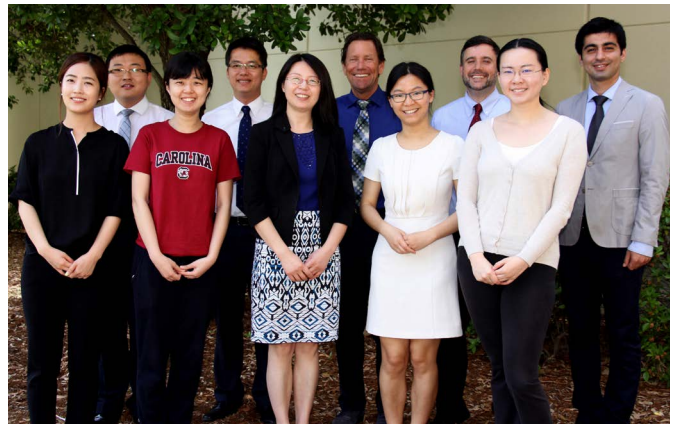
fascinating to see countries like Myanmar – for so long in isolation – opening up to international tourism.

Likewise, travelers from these developing countries are spanning the globe in huge numbers – the Chinese, for example, now spend more money on vacation than any other nationality in the United States.

Aware of this, our research center has shifted its focus slightly from an emphasis on tourism in South Carolina, to explore tourism in other parts of the world.

Again, examples of this can be found in this newsletter, but on the subject of 'global,' it is interesting to note (given today's political climate) that all ten members of our very successful research team are immigrants, representing five countries of the world. It really is a small world after all!

Simon Hudson



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UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA
College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management

Studies Highlight the Significance of Two Lucrative Market Segments

The Center completed two large funded projects in 2016. The first was for South Carolina Parks, Recreation & Tourism looking at the growing African-American tourism market, and the second was for the Economic Development Administration (EDA) focusing on attracting retirees to the state. A quick snapshot of both projects can be seen below, but both reports (and other industry reports from the Center) can be downloaded from our website.

SmartState Retiree Study
SC Centers of Economic Excellence

Attracting retirees is a lucrative prospect for **SOUTH CAROLINA**.
\$29b Economic Impact
50,000 New Retirees Every Year

Our strengths and weaknesses as a retiree destination

Strengths	Weaknesses
Warm climate	Poor healthcare
Recreation activity	Poor infrastructure
Cost of living	

ECONOMIC IMPACT

1% increase in in-migration retirees

\$29.6 billion annually	\$20.1 million
333,521 jobs	227 jobs
\$11 billion labor income	\$7.3 million labor income

(in annual additional economic impact)

What today's retirees want

- Smart and Active Communities
- Business and Volunteer Opportunities
- Physical and Mental Rejuvenation

The result is that...

- Our retirees feel they are 14 years younger than they really are
- 82% of retirees feel mentally younger than they really are
- 64% of retirees feel physically younger than they really are

SmartState South Carolina Just right.
SC Centers of Economic Excellence DiscoverSouthCarolina.com

Increasing African-American Tourism in **SOUTH CAROLINA**
\$2.4b Economic Impact
12% of annual visitation to SC

Our strengths and weaknesses as an African-American tourism destination

Strengths	Weaknesses
Cultural attractions	Lack of awareness
Rich history	Fear of racial discrimination

ECONOMIC IMPACT

5% increase in visitation from African-Americans

\$2.4 billion annually	\$118.6 million
26,302 jobs	1,315 jobs
\$789.5 million labor income	\$39.5 million labor income

(in annual additional economic impact)

What African-American tourists want

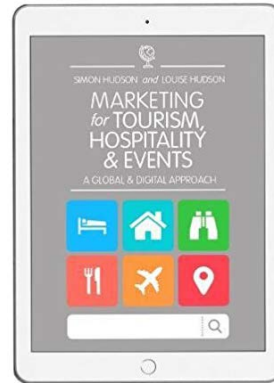
- Family Reunions
- Themed festivals and events
- African-American cuisine

The recommendations are that...

- We need to invest in our African-American cultural attractions
- We need to encourage the African-American community to be involved in tourism businesses
- We need to specifically target African-American tourists

PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

It has been another very productive year for the SmartState Center. In total, between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017, the Center published 2 funded industry reports, 19 articles in peer reviewed journals (many of them in A+ journals), 1 book, 1 book chapter, and delivered 21 presentations of research papers at academic conferences. Here are just a few of the highlights.



Simon Hudson has a book fresh off the press called *Marketing for Tourism, Hospitality & Events* that provides a much-needed cutting edge textbook for students covering both the theory and practice of global and digital industry developments, in addition to the basic principles of marketing. These industry

developments are captured via chapter features including Lessons from a Marketing Guru, Digital Spotlights, and Marketing in Action case-studies that all highlight the realities of tourism and hospitality marketing in practice. The book is complimented by a companion website featuring a range of tools and resources for lecturers and students, including PowerPoint slides, an instructor's manual, and selected videos to bring the examples from each chapter to life. Instructors can order a review copy from Sage Publications Inc.



Best Paper Award

PhD student **Rui Qi** and Center Associate **David Cardenas**, won the Best Paper Award at the 22nd Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism in Houston. The award, sponsored by the Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management, was for their paper titled “Longitudinal Value Relevance of Advertising Expenditures in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry: Investments or Expenses.”

Breakthrough Scholar

PhD student **Hengyun (Neil) Li**, received the esteemed honor of being named a 2017 University of South Carolina Breakthrough Graduate Scholar. Neil was one of 13 graduate students at the university to win this prestigious award. The award recognizes those outstanding graduate students that have excelled in their contributions to research in their respective discipline.



INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Center Associate **David Cardenas** has been busy developing ties with international partners. David was integral in setting up a new collaboration between University of South Carolina's International Programs office and the Universidad San Francisco de Quito in Ecuador. The outcome is the first "USC in the Galapagos" program that includes a Maymester study abroad experience and a semester long sustainable tourism track. In May 2017, four faculty members and 18 students will travel to the Galapagos for three weeks to take part in four different courses (Foundation of Tourism, Ocean and Society, Latin American History and Travel Photography). Then later in the Fall, students will partake in the islands first sustainable tourism track, taking five classes (Wildlife Conservation Biology,



Introduction to Sustainable Tourism, Strategic Planning for Natural Resource Management, Destination Marketing and Island Socio Ecosystems). Students both in the Maymester class and semester long program will live with local families, explore the island, and study and develop strategies to sustain the islands' natural beauty and charm.

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NEWS FROM OUR PHD STUDENTS



Pei Zhang, a fourth-year PhD

candidate of the SmartState Center, has recently received and accepted the job offer from University of Kentucky, as a tenure-tracked Assistant Professor of Retailing and Tourism Management in the College of Agriculture. Her research interests include co-creation experience in tourism and hospitality, peer-to-peer accommodation experience, tourism shopping, and rural tourism.



Bahman Ajdari, a new PhD student,

joins the Center from Iran, via Sweden, after receiving his B.S. in Industrial Engineering and his MSc in Business Administration from Tarbiat Modares University (Iran) and Lulea University of Technology (Sweden) respectively. Bahman has industry experience in branding and marketing, and his particular research interests are in consumer behavior, social media and tourism branding.



Somang Min is another new addition to the Center,

coming to the University of South Carolina from South Korea via Michigan, having received her B.S. degree from Korea University, and her M.S. degree in Hospitality Business Management from Michigan State University. Somang's research interests lie in marketing, consumer behavior, social media, and technology in the hospitality industry. She is particularly interested in how technology can be utilized more effectively and easily for both the industry and the customer.