

The Role of Standardization and Certification Processes in Developing Innovative Tourism Activities

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Abstract

Standardization and certification processes play a crucial role in implementing innovations and novelties in tourism industry. Since not every innovative idea is applicable or suitable to put in practice in the tourism and service sector, some standards or measurements should be working to hold a control over these innovations. Purpose of this paper work is emphasizing the importance of standards and certificates in tourism innovation in different approaches. Main findings can be found as best ways of standards and certification implementations in innovative tourism products and services as well as obtaining prospective profit through this sector, in turn

Keywords: *tourism, standardization and certification, innovations, diversity, economic growth, new goals.*

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1. Introduction.

One of the main objectives of standardization is usually that everybody adheres to the same standards, such as the same procedures or product specifications. This may ease logistical procedures, facilitate trade, prevent consumer deception and improve quality. It is easy to see how standardization facilitates trade and other logistical procedures, if only by looking at the complications that different weight measurement systems can cause. However, increase in quality is not an automatic result of standardization. This will only be achieved when the advocated standard is a "high" standard, namely, when the requirements are an improvement in relation to common practice. [1]

The standards ensure that goods or services produced in a specific industry come with consistent quality and are equivalent to other comparable products or services in the same industry. Standardization also helps in ensuring the safety, interoperability, and compatibility of goods produced. [2] While the purpose of certification is to demonstrate that specified requirements are met. The requirements are usually based on international standards. For example, SFS-EN ISO 9001 is a generic quality management standard that is used as a requirement in the certification of organization's quality management systems. [3]

Standardization is the process of developing, promoting and possibly mandating standards-based and compatible technologies and processes within a given industry. Standards for technologies can mandate the quality and consistency of technologies and ensure their compatibility, interoperability and safety. [4] On the other hand, both standardization and certification processes can be defined as important factors in protecting consumer rights, providing them with the reliable, safe and quality products and services. Standardization and certification are used for every good and service so that everybody adheres to the same standards, such as the same procedures or product specifications.

2. Literature review

A systematic review of the literature related to Standardization and certification was conducted during the research. In addition, the author used the online research database to find relevant materials for the research: Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI), and Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A & HCI). Around 250 papers and articles were analyzed and the most relevant ones were used for shaping and finalizing the research. Excluded papers were not directly related to the topic or the data they contain were not reliable.

Standardization is as old as interactions within larger human communities. The first Chinese emperor, Qin Shi Huang (260 to 210 BC), standardized not only the Chinese characters, but also the system of units and measurements as well as the currency and the width of cart axles. War has often driven standardization. More than 2,500 years ago, Heraclitus stated: "War is the father and king of all." In the American Civil War (1861 to 1865), one of the reasons for the Union's victory against the South was the standardization of its rail tracks. The problem was the difference in track gauges. The Confederate rail network was mostly in the broad gauge format; only North Carolina and Virginia had standard gauge lines. Southern railroads west of the Mississippi widely differed in gauge, making them isolated and disconnected. During the Civil War, the Union government recognized the military and economic advantages of having a standardized track gauge. The government worked with the railroads to promote use of the most common railroad gauge in the U.S. at the time, which measured 4 ft. and 8½ in, a track size that originated in England. This gauge was mandated for use in the Transcontinental Railroad in 1864

and by 1886 had become the U.S. standard. [5] These facts show that the standards were as much important in the past as they are now.

There are also civil examples of standardization benefits. In 1904, a fire broke out in Baltimore. Reinforcements from New York, Philadelphia, and Washington, DC, came to Baltimore to combat the flames. After they arrived, they realized that their fire hoses could not be connected to the fire hydrants. With the lesson learned, the U.S. started many standardization projects. In 1904, the ANSI (American National Standards Institute) was established. A few years earlier, the British Standardization Institute (BSI) had been founded as well.

The process of standardization is sometimes slow compared to the development of technology. Because of this, technology is often introduced first and standardized later. Standardization is slow because all parties should have the chance to comment on the provided drafts and proposals. On the positive side, the slow process avoids standardizing technology that disappears again soon. [5]

Standardization in business is a way to ensure consistent quality in products for organizations. Companies and industries use standards to improve their processes and follow guidelines. Understanding standardization can help you increase your business' productivity and reduce operational costs. In this article, we define what standardization in business is, explain how it works and provide several examples of different ways companies use it. [6]

Currently, importance of standards and certification can be clearly seen in products and services. For example, in health care system, product standardization is the process of reviewing the suppliers and products being purchased, that have little or no variation, across the hospital or health system. This clinical and economic analysis consists of utilizing the hospital's purchasing data to identify opportunities to consolidate and standardize the number of suppliers and products being handled across facilities, contracts, UOMs, product classes, and categories. Potentially resulting in optimization of contracts to leverage better-tiered pricing, consolidation of deliveries, reduction of freight costs, optimization of forecasting, streamlined purchasing and logistics processes, as well as more predictable patient outcomes and increased staff efficiency. [7]

3. Methodology

The method of analyzing previous researches in the field has been used to conduct this research and come to the conclusion. Apart from that, some essential interviews have been carried out with the university tourism direction professors and specialists. The choice of respondents stemmed from several reasons. First, professors, as those surveyed, had accurate knowledge related to the given topic. Second, they had a deep understanding of certification and standardization use in a global context. Everybody wants to use quality products and services but not all people know how to assess the quality of the products they are using with the help of certain standards and certificates. However, as an expert the professors are aware of these.

4. Findings

Standardization refers to the creation and use of guidelines for the production of uniform, interchangeable components, especially for use in mass production. It also refers to the establishment and adoption of guidelines for conduct. In global marketing, the term is used to describe the simplification of procurement and production to achieve economy. In general, standardization determines and promulgates criteria to which objects or actions are expected to

conform. Standardization for manufacturing may entail the creation of production standards, tolerances, and/or specifications. These can be expressed as formulas, drawings, measurements, or definitions. Standards delineate the limits within which products or components must fall in order to be useful and interchangeable. Components that do not adhere to such limits are "nonstandard" or, more commonly, "rejects." Virtually any aspect of a product or component can be standardized. Quality control and testing are used to measure achievement of standards. The use of such standards promotes clear communication within and among organizations. It can also lower the costs of labor, production, and repair. In the current business climate, businesses have demanded ever-increasing standardization from their suppliers as well as from their own production. [8] If the service or good meets the requirements of certain standards there are a range of non-governmental organizations that work on certification of goods and services. Certification is the second step in making people relied on the quality of the product or service in documented way.

Product certification lets you know that a product is safe and reliable. It is a benchmark for product quality, a guidepost leading you to reliable manufacturers. Reputable companies work to minimize and eliminate risk. Product certification demonstrates their commitment to quality and safety. It affirms that products have passed specific performance and quality assurance tests. [9] This process eases the process of product selection for the consumers.

Many electronic devices are well-made and reliable. Many others are made using shortcuts with quick profits in mind. It can be difficult to tell the difference. Product certification is an important clue. Products without certification marks may function as intended (for a while). But they're more likely to be cheaply produced. Uncertified products are more likely to be made from sub-standard components. Components that would fail product safety and quality standards if they had been submitted for testing.

Confirming that electronic and computing products are certified:

- Safeguards health and safety
- Protects productivity and profit
- Ensures reliability
- Guards against liability

Health and safety. Electronic devices that qualify for product certification are safer to use. They've been tested to meet the highest standards for protecting user health and safety.

Productivity and profit. According to OSHA, providing a safe work environment saves companies money. Safe workplaces are more productive. Employees are more comfortable. And motivation and morale are higher.

Work-related injuries and illnesses sap company resources. They increase workers' comp claims and retraining costs. They lead to lost workdays and lower productivity. And they impair the efficient delivery of products and services.

Liability. Using safety-certified products and components is often required by law. Government agencies are a case in point. Another example: The National Electrical Code (NEC) requires the use of UL-listed products.

Product certification is a good idea even when it is not required by law. Using a product tested and certified for safety reduces the risk of legal action. Product certification signals that a company has confidence in their product. And cares about customer safety. It protects against potential liability in the event an injured employee files suit. Failing to use certified products can result in denial of insurance claims. Even when it is not required by law. This can result in costly legal battles.

Reliability. Getting products certified is a lengthy, costly process. Certification marks identify whether a company is committed to the market. A certified product can be counted on to perform safely. It is also a good bet that the company can be counted on for support, too. That is important for ensuring reliable customer service in the long run. [9]

5. Conclusion

Standardization is a voluntary, consensual process. Authorities, standards officials, customers and manufacturers meet to consider mature and emerging technologies. They should operate to a frame of reference specifications.

Take mobile phones for instance. They are governed by standards so work wherever you are. But not plugs and inlets. Because when they were first manufactured, there was no regional or international standards. Only national ones, which explains the situation today. Standardization professionals work ahead of the market, imagining new trends and requirements and taking into account the existing ones. I would say a standard is the touchstone of technology. International standards bodies like ISO and IEC establish the consensual state of the art for mature technologies.

Standards also make marketing sense. They improve your products and open up markets. But you need to supply proof. That means having them assessed and certified to standard. Imagine you make low-voltage switchgear that complies with IEC 60947-2. You need to demonstrate its conformity. That involves submitting to certification by a third-party organization that issues a certificate.

Certification body assesses and certifies conformity with standards. Take China for example. Its conformity mark is CCC (China Compulsory Certification). The third party that carries out conformity assessment is the China Quality Certification Centre (CQC). It delivers certification to the Chinese national standard, GB. So far, so good.

But the picture clouds in the US. There most customers want products that meet the US national standard, UL (in the electrical industry). For them, that means with the UL conformity mark on the package. They mix up standards and certification.

UL is the technical standard of reference. But UL is also a private company that does conformity assessment. It's just one of 18 nationally recognized test laboratories on the US market which provide conformity assessment service in the electrical field. [10]

Standardization and certification is helpful for both the provider and consumer. Since it focuses on the quality measurements, consumers get huge amount of satisfaction from the standardized and certified good or service. This satisfaction, in turn, brings prosperity to the activities of manufacturer or the service provider.

Standardization and certification can cover products, quality, safety, manufacturing processes, etc. But not "solutions" (systems) in areas of growing importance like energy efficiency. It is

the responsibility of all stakeholders to decide if certification can add value to such markets and, if so, to build the right certification schemes. In fact, all stakeholders (big and small) should be involved in conformity assessment and certification and work closely with regulators. [10]

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