



ROLE OF GAMIFICATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TOURISM

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ABSTRACT

Gamification refers to the use of game design elements like rewards, missions, rankings, and fun in non-game or business domains such as education, management, health care, and tourism (Deterding et al., 2011) (Lee B.C., 2019). The principal idea behind gamification is that game design and game elements confer such power to people that it can transform their relation with services, products, policies or even everyday tasks that can be monitored tracked and modeled within a 'gamespace' (Beza 2011). Present paper emphasis on the uses of gamification in business with special reference to tourism industry.

Keywords: Gamification, Tourism Industry, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

Globalisation, communication, mobility and virtuality have been identified as the four dominant trends in our contemporary society and economy, and thus our world is being transformed and indeed revolutionised by developments in information and communication technologies (ICT) (Egger and Buhalis, 2008) (Skinner et al.,2017). In tourism these technological advancements are combined to mobile technology. Following the success of the location-based service Foursquare, the idea of using game design elements in non-game contexts to motivate and increase user activity and retention has rapidly gained traction in interaction design and digital marketing (Deterding et.al 2011). Techniques and mechanisms coming out of game and video game design are proposed as tools which allow greater engagement, contributing to client loyalty (Zichermann & Linder, 2010; Deterding, Dixon, Khaled & Nacke, 2011; Huotari & Hamari, 2012; Nunes et al., 2014). Gamification works by combining commonly used applications, such as customer loyalty programs, with game playing techniques and rewards to create a more entertaining and competitive user experience. This is thought to motivate users more highly and therefore strengthen their engagement and increase brand loyalty (www.thinkdigitaltravel, 2013). Gamification has already been successfully used in marketing, business, health and education (Buhalis et. al 2014). Currently, gamified tourism apps can be differentiated in social games,

where the game prepares the tourist to the visit, and location-based mobile games, where the gamer plays during the visit (Bartoli et al.,2018)

MEANING OF GAMIFICATION:

Gamification is a new term but an old concept. The root of the gamification started with the term “Funware” back in 2008, given by Gabe Zicherman. He defined it as “Funware is the art and science of turning your customer ‘s everyday interactions into games that serve your business purposes” (Zichermann & Linder, 2010; Beza, 2011). The term gamification got popularized in the second half of 2010 after involvement of several industry players.

According to Bunchball.com, "Gamification takes the data-driven techniques that game designers use to engage players, and applies them to non-game experiences to motivate actions that add value to your business".

MOTIVATION BEHIND GAMIFICATION:

According to forbes.com, "Gamification is currently being applied to customer engagement, employee performance, training and education, innovation management, personal development, sustainability, health and wellness and the list continues to grow. Nike built the Nike+ platform to engage fitness enthusiasts to take their workouts to the next level. Khan Academy uses gamification to enhance the learning experience for students. Quirky uses gamification to crowdsource ideas from inventors for product development. These bright spots in gamification are both inspirational and instructional. However, the current hype around gamification disguises the reality of early enterprise implementation".

The reasons behind the people behavior of spending so much time in playing games are the concern of different researchers. Jane McGonigal (2010) answers this by introducing some traits of the gamers by labeling them “super-empowered hopeful individuals”. Those traits are:

1. Urgent Optimism – the desire to act and the belief in achieving success.
2. Social Fabric – the ability to trust and form stronger social bonds through game playing.
3. Blissful Productivity – the belief that the task they are engaging with is meaningful, hence the dedication towards the game task itself.
4. Epic Meaning – the strong attachment to a meaningful and awe-inspiring story that they are personally involved in and striving to make their mark on it. (Beza 2011)

The key principles behind a successful gaming design include:

- Progress bar
- Progression dynamics
- Multiple long term and short-term goals
- Rewards
- Appointment Dynamic: prompted to be in the game
- Uncertainty about awards lies ahead
- Collaboration and engagement with other gamers.

Various awards got by a gamer can be in the form of points, levels, badges, achievements, challenges, trophies, leader boards. For game mechanics, 84% of the gamified systems used points, making it by far the most popular mechanic used, this was followed closely by Challenges, Badges, Leaderboards, Rewards, Badges, Competition and Cooperation. (Khuffash 2013). Game dynamics are successful in influencing people behavior positively as human behavior is driven by desires and games satisfy human psychological and social needs as well.

GAMIFICATION USES IN BUSINESS

U.S. Army is using gamification for the purpose of attracting new recruits and promoting awareness of the U.S. Armed forces through “Virtual Army Experience”.

Gamification can be used as a tool for Motivation and Goal Tracking, as done by Jillian Michaels for encouraging users to stay on track with her fitness programs that can be selected by users that’s most closely aligned with personal goals and lifestyle.

Samsung is getting Social Loyalty and Customer Engagement with creating user-generated content by rewarding users for getting engaged with the community, participating in Q&A discussions with other users, watching videos, reviewing products, and other activities.

Mint.com is fostering financial independence and goal tracking through gamification by helping users to plan secure financial futures with creating a colorful display of money outflow.

Badge Ville solutions given by Kaplan University to enhance its curriculum by encouraging more engaged participation by incorporating challenges and badges, resulted into higher student grades, decreased rates of students failing to complete courses and programs and higher motivational level.



GAMIFICATION IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

Gamification is mostly used in the areas of health and well-being, motivation for sports, sustainability awareness and personal finance. However, gamification can be used by tourism organisations for marketing, sales and customer engagement (external application) or in human resources, training, productivity enhancement and crowd sourcing (internal application) (Buhalis et al.,2014). Within the context of tourism, gamification is expected to increase tourists' satisfaction levels, as it provides better access to desired services and additional opportunities about need-based products and services, social recognition, effective time management, and virtual collaborative learning experiences while touring a destination (Lee B.C., 2019)

In the tourism and travel industry, we can see the inclusion of gamification elements at all stages of the travel cycle. The Holmenkollen Ski Jump by Visit Norway is one of the most prominent examples of how gamified experiences can help raising awareness. Geneva's gamified campaign is one of the most recent travel and tourism campaigns that make use of gamified elements for brand development purposes. The award-winning app of Stockholm Sounds on the other hand, provides a best practice case study of how the adoption of gamified elements creates truly immersive and digitally enhanced tourist experiences. (Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2014).

Recently launched app "Epiclist" is using social gaming elements to encourage users to plan trip, carry them out and share visual contents afterward. One can book the tour even on this app. "Stray Boots" is a new game that is available in the US where travelers or local people can go on an urban adventure, solve fun clues, discover cool spots and learn more about the destination or particular places. (Digital Tourism Think Tank, 2014). Presently, these tours are available in 14 US Cities like Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, and New York and others, with a version for the UK. The cost of the tour lies to \$2 - \$12. On each correct answer, users can earn points. Locals as well as visitors both enjoy game to discover cities in the US. "Sighter" is one of the innovative and new applications for mobile where the user find the nearby locations with their distances and directions on mobile with a goal to find these locations and take the similar photos or can be the first to hide new ones at their location. This is quite an interesting way of doing treasure hunt.

The campaign "Jet off to Geneva" launched by Geneva Tourism & Convention, where the users have to pump water in the lake of Geneva, by pedaling on a bicycle and compete for prizes based

on the amount of water pumped.

Industry	Company	Case description	Gaming elements
Airlines and Transportation	American Airlines	Gamified mobile app represents current elite status qualification visually (American Airlines 2013)	Progress bar points Levels (gold, platinum, executive platinum)
	Turkish Airlines	QR-coded national flags have been placed on 100 digital bus shelters for London 2012. Users who read the code can win a ticket to Australia. Goal is to have most check-ins in one place or individual places (Duncan 2012)	Physical rewards Badges
Retail and Hospitality	Shopkick	Users are engaged with products by applying game mechanics for incentivising offers prior to shop visits. The gamification also involves a geo-targeted approach to drive local engagement. The aim is to influence buyers' behaviour via game mechanics (Edwards 2011)	Virtual currency Rewards Contests
	Starwood SPG program	Partnership with Foursquare to provide customers 250 bonus points per check-in and chances to unlock a hidden Free Resort Night Award (Vittal 2011)	Point system Badges
	Marriott My Hotel	Aim of the social media game is to recruit new staff for job vacancies and familiarise players with various parts of a hotel (MyMarriott 2012)	Point system Levels Virtual goods
Destination	Four-square	Users can claim mayor ships, unlock badges, receive special offers and rewards such as discounts to specific retailers while also tracking against friends via a leaderboard while checking-in at a restaurant etc. (Vittal 2011)	Badges Leaderboard Reward with real world offers

Buhalis et al.2014

Fig.1 Examples of gamification in tourism industry

CONCLUSION

Although the concept of gamification is not too old but it has been accepted widely in all fields such as education, marketing and networking, changing consumer and employee behavior. The success of these objectives entirely depend upon the good understanding of how game elements work to tackle specific human behavior means with carefully analyzing the target audience and its needs. In the tourism industry gamification is proving as a better medium for more customer engagement, destination awareness and community involvement as well.

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