Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management

Vania Vigolo

Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools

Springer

Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management

More information about this series at http://www.springer.com/series/15444

Vania Vigolo

Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools

Springer

Vania Vigolo
Department of Business Administration
University of Verona
Verona
Italy

ISSN 2510-4993 ISSN 2510-5000 (electronic)
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management
ISBN 978-3-319-47734-3 ISBN 978-3-319-47735-0 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017934450

Printed on acid-free paper

This Springer imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

To my family

Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to commend Vania Vigolo's new book titled "Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools" to you. The first two parts of this book present a review of older tourists' behavior, while the third part is aimed at analyzing different companies' approaches to catering for older tourists. It is pleasing to note that Vania has devoted particular attention to how companies define and segment their market and how they manage their marketing mix. It is timely that Vania has devoted this textbook to an examination of the older and baby boomer travel market. The United Nations (2013) has recognized the fact that the older generation is growing at a rapid rate, and estimated that more than 2 billion people will be aged 60 and older by 2050. This will account for 22% of the world's population, compared with only 10% in 2000, and this demographic shift will be seen across all continents.

Since I wrote the first textbook on older tourists in 2006 titled, "Growing Older: Tourism and Leisure Behaviour of Older Adults", tourism has become even bigger business for the increasing numbers of older travelers who are being targeted by marketers and travel companies as a growing niche market. In addition there has been an explosion of academic articles that are targeting senior, baby boomer and older adult travel. There is little doubt that the next wave of tourism businesses to prosper will be those that can effectively market tourism products, services and experiences to the older consumer. Among new trends that have been identified in the research are that older travelers are seeking new experiences and creative personal challenges in their travel behavior, as well as becoming more skilful and knowledgeable consumers that require value for their money. In particular, there is a growing market segment of adventurous, independent and special interest older travelers who are increasingly seeking out niche markets that take them to new, exotic and interesting places that may include educational tourism, adventure holidays, visiting heritage sites, and volunteering holidays. It is hoped that this book will provide tourism marketeers with an in-depth understanding of the challenges

and opportunities facing them in the future so they can more carefully segment the market and better anticipate older individuals tourism and travel needs through a customer-centered approach.

Dr. Ian Patterson
Associate Professor
(recently retired)
School of Business (Tourism Cluster), The University of Queensland
St. Lucia Campus, Queensland, Australia

Reference

United Nations (2013) World Population Ageing. Department of Economic and Social Affairs Population Division. Available at: http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WorldPopulationAgeing2013.pdf

Preface

Population aging is one of the most significant trends of the twenty-first century. By 2030, people aged 60 years and older will outnumber children aged under nine years. Even though this trend is most advanced in high-income countries, population aging is proceeding at a fast pace also in developing and emerging countries, and already has profound social and economic implications. Within this context, an increasing number of individuals of all ages participate in tourism activities. According to recent European statistics, the 65-plus age group has significantly contributed to counterbalancing the negative impact of the economic and financial crisis by increasing both tourist arrivals and overnight stays. Hence, population aging poses new challenges and opportunities to tourism, which is by far one of the most important and dynamic global industries.

For these reasons, the older tourist market a viable and fascinating stream of research for scholars belonging to different fields, including the social sciences, psychology, medicine, the arts and humanities, and business. According to the Scopus database, among business, management, and accounting journals, the number of tourism articles dealing with aging-related topics has increased fourfold from the period of 2000 to 2016. This datum gives an idea of the growing attention tourism scholars are devoting to population aging.

Extant research on older tourists has focused on themes such as socio-demographic and travel characteristics, travel motivations, and psychological factors (Jang et al. 2009). Other scholars have focused on older tourists' accessibility requirements, perceptions of service features, and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) adoption. However, despite its potential, the older tourist market is still under researched, and stereotypical images of older adults are still used in marketing practices. Even though a few scholars have examined tourism organizations and their marketing strategies aimed at older individuals, for example in the context of accessible tourism, the literature has devoted limited attention to suppliers targeting older tourists. Overall, there is a need for a comprehensive analysis of the older tourist market that considers both tourists' behavior as well as suppliers' strategies.

This book aims to provide an in-depth analysis of population aging challenges and opportunities from a tourism marketing perspective by combining a demand-side and supply-side approach to older tourists. The methodological approach used in this book stems from the consideration that tourism marketing must be customer-centered if it is to be successful. Tourism organizations must carefully segment their market and understand—or better, anticipate—their customers' needs and desires to provide successful product, price, place and promotion strategies. In other words, the use of marketing tools should derive from scrupulous and constant marketing research activity. Accordingly, this book first addresses older tourists' characteristics and travel behavior, and then discusses how tourism organizations can develop their marketing strategies to target this specific market segment.

This book consists of three main parts. The first part (Chaps. 1–2) introduces the population aging phenomenon from a tourism marketing perspective. In particular, Chap. 1 presents an overview of the main challenges of aging and addresses some of the most common stereotypes about older consumers. In addition, the chapter begins a depiction of the profile of the older tourist. Chapter 2 provides a review of existing segmentation approaches to older tourists by distinguishing between a priori (or conceptual) methods and a posteriori (or data-driven) methods.

The second part (Chaps. 3–5) adopts a demand-side perspective and focuses on key aspects of older tourists' behavior. Specifically, Chap. 3 analyzes the travel planning process from travel needs to travel organization. Chapter 4 discusses ICT adoption among older individuals and displays how technology is changing travel behavior within this specific market. Chapter 5 deals with older tourists' accommodation choices, focusing in particular on hotels.

The third and last part (Chaps. 6–7) represents the empirical heart of the book and focuses on the suppliers' perspective. To provide some insights into marketing approaches to older tourists, Chap. 6 presents a selection of case studies about travel companies targeting older tourists: a Canadian-based tour operator offering exotic adventure travels, a Slovenian-based tour operator and travel agency specializing in slow garden travels, and a British company offering long-term stay accommodation in southern Europe. Chapter 7 draws on the literature review and the case studies provided in the previous chapters to propose some theoretical contributions as well as a practical toolbox for firms and professionals willing to target older individuals.

From a methodological point of view, the first two parts of the book are the result of an extensive literature review of the top international tourism and hospitality journals and industry reports, as well as of empirical studies conducted by the author during the last five years. In the last part, three original case studies are developed following a qualitative research approach based on semi-structured in-depth interviews. This method enabled a holistic understanding of respondents' experiences that could not have been achieved otherwise, given that the suppliers' perspective has hitherto been under-investigated. The book concludes by encouraging further research in this field in order to respond to the challenges and opportunities of this rapidly increasing segment.

My interest in the older-market segment started in 2012. When talking about macro-trends with my husband, he commented about Lombard Odier's Golden Age Fund, a global equity thematic fund designed to seize the opportunity of the long-term aging population trend across multiple sectors. It invests in equities that derive mainly from the aging population theme, including for example health care products and services, healthy food, cosmetics, leisure, and financial planning. Later, in early 2013, Liz Gill, a colleague from the University of Sydney, held a seminar at the University of Verona and discussed a paper concerning older people's empowerment and social engagement, which stimulated me further to explore the relationship between age and consumer behavior in a research area that has been fascinating me since my master's degree in tourism management.

The book is intended to be a helpful reference work for academics, researchers, postgraduate students, and practitioners in the tourism and hospitality industry willing to deepen their knowledge about the older tourist market and its potentialities.

I am grateful to many people who contributed to the completion of this book. First, I would like to thank Prof. Federico Testa, who over the years supported me in my work and stimulated me to pursue new and challenging areas of research. My gratitude goes to Prof. Marta Ugolini, who generously offered me precious insights and advice during the development of this book. I am also thankful to my colleagues Francesca Simeoni, Fabio Cassia, and Nicola Cobelli for their warm-hearted exchange of thoughts and ideas and their daily presence.

I would like to thank Prof. Claudio Baccarani for his inspirational approach to management studies, and the colleagues at the Department of Business Administration, University of Verona, with whom I have the opportunity to work: Prof. Federico Brunetti, Prof. Elena Giaretta, Dr. Paola Castellani and Dr. Chiara Rossato. I am indebted to Professor Angelo Bonfanti for revising parts of the book and giving me honest and valuable suggestions.

I am also grateful to Dr. Francesca Negri (University of Parma) for her stimulating insights on the relationship between ICT and older tourists.

A special acknowledgment goes to the companies that enthusiastically accepted my invitation to participate in my research: ElderTreks, Viaggi Floreali, and Algarve Senior Living. I am grateful to Amanda Dunning (ElderTreks), Erica Vaccari (Viaggi Floreali), and Luis Teixeira da Silva (Algarve Senior Living) who generously offered me their time and experience, helping me to better understand the older tourist market from a supplier's perspective.

Dialogues with academic and industry experts at several international conferences (in particular, at the Tourism&Aging Conference, the Academy of Marketing Science World Marketing Congress, and the ENTER-Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism Conference) contributed as a stimulus to design the structure of this book. At the Tourism&Aging Conference, held in Lisbon in 2014, I had the opportunity to meet and discuss my work with Prof. Ian Patterson, whose studies about older tourists are a reference point for tourism scholars. His book "Growing Older: Tourism and Leisure Behavior of Older Adults" is a milestone in this field of research.

I would also like to thank Springer's anonymous reviewers for their constructive comments in the first draft of my work. Their suggestions were extremely helpful for improving the manuscript. Last but not least, I am grateful to Maria Cristina Acocella, Assistant Editor of Springer, for her continuous assistance throughout the writing process.

Verona, Italy Vania Vigolo

Contents

Part I
Defining the Older Tourist Market

Chapter 1
Population Aging: Challenges and Opportunities for the Tourism Industry

Abstract In the coming years, people aged 60 years and over will account for 22% of the world population. This trend already has profound implications for many facets of human life, including social and economic activities. Within this framework, the World Health Organization coined the expression "active aging" to define the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security to improve quality of life as people age. According to this perspective, tourism activities represent a major means through which older people can increase their participation in society and enhance their quality of life. After depicting the global demographic trends and the challenges of population aging, the first part of the chapter describes the active aging approach. The second part provides an overview of older individuals as presented in marketing literature and practice. Finally, the potentialities of population aging for the tourism industry are discussed and future trends are presented.

1.1 The Population Aging Phenomenon

In 2000, there were more people over the age of 60 than children under five (HelpAge International 2015). For the first time in history, older people account for a proportionately larger share of the total population (United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA] and HelpAge International 2012). This relentless process, known as population aging, is projected to increase rapidly over time. According to the United Nations' latest population forecast, there will be two billion older individuals by 2050 (United Nations [UN] 2015a, b). Although this phenomenon is now more evident in developed countries, it is happening at a higher speed in developing and emerging countries, where 73% of the world's older population will be living by 2030.

What are the reasons for this phenomenon? Various drivers contribute to population aging; however, there are three main long-term causes: (1) increased life expectancy, (2) declining fertility rates, and (3) a "temporary blip" known as the "baby boom" (The Economist 2009). These are explained briefly below.

V. Vigolo, *Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools*,
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0_1

Increased life expectancy

Life expectancy refers to the average number of years that a population is expected to live. Therefore, in a wider sense, life expectancy is a measure of a country's overall quality of life. In 1950, at the world level, life expectancy was below 50 years, while by 2050 it is projected to reach around 75 years (UN 2015a, b). Life expectancy has increased because of major improvements in nutrition, health care, education, and economic well-being. As a result, infant mortality has decreased and people live longer. Increased life expectancy thus contributes to the increase in the proportion of older people.

Declining fertility rates

Fertility rates have declined by half from five children per woman in 1950–1955 to 2.5 in 2010–2015. According to the World Health Organization (WHO 2002), by the next decade 120 countries will have reached total fertility rates below replacement level (2.1 children per woman). This phenomenon is increasing the acceleration of population aging and, consequently, the younger generations are not able to counterbalance the number of older persons (Lutz et al. 2008).

The "baby boom"

The baby boom is a period of surprising recovery in fertility rates that occurred in the developed countries between the mid-1940s and the late 1960s (Greenwood et al. 2005). For example, in Europe, baby boomers still represent a major part of the working-age population, but many of them are now reaching retirement age (Eurostat 2016). Similarly, in the United States, by 2029, all baby boomers will be 65 years and over and will move into retirement. Even though the number of baby boomers will gradually diminish through mortality, this shift toward an increasingly older population in the United States is expected to continue (Colby and Ortman 2015). Baby boomers were born in a historical context in which the dynamics of reproduction changed dramatically, with a substantial increase in marriage rates, total fertility, and number of births (Van Bavel and Reher 2013).

Population aging and life expectation are not homogeneous among and within countries and may vary according to several factors (Chand and Tung 2014):

- Level of economic development (i.e., developed vs. developing countries): in 1950, life expectancy was around 65 years in the more developed regions, compared with only 42 years in the less developed regions. In the next decades, this gap will narrow and by 2050 life expectancy is projected to reach 83 years in the more developed regions and 75 years in the less developed regions. For example, at the age of 60 a woman in western Europe can expect to live another 25–30 years, while a woman in western Africa can expect to live approximately another 4–15 years.
- Residential area (i.e., urban vs. rural areas): as younger cohorts move to urban areas in search for work, the proportion of older persons in rural areas increases, both in developed and developing regions.

- Gender: in general, women tend to outlive men. This phenomenon is called "feminization of aging" and has profound implications for policy (WHO 2002; Davidson et al. 2011).

Despite an increasing awareness about population aging in several countries at multiple levels such as governments, policy makers, and industries (UNFPA and HelpAge International 2012), there are still many areas of intervention to adequately address the needs of older individuals in terms of poverty eradication, health, food security, equality opportunities, and many others. In wide areas of the world, including the most developed countries, older persons still lack visibility and opportunities for a healthy and secure aging. According to the Public Consultation on the Human Rights of Older Persons, the post-2015 development agenda of the United Nations needs to be sensitive and responsive to how age, gender, and country of residence affect equality, safety, and enjoyment of human rights, especially among older persons.

1.2 Toward a Definition of Older Persons

One of the conceptual challenges of population aging is defining older people. According to the United Nations, available data on older people are still scant and not internationally comparable (UNFPA and HelpAge International 2012). Further, there is no agreement on the definition of "older people". A variety of terms have been used to refer to older persons, including "seniors," "whoopies" (well-off older people), "baby boomers," and "generation between" (Hunter-Jones and Blackburn 2007). In addition, different sources use different criteria to classify older persons. For example, in the World Population Aging report 2015 (UN 2015a, b), the United Nations uses the age of 60 to refer to older people, even though many developed countries use the age of 65 as a threshold for retirement and old age social security benefits. Reports by the International Monetary Fund (2015) and the World Bank (Bussolo et al. 2015) refer to the age group of 65 and older. Specifically, individuals aged 80 or over are also referred to as "the oldest old," the "super senior," or "the fourth generation" (World Economic Forum 2012; AgeUK 2013). These persons represent now 1.6% of the world population, but this will increase to 4.3% by 2050. For instance, in the United Kingdom, the oldest old are the fastest growing age group in the population (AgeUK 2013). Table 1.1 reports some examples of existing labels commonly used to define older people, as well as the corresponding age group.

Despite the practical need to define older persons in terms of age, various studies have highlighted the limitations of considering chronological age as a significant predictor variable of attitudinal and behavioral patterns of older people (Sudbury and Simcock 2009). As a matter of fact, "people frequently perceive themselves to be at an age other than their birth age" (Barak and Schiffman 1981, p. 602). In particular, older people see themselves as considerably younger than their actual

Table 1.1 Examples of definitions of older persons

Label	Age	Source
Seniors	50+	Sudbury and Simcock (2009) Kim et al. (2013)
	65+	Friemel (2016)
Older persons	60+	UN (2015a, b)
Older people	65+	Bussolo et al. (2015), International Monetary Fund (2015), Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre (2015)
Elderly/older people	65+	International Monetary Fund (2015)
Whoopies (well-off older people)	Not specified	Lohmann and Danielsson (2001)
Baby boomers	Born between 1945 and 1964	Pruchno (2012)
Mature	55+	Moschis et al. (1997)
	65+	Nam et al. (2007)
Silver/gray	65+	Beneke et al. (2011)
	50+	Kohlbacher and Chéron (2012)
Oldest old	80+	AgeUK (2013)
The fourth generation	80+	European Commission (2012)
Super seniors	80+	World Economic Forum (2012)
Late seniors	80+	Kim et al. (2013)

Source Author's elaboration

age. For example, in their study about older Japanese consumers, Kohlbacher and Chéron (2012) found that respondents' perception of their age was on average eight years younger than their actual chronological age. Research on self-perceived age strongly suggests that subjective age may contribute more than chronological age to an understanding of older consumers' consumption decisions (Moschis and Mathur 2006).

This book addresses travel behavior and tourism marketing in an aging society, therefore its central focus is on the shift from a youth-centric to an all-inclusive tourism marketing approach. Hence, it does not only address individuals aged 65+ or retired persons, but also individuals who are approaching this stage of their life. In addition, since self-perceived age influences travel behavior much more than chronological age (Muller and O'Cass 2001; González et al. 2009), a stiff age-group division would not be appropriate in the context of this book. The use of the term "older" instead of terms such as "elder," "silver/gray" or "mature" is motivated by a willingness to avoid patronizing or negatively connoted labels. The need to identify new unbiased expressions to refer to (and to talk to) older individuals will be further discussed in Chap. 7.

1.3 Major Challenges of Population Aging

Population aging has relevant social and economic repercussion for individuals, families, and society. Some of the major challenges include financial security, health care, and enabling environments (Jay Olshansky et al. 2011). These challenges also have profound implications for tourism activities, both from a travel behavior perspective and from an industry perspective, as synthesized in the following paragraphs.

1.3.1 Financial Security

In advanced economies, older people often represent the wealthiest part of the population. Several studies have demonstrated the economic power of this cohort (Meneely et al. 2008; Kohlbacher and Chéron 2012). For example, in the United Kingdom over 80% of all private financial wealth is held by the over 50s (Thompson and Thompson 2009). However, as reported by Mumel and Prodnik (2005), there is general agreement that older consumers are not attractive in terms of numbers and spending power.

In particular, older people usually have more discretionary spending power than when they were younger because they have extinguished their mortgages, and they do not have pensions to fund or children to raise (Chand and Tung 2014). Even though great differences between individuals exist, many older people have a considerable purchasing power and are willing to spend on consumer goods and leisure activities, including tourism. For example, as reported by Thompson and Thompson (2009) in the United Kingdom, in 2003–2004 the household spending per person was £178 for the under-30 age group, £175 for the 30–50-year age group, £201 for the 50–65-year age group, and £170 per week for older individuals belonging to the 65–75 year age group.

Financial security is important to secure the well-being of the older population because it assures access to health care, good nutrition, basic services and adequate shelter (UNFPA and HelpAge International 2012). Even though previous research has demonstrated a high level of heterogeneity between individuals with respect to their spending preferences, including tourism expenditures, it has long been recognized that a positive correlation exists between disposable income and intention to travel (Uysal and Crompton 1985; Jang et al. 2004; Dolnicar et al. 2008; Bernini and Cracolici 2015).

1.3.2 Health

The demographic transition to an aging population is associated with an increasing demand for health care and long-term care (UNFPA and HelpAge

International 2012). Chronic diseases such as dementia cause disability and reduced quality of life in both developing and developed countries. Physical or mental disabilities represent a threat to older people's independence because they reduce the ability to carry out daily life activities (WHO 2002). In particular, non-communicable diseases, such as Alzheimer's, are among the main causes of disability for older people and require long-term health care. This situation affects not only individuals but also their family and friends (Gladwell and Bedini 2004). In fact, it is estimated that about 80% of long-term care is still provided by family members and friends (The Economist 2009). Therefore, daily life, including consumption choices and travel decisions for individuals with disabilities, may not only depend on but also affect a larger social context. Further, as emphasized by the WHO (2002), as they grow older, people with disabilities are likely to encounter additional barriers. For example, mobility problems deriving from arthritis tend to get worse with time. Therefore, there is a need not only to cater for older individuals' health needs, but also to prevent diseases and promote a healthy way of life so that individuals can live healthier longer. An increased quality in health is beneficial for single individuals, for their families, and for society as a whole. Moreover, the relation between wealth and health is well established (Bloom et al. 2004) and previous research has emphasized that the marginal utility of consumption declines as health deteriorates (Finkelstein et al. 2013).

From a tourism perspective, health is strictly connected to travel motivations and travel intentions. On the one hand, it has been demonstrated that physical disabilities represent a travel constraint and a deterrent to travel (Buhalis and Darcy 2011; Lee et al. 2012). On the other, health preservation could also become a travel motivation for older people (Mueller and Kaufmann 2001; Smith and Puczkó 2008). In this regard, wellness tourism has greatly expanded in the last decades among all cohorts, including older persons (Chen et al. 2013). The relationship between health and older tourists will be addressed in more detail in Chap. 3 with regard to travel motivations and travel constraints.

1.3.3 Enabling Environments

Thindwa (2001, p. 3) described an enabling environment as:

> a set of interrelated conditions—such as legal, organizational, fiscal, informational, political, and cultural—that impact on the capacity of development actors… to engage in development processes in a sustained and effective manner.

The creation of such support systems is the key to the successful promotion of social development. In particular, physical and social environments influence an individual's ability to enjoy healthy and active aging and a good quality of life (UNFPA and HelpAge International 2012). Mobility in particular is a major concern with regard to older people (WHO 2002). Policy makers as well as industries should move toward an "aging-friendly" approach to mobility rather than think

about disablement. As a matter of fact, disablement processes increase the needs of older individuals, and increase their isolation and dependence (WHO 2002). Enabling environments should enhance the participation of older people, including people with disabilities, in all aspects of society. Some examples of enabling programs, environments, and policies identified by the WHO (2002) include barrier-free workplaces, and modified work environments and work-hours; good street lighting for safe walking; traffic lights that give people more time to cross the street; exercise programs that help older people maintain their mobility; life-long learning and literacy programs; barrier-free access to health centers; and credit access to small business and development opportunities so that older people can continue to work if they need to.

From a tourism perspective, the creation of enabling environments implies providing accessible tourism possibilities for all, including older people with physical or mental disabilities (Buhalis and Darcy 2011). As emphasized by Swain (2004), enabling environments need to incorporate economic, political, and social structures to reduce barriers and increase social participation. Everybody, and not only older individuals, could benefit from improved environments and support. For example, as reported by The Economist (2002), in the late 1990s the Paris public transport network (RATP) asked older passengers what they disliked most. The metro map layout was at the top of their list. Hence, the RATP introduced a simplified and more readable version of the map, originally intended to co-exist with the old one. But all passengers, older and younger alike, immediately appreciated the new map and RATP decided to replace the old one with the revised one, thus improving service quality for locals and tourists as well. However, enabling environments and accessible tourism still represent a critical point that needs to be addressed by single tourism suppliers, as well as destinations (Darcy and Dickson 2009; Michopoulou et al. 2015).

To summarize, financial security, health, and enabling environments are paramount for individuals to remain independent, live actively, and travel for as long as possible. Older adults are more likely to travel if they have disposable income, are healthy and can move in an accessible environment.

1.4 A New Approach to Older Persons: Promoting Active Aging

The path toward the active aging approach has been traced throughout the last 35 years by some key documents concerning the population aging phenomenon. In 1982, the first world assembly on aging was organized by the United Nations, resulting in a document, “The Vienna International Plan of Action on Aging” (United Nations 1983), which called for specific action on several issues, such as health, nutrition, housing and environment, family, social welfare, income security and employment, and education. Nearly ten years later, the “United Nations

Principles for Older Persons" (UN 1991) recognized the older persons' rights to independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment, and dignity. The term "active aging" was first adopted by the WHO in the late 1990s to express a more inclusive message than "healthy aging" and to recognize the factors, other than health care, that affect how individuals and populations age (Kalache and Kickbusch 1997).

Active aging became the central focus of the WHO's "Active Ageing: A Policy Framework" (2002), which still represents a reference point for active aging studies. The framework aimed to support the formulation of action plans to promote healthy and active aging and was developed by WHO's Aging and Life Course Program as a contribution to the Second United Nations World Assembly on Aging, organized in Madrid in 2002. A preliminary version (WHO 2001) had circulated for feedback throughout 2001 at special workshops (held in Brazil, Canada, the Netherlands, Spain, and the United Kingdom). Additionally, in January 2002, an expert group meeting with representatives from 21 countries was organized at the WHO Center for Health Development (WKC) in Japan. As a result, further comments and recommendations were included in the final document, "Active Aging: A Policy Framework," published by the WHO in 2002.

According to the definition provided by the WHO (2002, p. 12) active aging is "the process of optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age." Active aging refers both to individuals and population groups. As stated by the WHO (2002, p. 12):

> It allows people to realize their potential for physical, social, and mental well-being throughout the life course and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capacities, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they require assistance.

Therefore, the term "active" does not only refer to physical ability, but also to the ability of participating in social, economic, cultural, spiritual, and civic affairs throughout one's life. Consequently, people who retire from work as well as individuals with illnesses or disabilities should still have the possibility to contribute actively to society in a variety of forms. From the WHO's perspective, health refers to physical, mental and social well-being. Accordingly, active aging policies and programs that promote mental health and social relations are as important as those that promote physical health (Wiggins et al. 2004).

Promoting active aging to increase autonomy and independence is a key goal for both individuals and policy makers. Moreover, since aging happens within social contexts—whether they be family, friends, work associates, neighbors—interdependence between cohorts and intergenerational solidarity are considered important principles of active aging (Grundy and Henretta 2006). With the active aging approach, the strategic focus has shifted from older individuals' needs to older individuals' rights. Of course, the adoption of healthy lifestyles and active participation are important at all stages of the life course. Further, a healthy way of life (e.g., physical activity, healthy eating, and not smoking) can prevent disease, extend life expectancy and improve quality of life as a person grows older.

The active aging approach "is based on the recognition of the human rights of older people and the United Nations Principles of independence, participation, dignity, care and self-fulfillment" (WHO 2002, p. 13). In this regard, participation in tourism activities can represent a means through which individuals remain active, learn to establish social connections, and improve their quality of life. Further, recent studies argue that there is a close link between tourism and well-being in later life (Morgan et al. 2015) as well as between tourism and healthy aging (Ferrer et al. 2016). Overall, the active aging approach has shifted the focus from chronological aging to toward functional, physical, and mental capacity as people age, while recognizing that these abilities may vary within older individuals (Jay Olshansky et al. 2011).

1.5 Older Persons as Consumers

To fully understand the relevance of a marketing approach specifically tailored for older tourists, it will be useful to recall first how older consumers in general have been traditionally addressed in marketing theory and practice. In particular, the next two paragraphs will point out two major marketing issues related to population aging: (1) the prevalence of a youth-centric marketing, and (2) the existence of stereotypes about older consumers. Then, some considerations about how to address the older consumer market will be provided.

1.5.1 The Ageism of a Youth-Centric Marketing

Traditionally, from the 1950s, marketing has focused on the needs and wants of young and affluent consumers willing to experience fun, novelty, and conformity with peers (Thompson and Thompson 2009). Even though companies have long addressed the older target group for certain product categories, such as hearing devices, drugs, or beauty products, only in the last couple of decades have firms started to devote specific attention to older adults as consumers *tout court*. In fact, in the post-war market, the rapid growth of young and wealthy cohorts had pushed companies to focus on the needs and desires of a young target group (Thompson and Thompson 2009). However, the situation has significantly changed, especially in developed economies. Some countries, such as the United States, responded quickly to population aging, both professionally and in terms of academic research. Conversely, in Europe, where the number of older individuals is projected to grow from 18 to 28% of the population by 2060 (European Commission 2014), both industries and academic research have reacted more slowly to this demographic and societal change (Thompson and Thompson 2009).

According to previous research (Help the Aged 2002), individuals aged over 50 account for 40% of consumer spending, while 95% of advertising targets mainly

consumers under 35 years old. In relation to this, the National Automobile Dealers Association recently declared that the average new car buyer is now 51.7 years old (Wernle 2015). Similarly, according to a car-market research firm (Edmunds.com), in the past five years the proportion of new car buyers aged 55 years and over has increased from 33 to 42% of sales.

As suggested by Thompson and Thompson (2009, p. 1283), "the late twentieth century was an age of youth; the early twenty-first century is an age of maturity." This rapid population aging has been described as a "cultural problem" because there is a profound gap between the quick enhancement of life expectancy and the cultural norms that rule societies (Carstensen 2011; Carstensen and Fried 2012). For example, medical science, which is a key element of culture, has focused more on cures for acute diseases than on prevention of the chronic diseases typical of aging. In addition, physical and social environments as well as institutions are built by and for young populations (World Economic Forum 2012). Most marketing programs are aimed at young target groups, and older consumers are frequently not even considered at the product design stage. Moreover, for products or services specifically designed for older people, on the rare occasions that they do appear in advertisements, the result is sometimes "ageist" (Help the Aged 2002).

The term ageism was introduced by Butler (1969) to define discrimination against older individuals. According to the International Longevity Center report (2006), there are four types of ageism: personal ageism, institutional ageism, intentional ageism, and unintentional ageism. Personal ageism consists of biased ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and practices toward individuals based on their older age. Institutional ageism comprises rules and practices that discriminate against older individuals, while intentional ageism includes biased ideas and attitudes purposefully implemented against individuals based on their older age. Finally, unintentional (or inadvertent) ageism consists of biased ideas, attitudes, or practices that are carried out without the awareness of a prejudice. These types of ageism, in particular personal and unintentional ageism, can be found in some advertising campaigns and marketing activities (Milner et al. 2012). For example, some studies suggest that advertising is mostly focused on younger generations in terms of structure, rhythm, fast-moving sights, and sounds that older audiences may find difficult to tolerate (Nielson and Curry 1997; Casarin 2008; Thompson and Thompson 2009). Furthermore, Pickett (2002) argues that possible decrements in hearing, sight, and information processing because of aging can cause difficulties in understanding the complex sequences and the speed of presentation of many advertisements.

Ageism also emerges from the way older persons are portrayed in advertising. For example, Rozanova (2010) explored how older age is depicted in newspapers, television, and magazines in Canada and Russia, and found that older individuals were underrepresented and often negatively portrayed. In addition, older individuals with disabilities appeared in advertising almost exclusively with regard to assistive devices. Such a negative view of aging portrays age-related changes in physical appearance as highly undesirable (Lewis et al. 2011). In relation to this, a United States study revealed that there is a mismatch between fashion magazines and their

readers. Specifically, as reported by Milner et al. (2012), an analysis of editorial and advertising images revealed that despite older readers representing almost 23% of overall readers, fashion magazines rarely include pictures of women over 40. There are some exceptions though. For example, the global personal care brand Dove, in its "Campaign for Real Beauty," created an advertisement which featured a 95-year-old model and the copy: "Withered or Wonderful? Will society ever accept old can be beautiful?" Viewers were invited to express their vote on the campaign website. This anti-ageism initiative had a viral effect on consumers and Dove declared a 700% growth in product sales in the United Kingdom, where the marketing campaign was introduced, and 600% in the United States within the first two months of the campaign's launch (Milner et al. 2012).

1.5.2 Stereotypes About Older Consumers

A stereotype is a widespread but fixed and oversimplified image or belief of a particular type of person (Oxford English Dictionary, www.oed.com). Repeated exposure to negative stereotypes about aging confirms beliefs, both consciously and subconsciously. As a result, individuals will actively look for information consistent with that belief, thus reinforcing such stereotypes. Some of the most common stereotypes about older consumers found in the literature concern:

- older age image
- brand loyalty
- level of technology adoption
- marital or civil status.

As regards older age image, it has long been shown that older individuals exposed to positive images tend to perform better on both physical and cognitive tasks than those exposed to negative images. Conversely, negative stereotypes affect older people's self-esteem and self-efficacy (Levy and Langer 1994; Guiot 2001; Coudin and Alexopoulos 2010). Furthermore, older individuals with positive perceptions of aging are more likely to take care of themselves and their health than are those with negative perceptions of aging (Levy et al. 2002; Langer 2009).

With respect to brand loyalty, some studies argue that older consumers are more loyal than younger cohorts because after the age of 50, consumer patterns tend to stabilize. For example, Silvester (2003) argues that, in contrast to younger consumers, older consumers are loyal because they have stable preferences, do not need to show off, and are not fashion victims. Lambert-Pandraud et al. (2005) found that older consumers are unwilling to experiment or try new activities, and are brand rigid and conservative. In addition, it has been argued that older customers have limited customer lifetime value in comparison with younger consumers (Thompson and Thompson 2009). Based on these considerations and on the growth size of the younger cohorts in the past decades, firms believed that they should

focus mainly on young consumers to increase their brand equity. However, several studies demonstrate that brand choices for older consumers are just as dynamic as those of the young, and they continue to innovate (e.g., Silvers 1997; Uncles and Lee 2006; Sudbury-Riley 2016). For example, Sudbury-Riley (2016) demonstrated that older consumers are likely to try new brands and introduce them to their friends and relatives. In fact, after 50 years, there are still major life changes that motivate consumers to reconsider their needs, wants, brand preferences, and selection criteria (Hudson 2010).

Another common stereotype that is gradually being overcome is that older consumers cannot cope with technology. Certainly, if they want to target older adults successfully, technological products should be adapted to be more "aging-friendly" and suitable for older consumers. For example, in 2014, Apple and IBM started a partnership to develop an iPad for the Japanese market that is specially designed for older consumers—that is, with simpler interfaces, larger fonts, and several apps for older needs and interests. The relationship between older individuals and technology for tourism purposes will be addressed in Chap. 4.

Stereotypes about older consumers may also concern their marital or civil status. As reported in the Financial Times (Jacobs 2014), based on the experience of some consultancies specializing in the over-50 market, nothing could be more annoying to a single older person than advertising using pictures of happy older couples. At the same time, portraying a single person on his or her own would be risky in terms of symbolism because he or she could appear lonely.

1.5.3 Addressing the Older Consumer Market

As expected, older people do not recognize themselves in such stereotypes. On the one hand, older consumers see themselves as healthy, wealthy, and full of life (Bradley and Longino 2001). In this regard, when Gerber, a United States-based purveyor of baby food, realized that many older consumers with dental and stomach problems were purchasing baby food (i.e., purees) for their own use, it decided to launch a product line called "Senior Citizen." However, older consumers would feel embarrassed to go to the supermarket and buy it, so the company decided to withdrawn the product (The Economist 2002). On the other hand, older individuals do not want to be considered "unrepentant teenagers" (Bradley and Longino 2001) and, of course, expect to be addressed differently than millennials. For example, Moschis (1992) reports a study conducted at Georgia State University's Center for Mature Consumer Studies in which researchers discovered that improper stereotypes of older people in advertising campaigns caused older people to refuse purchasing the advertised products. Sometimes companies might even fear that targeting older consumers would have a negative influence on their reputation. In their study among South African consumers, Beneke et al. (2011) found that older consumers have a negative attitude toward advertising because they feel neglected in favor of younger consumers. It has been argued that such an attitude toward the

older consumer market may be related to the age gap between older consumers and marketers (Thompson and Thompson 2009), especially in the advertising arena (Moschis et al. 1997; Barrie 1998; Carrigan and Szmigin 1999; Trégeur 2002). As a matter of fact, most product managers, brand managers, and advertisers are young. For example, according to the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising, 94% of people employed in agencies are aged under 50 (Trégeur 2002).

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, the older consumer market has been widely recognized as a relevant market segment because of its size, growth rate, and spending power (Moschis et al. 2000; Stroud 2005; Meneely et al. 2008; Thompson and Thompson 2009; Kohlbacher and Chéron 2012; Chand and Tung 2014). According to Beneke et al. (2011), failing to recognize the potential of the older consumer market is a missed opportunity in terms of financial success. However, older consumers are far from being a one-dimensional, uniform market. Nielson and Curry (1997, p. 311) emphasized this concept by stating:

> Over time, only one common characteristic of mature individuals emerged: that they are among the most diverse and idiosyncratic of all age cohorts.

In fact, older individual are said to have less in common with each other than younger people have with their peers because they are no longer moved by the major life-cycle stages (Doka 1992).

As a result, older consumers often demand tailor made products and services (Pak and Kambil 2006). For example, in Japan, the country with the highest proportion of older population, the supermarket chain Aeon, which had previously focused mainly of families, launched a new senior-friendly shopping center in the suburbs of Tokyo where stores and services target older consumers by using large signs and slow escalators, as well as services specifically designed for older individuals. Always in Japan, lingerie manufacturer Wacoal promotes its product line as a fit that complements body shapes of all ages rather than something to remodel older bodies into younger shapes (Smith 2015). In order to grasp the opportunities in the older consumer market, Pak and Kambil (2006, p. 24) argue:

> Managers must understand how senior markets evolve and adapt products and service offerings along multiple dimensions to meet the needs of senior consumers.

With this objective in mind, Ford literally helps young designers to put themselves in older users' shoes to better understand their needs. More than twenty years ago, Ford introduced "the third-age suit", an outfit which adds about 30 years to the wearer's age. The suit restricts the ways in which people move by stiffening knees, elbows, ankles and wrists. The suit also includes a vibration simulator to reproduce Parkinson and comes with multiple sets of colored glasses to simulate eye deterioration typical of older age such as Glaucoma (The Economist 2002).

To conclude, even if the literature has long recognized the diversity and richness of old age in terms of psychographics, lifestyles, and consumer behavior (Sherman et al. 2001), there is a need to conduct further research and trace new directions, both in academic studies and in business.

1.6 Aging and Traveling: Opportunities for the Tourism Industry

Traveling implies a heterogeneity of activities, but its prerequisite is that individuals move between different geographic locations. Specifically, a tourist is a traveler taking a trip to a destination outside his or her usual environment, for at least an overnight stay and for less than a year, for any main purpose (e.g., business, leisure, or other personal purpose) other than to be employed by a resident entity in the country or place visited (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO] 2010). Moving, across short or long distances, is therefore the foundational element of tourism activities. For this reason, the leisure tourism industry has mainly devoted its attention to young and healthy individuals willing to spend their leisure time away from home. Tourism activities for older individuals were, with due exceptions, traditionally limited mainly to religious tourism or social tourism (Minnaert 2014). However, the tourism industry needs to catch the wave of this demographic trend if it is to remain competitive.

1.6.1 Defining Older Tourists

As for older consumers, there is no clear definition of older tourists. Several expressions have been used, such as older travelers, mature travelers, gray or silver tourists, and gray nomads. The age threshold to be consider an "older tourist" varies according to different sources. For example, the age of 50 is commonly used as a criterion to define older adults (e.g., Littrell et al. 2004; Sellick 2004; Sudbury and Simcock 2009; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012; Chen et al. 2013). Following Chen et al., older adults can also be classified into prospective seniors (aged 50–64) and seniors (aged 65 and above). Table 1.2 reports some examples of how older adults have been defined and classified in terms of chronological age in the tourism literature.

Older consumers tend to have a greater amount of leisure time available as most are retired or near to retirement and can thus pursue their hobbies and interests (Le Serre and Chevalier 2012; Losada et al. 2016). In addition, as emphasized in the previous paragraphs, improved health and economic conditions have led an increasing number of older individuals to be willing to travel (Patterson 2006). Today's older travelers are healthier, wealthier, and better educated than older travelers in the past decades. For example, in Australia the 50–69-year-old group holds more than 40% of the nation's wealth and is keen on traveling domestically and abroad (Australian Human Rights Commission 2014). Therefore, older individuals present a relevant market potential (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe 2009).

Looking at the tourism statistics, the potential of the older market emerges from four main indicators: number of tourists, number of trips, length of stay, and travel expenditure. Despite the economic crisis, which affected the tourism industry, between 2006 and 2011 older tourists improved their contribution across all

Table 1.2 Examples of definitions of older tourists

Label	Age	Source
Older tourists	50+	Littrell et al. (2004), Sellick (2004), Le Serre and Chevalier (2012), Chen et al. (2013)
Eldery	55+	Alén et al. (2015)
	60+	Romsa and Blenman (1989), Hung et al. (2015)
Young-old Old Very old	55–64 65–74 75+	Hong et al. (1999)
Pre-seniors	50–64	Caber and Albayrak (2014)
Prospective seniors	50–64	Chen et al. (2013), Vigolo and Confente (2013)
Gray nomads	55+	Patterson et al. (2011), Mahadevan (2014)
Senior tourists	50+	Littrell et al. (2004), Le Serre and Chevalier (2012)
	55+	Hunter-Jones and Blackburn (2007), Sangpikul (2008)
	65+	Chen et al. (2013) Caber and Albayrak (2014)
Mature tourists	Born between 1946 and 1964	Hudson (2010)

Source Author's elaboration

indicators. For example, according to European Statistics (Eurostat 2012), the number of older tourists in Europe increased by 6% between 2006 and 2011. In addition, older tourists traveled more (29% more trips) and longer (23% more overnight stays) than the other cohorts. Specifically, the over 65s spent on average 26.1 nights away from home on long trips in 2011, compared with a general population average of 21.2 days. Older tourists' length of stay was also longer (11 nights against a general average of 9.8). This age group also spent more during their travels (1344 Euros above the general population average of 1203), thus accounting for 20% of all tourism expenditure by European residents in 2011.

In relation to the travel season, some studies found that older tourists are more prone to travel in the off-season (Tiago et al. 2016), thus representing a relevant tool for tourism suppliers and destinations to manage seasonality. With regard to travel organization, older tourists tend to spend more on package trips than do other cohorts. For example, in 2011 the 38% of older tourists' expenditure consisted of package travels (Eurostat 2012). However, as supported by a recent survey (AGE Platform Europe 2015), older tourists tend to be quite autonomous in planning and managing their travels, opting less frequently for all-inclusive packages, and preferring to organize their holidays individually.

Several academic sources agree that older travelers represent a strategic segment for the tourism and hospitality industry. In relation to this, Pizam (2014), editor in chief of the International Journal of Hospitality Management, published an editorial that emphasized the need to expand research from hedonic and business services to new services specifically designed for older individuals.

1.6.2 Emerging Trends in Older Tourists' Behavior

With reference to recent studies (UNWTO 2012; AGE Platform Europe 2015) it is possible to identify some emerging trends that affect older tourists' behavior:

- The change in household compositions (i.e., the shift from traditional large "horizontal" families to "vertical" intergenerational families) is changing the composition of travel parties.
- The increasing number of older individuals living alone implies an increase in the number of single or solo travelers.
- The growing Information and Communication Technology adoption among older individuals has enhanced the possibilities for their autonomous travel organization.
- Population aging entails the need for an increasing proximity to medical care in tourism contexts.
- Minor disabilities due to aging require suppliers to reconsider service design and staff training, especially in transport and hospitality.

These trends challenge tourism and hospitality firms to rethink their marketing strategies and their approach to older tourists to remain competitive, as will be discussed in Chaps. 6 and 7.

References

AGE Platform Europe (2015) European senior citizens' actions to promote exchange in tourism. http://www.accessibletourism.org/resources/escape_fiche.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2010

AgeUK (2013) Improving later life—understanding the oldest old. Age UK, London. http://www.ageuk.org.uk/Documents/EN-GB/For-professionals/Research/Improving%20Later%20Life%202%20WEB.pdf?dtrk=true%20. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Alén E, Losada N, de Carlos P (2015) Profiling the segments of senior tourists throughout motivation and travel characteristics. Curr Issues Tour 3500:1–16. doi:10.1080/13683500.2015.1007927

Australian Human Rights Commission (2014) Older consumers' fact sheet. https://agepositive.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/Older%20Consumers%20Fact%20Sheet.docx. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre (2015) The Mature Economy—The Business of Ageing. The University of Adelaide, Adelaide

Barak B, Schiffman LG (1981) Cognitive age: a nonchronological age variable. Adv Consum Res 8:602–606

Barrie G (1998) Understanding the older consumer: the grey market. Routledge, London, UK and NY

Beneke J, Frey N, Chapman R, Mashaba N, Howie T (2011) The grey awakening: a South African perspective. J Consum Mark 28:114–124

Bernini C, Cracolici MF (2015) Demographic change, tourism expenditure and life cycle behaviour. Tour Manag 47:191–205

Bloom DE, Canning D, Jamison DT (2004) Health, wealth, and welfare. Finance Dev 41:10–15

Bradley D, Longino C (2001) How older people think about images of aging in advertising and the media. Generations 25:17–21

Buhalis D, Darcy S (eds) (2011) Accessible tourism: concepts and issues. Channel View Publications, Bristol-Buffalo-Toronto

Bussolo M, Koettl J, Sinnott E (2015) Golden Aging: Prospects for Healthy, Active, and Prosperous Aging in Europe and Central Asia. World Bank, Washington, DC. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-0353-6

Butler RN (1969) Age-ism: another form of bigotry. Gerontologist 9:243–246

Caber M, Albayrak T (2014) Does the importance of hotel attributes differ for senior tourists? Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 26:610–628. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-02-2013-0103

Carrigan M, Szmigin I (1999) The representation of older people in advertisements. J Mark Res Soc 41:311–326

Carstensen LL (2011) A long bright future: happiness, health and financial security in an age of increased longevity. Public Affairs, New York

Carstensen LL, Fried LP (2012) The meaning of old age. In: Beard J, Biggs S, Boom D, Fried F, Hogan P, Kalache A, Jay Olshanky S (eds) Global population ageing: peril or promise? World economic forum, Geneva, pp 15–17. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_GlobalPopulationAgeing_Report_2012.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Casarin F (2008) Marketing e domanda senior. Giappichelli, Torino

Chand M, Tung RL (2014) The aging of the world's population and its effects on global business. Acad Manag Perspect 28:409–429

Chen KH, Liu HH, Chang FH (2013) Essential customer service factors and the segmentation of older visitors within wellness tourism based on hot springs hotels. Int J Hosp Manag 35:122–132

Colby SL, Ortman JM (2015) Projections of the size and composition of the US population: 2014 to 2060. US Census Bureau: 1–13. https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p25-1143.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Coudin G, Alexopoulos T (2010) 'Help me! I'm old!' How negative aging stereotypes create dependency among older adults. Aging Ment Health 14:516–523

Darcy S, Dickson TJ (2009) A whole-of-life approach to tourism: the case for accessible tourism experiences. J Hosp Tour Manag 6:32–44

Davidson PM, DiGiacomo M, McGrath SJ (2011) The feminization of aging: how will this impact on health outcomes and services? Health Care Women Int 2:1031–1045

Doka KJ (1992). When gray is golden: business in an aging America. Futurist 26:16–21

Dolnicar S, Crouch GI, Devinney T, Huybers T, Louviere JJ, Oppewal H (2008) Tourism and discretionary income allocation—heterogeneity among households. Tour Manag 29:44–52

European Commission (2012) Europe's changing population structure and its impact on relations between the generations. http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-05-96_en.htm. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

European Commission (2014) The 2015 ageing report: underlying assumptions and projection methodologies. European Commission, Brussels. http://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/publications/european_economy/2014/pdf/ee8_en.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Eurostat (2012) Europeans aged 65+ spent a third more on tourism in 2011 compared with 2006. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/3433488/5585284/KS-SF-12-043-EN.PDF/0d45fd84-d6ad-4584-a800-2ac868f17e0c?version=1.0. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Eurostat (2016) Population structure and ageing. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Ferrer JG, Sanz MF, Ferrandis ED, McCabe S, García JS (2016) Social tourism and healthy ageing. Int J Tourism Res 18:297–307

Finkelstein A, Luttmer EF, Notowidigdo MJ (2013) What good is wealth without health? The effect of health on the marginal utility of consumption. J Eur Econ Assoc 11:221–258

Friemel TN (2016) The digital divide has grown old: determinants of a digital divide among seniors. New Media Soc 18:313–331. doi:10.1177/1461444814538648

Gladwell N, Bedini LA (2004) In search of lost leisure: the impact of caregiving on leisure travel. Tour Manag 25:685–693. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2003.09.003

González AM, Rodríguez C, Miranda MR, Cervantes M (2009) Cognitive age as a criterion explaining senior tourists' motivations. Int J Cult Tour Hosp Res 3:148–164. doi:10.1108/17506180910962159

Greenwood J, Seshadri A, Vandenbroucke G (2005) The baby boom and baby bust. Am Econ Rev 95:183–207

Grundy E, Henretta JC (2006) Between elderly parents and adult children: a new look at the intergenerational care provided by the "sandwich generation". Ageing Soc 26:707–722

Guiot D (2001) Antecedents of subjective age biases among senior women. Psychol Mark 18:1049–1071

HelpAge International (2015) Global age watch index 2015: insight report. HelpAge International, London. https://www.ageinternational.org.uk/Documents/Global_AgeWatch_Index_2015_HelpAge.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Help the Aged (2002) Marketing and advertising to older people. http://www.ageuk.org.uk/documents/en-gb/for-professionals/consumer-issues/id2710_marketing_and_advertising_to_older_people_2002_pro.pdf?dtrk=true. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Hong GS, Kim SY, Lee J (1999) Travel expenditure patterns of elderly households in the US. Tour Recreat Res 24:43–52. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014856

Hudson S (2010) Wooing zoomers: marketing to the mature traveler. Mark Intell Plan 28:444–461

Hung K, Bai X, Lu J (2015) Understanding travel constraints among the elderly in Hong Kong: a comparative study of the elderly living in private and in public housing. J Travel Tour Mark 33:1051–1070. doi:10.1080/10548408.2015.1084975

Hunter-Jones P, Blackburn A (2007) Understanding the relationship between holiday taking and self-assessed health: an exploratory study of senior tourism. Int J Consum Stud 31:190–195. doi:10.1111/j.1470-6431.2009.00842.x

International Longevity Center (2006) Ageism in America. International Longevity Center-USA New York, NY

International Monetary Fund (2015) The fiscal consequences of shrinking populations. https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2015/sdn1521.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Jacobs E (2014) Advertisers' ageing dilemma. Financial Times, October 29

Jang SS, Bai B, Hong GS, O'Leary JT (2004) Understanding travel expenditure patterns: a study of Japanese pleasure travelers to the United States by income level. Tour Manag 25(3):331–341

Jay Olshansky S, Bigg S, Andrew Achenbaum W, Davison GC, Fried L, Gutman G, Kalache A, Khaw K-T, Fernandez A, Rattan SIS, Guimarães RM, Milner C, Butler RN (2011) The global agenda council on the ageing society: policy principles. Global Policy 2:97–105

Kalache A, Kickbusch I (1997) A global strategy for healthy ageing. World Health 50:4–5

Kim MJ, Lee CK, Gon Kim W, Kim JM (2013) Relationships between lifestyle of health and sustainability and healthy food choices for seniors. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 25:558–576

Kohlbacher F, Chéron E (2012) Understanding "silver" consumers through cognitive age, health condition, financial status, and personal values: Empirical evidence from the world's most mature market Japan. J Consum Behav 1(3):179–188

Lambert-Pandraud R, Laurent G, Lapersonne E (2005) Repeat purchasing of new automobiles by older consumers: empirical evidence and interpretations. J Mark 69:97–113

Langer EJ (2009) Counterclockwise: mindful health and the power of possibility. Ballantine Books, New York

Le Serre D, Chevalier C (2012) Marketing travel services to senior consumers. J Consum Mark 29:262–270

Lee BK, Agarwal S, Kim HJ (2012) Influences of travel constraints on the people with disabilities' intention to travel: an application of Seligman's helplessness theory. Tour Manag 33:569–579

Levy B, Langer E (1994) Aging free from negative stereotypes: successful memory in China among the American deaf. J Pers Soc Psychol 6:989–997

Levy BR, Slade MD, Kunkel SR, Kasl SV (2002) Longevity increased by positive self-perceptions of aging. J Pers Soc Psychol 3:261–270

Lewis DC, Medvedev K, Seponski DM (2011) Awakening to the desires of older women: deconstructing ageism within fashion magazines. J Aging Stud 25:101–109
Littrell MA, Paige RC, Song K (2004) Senior travellers: tourism activities and shopping behaviours. J Vacat Mark 10:348–362
Lohmann M, Danielsson J (2001) Predicting travel patterns of senior citizens: how the past may provide a key to the future. J Vacat Mark 7:357–366. doi:10.1177/135676670100700405
Losada N, Alén E, Domínguez T, Nicolau JL (2016) Travel frequency of seniors tourists. Tour Manag 53:88–95. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.09.013
Lutz W, Sanderson W, Scherbov S (2008) The coming acceleration of global population ageing. Nature 451:716–719
Mahadevan R (2014) Understanding senior self-drive tourism in Australia using a contingency behavior model. J Travel Res 53:252–259
Meneely L, Burns A, Strugnell C (2008) Food retailers' perceptions of older consumers in Northern Ireland. Int J Consum Stud 32:341–348
Michopoulou E, Darcy S, Ambrose I, Buhalis D (2015) Accessible tourism futures: the world we dream to live in and the opportunities we hope to have. J Tour Futur 1:179–188. doi:10.1108/JTF-08-2015-0043
Milner C, Van Norman K, Milner J (2012) The media's portrayal of ageing. In: World Economic Forum Global population ageing: Peril or promise? pp 25–28. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_GlobalPopulationAgeing_Report_2012.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
Minnaert L (2014) Social tourism participation: the role of tourism inexperience and uncertainty. Tour Manag 40:282–289
Morgan N, Pritchard A, Sedgley D (2015) Social tourism and well-being in later life. Ann Tour Res 52:1–15
Moschis GP (1992) Marketing to older consumers: a handbook of information for strategy development. Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport
Moschis GP, Mathur A (2006) Older consumer responses to marketing stimuli: the power of subjective age. J Advert Res 46:339–346
Moschis GP, Lee E, Mathu A (1997) Targeting the mature market: opportunities and challenges. J Consum Mark 14:282–293
Moschis GP, Lee E, Mathur A, Strauman J (2000) The maturing marketplace: buying habits of baby boomers and their parents. Quorum Books, Westport
Mueller H, Kaufmann EL (2001) Wellness tourism: market analysis of a special health tourism segment and implications for the hotel industry. J Vacat Mark 7:5–17
Muller TE, O'Cass A (2001) Targeting the young at heart: seeing senior vacationers the way they see themselves. J Vacat Mark 7:285–301. doi:10.1177/135676670100700401
Mumel D, Prodnik J (2005) Grey consumers are all the same, they even dress the same-myth or reality? J Fash Mark Manag 9:434–449
Nam J, Hamlin R, Gam HJ, Kang JH, Kim J, Kumphai P, Starr C, Richards L (2007) The fashion-conscious behaviours of mature female consumers. Int J Consum Stud 31:102–108. doi:10.1111/j.1470-6431.2006.00497.x
Nielson J, Curry K (1997) Creative strategies for connecting with mature individuals. J Consum Mark 14:310–322
Pak C, Kambil A (2006) Over 50 and ready to shop: serving the aging consumer. J Bus Strategy 27:18–28. doi:10.1108/02756660610710319
Patterson I (2006) Growing older: tourism and leisure behaviour of older adults. Cabi, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, Cambridge
Patterson I, Pegg S, Litster J (2011) Grey nomads on tour: a revolution in travel and tourism for older adults. Tour Anal 16:283–294. doi:10.3727/108354211X13110944387086
Pickett J (2002) Marketing and advertising to older people. Help the Aged, London
Pizam A (2014) Senior living facilities: the new frontier of hospitality management. Int J Hosp Manag 43:145–146
Pruchno R (2012) Not your mother's old age: baby boomers at age 65. Gerontologist 52:149–152

Romsa G, Blenman M (1989) Vacation patterns of the elderly German. Ann Tour Res 16:178–188. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(89)90066-2
Rozanova J (2010) Discourse of successful aging in the globe & mail: insights from critical gerontology. J Aging Stud 24:213–222
Sangpikul A (2008) A factor-cluster analysis of tourist motivations: a case of US senior travelers. Tourism 56:23–40
Sellick MC (2004) Discovery, connection, nostalgia: key travel motives within the senior market. J Travel Tour Mark 17:55–71
Sherman E, Schiffman LG, Mathur A (2001) The influence of gender on the new-age elderly's consumption orientation. Psychol Mark 18(10):1073–1089
Silvers C (1997) Smashing old stereotypes of 50-plus America. J Consum Mark 14(4):303–309
Silvester S (2003) You're getting old. Young & Rubicam, London
Smith JW (2015) Brands must adapt to an ageing world. Financial Times, May 27
Smith M, Puczkó L (2008) Health and wellness tourism. Routledge, London
Stroud D (2005) The 50 plus market: why the future is age-neutral when it comes to marketing and branding strategies. Kogan Page, London
Sudbury L, Simcock P (2009) A multivariate segmentation model of senior consumers. J Consum Mark 26(4):251–262
Sudbury-Riley L (2016) The baby boomer market maven in the United Kingdom: an experienced diffuser of marketplace information. J Mark Manag 32:716–749. doi:10.1080/0267257X.2015.1129985
Swain J (2004) Disabling barriers, enabling environments. Sage, London
The Economist (2002) Marketing to the old. Over 60 and overlooked, August 8
The Economist (2009) A slow-burning fuse. special report: ageing populations, June 25
Thindwa J (2001) Enabling environment for civil society in CDD projects. World Bank, Social Development Family, CDD Learning Module, 2001, Washington, DC
Thompson NJ, Thompson KE (2009) Can marketing practice keep up with Europe's ageing population? Eur J Mark 43(11/12):1281–1288
Tiago MTPMB, de Almeida Couto JP, Tiago FGB, Faria SMCD (2016) Baby boomers turning grey: European profiles. Tour Manag 54:13–22
Tréguer JP (2002) 50+ marketing: marketing, communicating and selling to the over 50s generations. Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke
Uncles M, Lee D (2006) Brand purchasing by older consumers: an investigation using the Juster scale and the Dirichlet model. Mark Lett 17:17–29
United Nations (1983) Vienna international plan of action on ageing. United Nations, New York. http://www.un.org/en/events/elderabuse/pdf/vipaa.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
United Nations (1991) The United Nations principles for older persons. United Nations, New York. http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OlderPersons.aspx. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
United Nations (2015a) World Population prospects—the 2015 revision, United Nations, New York. https://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Publications/Files/Key_Findings_WPP_2015.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
United Nations (2015b) World population ageing 2015. United Nations, New York. http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/ageing/WPA2015_Report.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (2009) Older Persons as consumers. Policy brief on ageing, 3:1–9. https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/_docs/age/2009/Policy_briefs/Policy-brief-Old_persons.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
United Nations Population Fund and HelpAge International (2012) Ageing in the twenty-first century. United Nations population fund and HelpAge international, New York, London. https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/Ageing%20report.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
United Nations World Tourism Organization (2010) International recommendations for tourism statistics 2008. United Nations world tourism organization, New York. http://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/Seriesm/SeriesM_83rev1e.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Uysal M, Crompton JL (1985) An overview of approaches used to forecast tourism demand. J Travel Res 23(4):7–15

Van Bavel J, Reher DS (2013) The baby boom and its causes: what we know and what we need to know. Popul Dev Rev 39:257–288

Vigolo V, Confente I (2013) Older tourists: an exploratory study on online behaviour. In: Zheng Xiang Z, Tussyadiah I (eds) Information and communication technologies in tourism 2014. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp 439–452

Wernle B (2015) Car buyers getting older, richer, NADA economist says. Automotive News, August 4

Wiggins RD, Higgs PF, Hyde M, Blane DB (2004) Quality of life in the third age: key predictors of the CASP-19 measure. Ageing Soc 24:693–708

World Economic Forum (2012) Global population ageing: Peril or promise? http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_GlobalPopulationAgeing_Report_2012.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

World Health Organization (2001) Health and ageing: a discussion paper. http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/66682/1/WHO_NMH_HPS_01.1.pdf. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

World Health Organization (2002) Active ageing: a policy framework? http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/active_ageing/en/. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Chapter 2
Segmentation Approaches to Older Tourists

Abstract Recognizing the differences between tourists is the first step toward competitive advantage. Segmentation allows the identification of groups of tourists who share some common characteristics and who are likely to respond similarly to marketing stimuli. Various approaches exist to segment tourist markets. Some scholars distinguish between a priori and a posteriori methods. While a priori methods involve conceptual classifications, a posteriori methods consist of the analyses of empirical data to derive a grouping. Proceeding from this classification, this chapter first presents a review of the main segmentation approaches that can be used to cluster older tourists and then provides directions for future research in segmentation studies.

2.1 Segmentation in Tourism Studies

Most tourism scholars and practitioners agree that segmentation is a key prerequisite of successful marketing strategies. With reference to the tourism market, segmentation can be considered a form of grouping tourists who share common needs and characteristic with the aim of predicting future tourist behavior and directing specific marketing strategies (Tkaczynski et al. 2009). The segments should have a good "strategic fit" with an organization's resources, core competences, and external environmental factors (Morritt and Weinstein 2012). Segmentation criteria include, for example, demographic or psychographic characteristics, travel needs, and motivations (Bieger and Laesser 2002). To be effective, market segmentation should lead to the definition of clearly identifiable, measurable segments, accessible in terms of distribution and communication. Segments should also be substantial in terms of sales and profitability, stable, and differential (Bieger and Laesser 2002).

V. Vigolo, *Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools*,
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0_2

There is no consensus in the literature about the most effective segmentation criteria for older tourists. When referring to "older" tourists, age is used as an implicit segmentation criterion; however, as argued by Ward (2014), the aging process varies considerably among individuals because people grow old biologically, psychologically, and socially at different times during their lives. For this reason, some scholars have long criticized the use of bare chronological age as a segmentation variable for older tourists (Moschis et al. 1997).

The aim of this chapter is to provide a review of the main segmentation approaches that can be used to cluster older tourists. Accordingly, the following paragraphs will provide a review of the literature belonging to two main streams of research: the most common types of segmentation approaches in tourism, and segmentation approaches to older individuals in tourism studies.

2.2 A Classification of Segmentation Approaches in the Tourism Literature

Tourism literature recognizes two major types of segmentation approaches: (1) a priori or conceptual segmentation (Mazanec 1992) or commonsense segmentation (e.g., Dolničar 2004), and (2) a posteriori (Mazanec 1992), post hoc (e.g., Wedel and Kamakura 2012), or data-driven segmentation (Mazanec 1992; Dolničar 2004, 2008).

In tourism studies, conceptual segmentation has been considered an approach that leads to the definition of a typology in which the grouping criteria are known in advance, that is, a priori (Dolničar 2004). This type of segmentation is based on theoretical elements. In her review on segmentation studies published in the Journal of Travel Research between 1990 and 2004, Dolničar (2004) argued that the most common type of segmentation used in tourism studies is a priori segmentation. Some examples of a priori segmentation in older tourists include segmentation based on cohorts (e.g., millennials vs. baby boomers), or classifications based on type of tourists (e.g., older motorcoach travelers). Dolničar (2008) also outlined the following four steps of a priori (commonsense) segmentation: in Step 1, the researcher chooses a segmentation criterion, in Step 2 the respondents are grouped in segments according to such criterion. Then, in Step 3, statistical analyses help the researcher to identify significant differences between segments, and finally, in Step 4, the researcher assesses the usefulness of the market segments from a managerial and marketing perspective.

A posteriori segmentation is based on analysis of the data to gain insights into the market and decide which segmentation criteria are the most effective in that specific context (Dolničar 2008). While typologies are theoretically based and derive from a discretionary selection of variables (i.e., a priori), taxonomies are empirical by definition (Bailey 1994). Starting from an empirical data set, for example the result of a guest survey in a hotel, a posteriori segmentation uses quantitative analysis techniques to empirically derive a grouping (Dolničar 2002). A posteriori segmentation based on data analyses was introduced by Haley (1968) and has been adopted in tourism studies since the 1980s (e.g., Calantone et al. 1980; Mazanec 1984). Since then, several studies have adopted an a posteriori segmentation approach in the tourism literature (Dolničar 2008). Examples of this approach used to cluster older tourists include an analysis of travel motivations or vacation activities (e.g., Le Serre and Chevalier 2012; Chen and Shoemaker 2014; Alén et al. 2015). The advantages of a posteriori segmentation include the validation of data-driven segment solutions that are used for marketing planning, more in-depth-research into a certain market, provision of a basis for forecasting, the possibility of regularly evaluating the effectiveness of the segments, and the applicability to multi-period data (Dolničar 2004).

In reviewing and categorizing the segmentation approaches in tourism, Dolničar (2004) further classified a priori and a posteriori segmentation as follows: (1) purely commonsense segmentation, that is, a priori segmentation based on existing knowledge of which tourist characteristics are relevant for grouping visitors; (2) purely data-driven segmentation, based on a posteriori analyses; (3) a priori segmentation followed by a posteriori segmentation; and (4) two rounds of a priori segmentation, in which tourists are classified on the basis of conceptual criteria in two subsequent steps.

2.3 Segmentation Approaches to Older Tourists

Most scholars agree that the older tourist market is far from homogeneous and therefore segmentation is needed (Sangpikul 2008a). Several studies have attempted to segment the older tourist market according to a number of different criteria; however, no systematic analysis about segmentation criteria has been conducted. This chapter will categorize the studies according to the a priori and a posteriori segmentation approaches to provide a systematized analysis (Fig. 2.1). In Table 2.2, a classification of segmentation studies about older tourists, published between 1982 and 2016, is proposed.

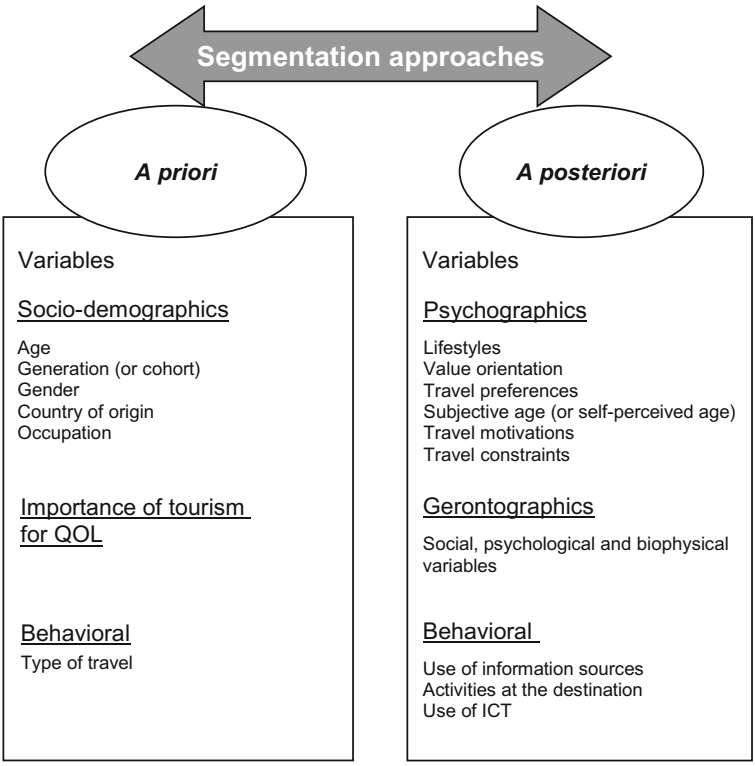

Fig. 2.1 Segmentation approaches to older tourists: a classification. *Source* Author's elaboration

2.4 A Priori Segmentation Approaches

The main a priori segmentation approaches identified in the literature are based on socio-demographic criteria. Socio-demographic variables include elements such as age, generation or cohort, gender, country of origin, and occupation. A priori segmentation criteria are often used by tourism organizations as a means to address certain segments of tourists. For their relevance in older tourist studies, age and generation segmentation criteria will be addressed separately in Sects. 2.4.1 and 2.4.2 respectively, while other socio-demographic variables will be reviewed in Sect. 2.4.3. A priori segmentation can also be based on the perceived importance of tourism activities for quality of life (QOL), as reported in Sect. 2.4.4.

2.4.1 Age

Tourists have traditionally been divided into groups in terms of chronological age (Swarbrooke and Horner 2006). Age represents the most frequently used type of a priori segmentation criterion for older tourists. For example, one of the first studies to address market segmentation for older tourists (Anderson and Langmeyer 1982) used the age of 50 as a segmentation variable and compared under-50 and over-50 travelers. A number of studies have used the age of 50 as a commonsense criterion to define older tourists (e.g., Hawes 1988; You and O'Leary 1999; Kim et al. 2003; Littrell et al. 2004; Sund and Boksberger 2007; Jang and Ham 2009; Patterson and Pegg 2009; Nimrod and Rotem 2010; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012; Chen et al. 2013; Ward 2014). However, different age thresholds have been used to define older tourists (see Chap. 1). Some scholars used the age of 50 (e.g., You and O'Leary 1999; Littrell et al. 2004; Sund and Boksberger 2007; Jang and Ham 2009; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012) or 55 (e.g., Javalgi et al. 1992; Mathur et al. 1998; Backman et al. 1999; Hong et al. 1999; Muller and O'Cass 2001; Fleischer and Pizam 2002; Hsu and Lee 2002; Reece 2004; Sangpikul 2008b; González et al. 2009; Chen and Shoemaker 2014; Alén et al. 2015). Other studies have focused on the 60-plus (e.g., Horneman et al. 2002; Boksberger and Laesser 2009) or the 65-plus age groups (Lawton 2002; Borges Tiago et al. 2016) because "in several countries those over 62 or 65 years of age are granted senior benefits" (Borges Tiago et al. 2016, p. 14).

Some other scholars provided a priori classification of older tourists into different age groups. For example, Javalgi et al. (1992) explored the differences in the use of package trips, travel agents, and other travel-related characteristic between three age groups: the under 55s, the 55–64s, and the 65s-plus. Further, some scholars have segmented older tourists according to different grades or levels of "olderness." Hong et al. (1999) provided a classification of United States older tourists by grouping them into three categories: the "young-old" (aged 55–64), the "old" (aged 65–74), and the "very old" (aged 75+). Similarly, Sund and Boksberger (2007) divided older tourists into "pre-seniors" (aged 50–59) and seniors (aged 60 +), though defining as "the real seniors" only those individuals over retirement age (65 years in Switzerland).

Some scholars have employed age as an a priori segmentation criterion in pure commonsense segmentation studies Dolničar (2004). For example, Anderson and Langmeyer (1982) compared the under and the over 50s. Nevertheless, most often, age represents the first a priori segmentation criterion for subsequent data-based analyses. For example, Borges Tiago et al. (2016) used age as the first step of their segmentation, followed by data-driven segmentation based on traveling preferences.

Exceptionally, some studies have identified age based on a posteriori data-driven analyses. For example, Ananth (1992) measured the median age (59 years) of the respondents to define the two segments under study: "mature travelers" and "younger travelers". In this sense, age can also be used as a posteriori segmentation criterion.

2.4.2 Generation or Cohort

Recent studies about older tourists have considered tourists not for their individual age, but for their belonging to a specific generation, which is generally considered to range over 10 years (Kim et al. 2003), or cohort. A "cohort" has been described as "people within a delineated population who experience the same significant event within a given period of time" (Pilcher 1994, p. 483). Generational segmentation implies, for example, considering the baby boom generation rather than older tourists in general. An example of cohort descriptions with reference to the north American market can be found in Table 2.1, which compares "the matures" with "the baby boomers" (by describing them in terms of television series, music, and significant events).

The role of generation on travel behavior has been addressed in the literature, mainly using one of the following frameworks: (1) theory of generations, (2) human life-cycle theory, and (3) continuity theory (Chen and Shoemaker 2014). What

Table 2.1 Cohorts' features in the United States: the matures and the baby boomers

The matures	"Whom do you think of when you hear the word Doctor? Well, if you are a member of the Mature generation, you probably think of Dr. Spock (…) We were born before 1945 and number 50+ million. We are Clint Eastwood, Queen Elizabeth II, Jack Nicklaus, Betty Ford, and Rosy the Riveter. And yes, we are even the Rolling Stones. Born before 1945, we are still a powerful economic force. We came of age in the shadows of the economic turmoil, common enemies, and America's emergence as a major force in the world and in our daily lives. Our attitudes toward life and work were formed in the throes of the Great Depression, the New Deal, two world wars, rationing, and the GI Bill. We were marked by tough times that required us working together for victory. As a result, we value teamwork, self-discipline, sacrifice, hard work, and putting money away for a rainy day. We believe in duty, institutions, authority, patriotism, and law and order. And, in our minds, rewards are earned"
The baby boomers	"We are Jimmy Buffett, Demi Moore and Clarence Thomas. We are Bill and Melinda Gates, Dorothy Hamill and Scott Hamilton, as well as Barbie and Ken. We are baby boomers. Born between 1945 and 1964" (…) "Some call us the 'Me' generation because we were the first group of Americans to put our own needs and desires ahead of the good of the group. We came of age in a period of great economic prosperity, marked by the expansion of suburbia, a television in every home, two cars in every garage, and a college education in our future. Our attitudes toward life and work were formed in the throes of mass marketing, Woodstock, Vietnam, the Pentagon Papers, the resignation of a President, assignations of iconic leaders, and the Miranda decision. As a result, we value individuality, personal growth, and involvement. We have high expectations and demand top service. We celebrate youth, have a health and wellness focus, and will 'retread' not retire. For us, work is an adventure and rewards are deserved. And for us, the future is now"

Source Author's elaboration on Knutson (2008). Reprinted from the Hotel Business Review with kind permission from www.HotelExecutive.com

these theories have in common is that they emphasize generation or cohort and demographic effects on travel behavior.

As reported by Chen and Shoemaker (2014), Mannheim (1952) introduced the theory of generations (or sociology of generations) based on the consideration that individuals of the same age belonging to the same socio-historical context in which remarkable events characterized their youth share "certain definite modes of behavior, feeling and thought" (Mannheim 1952, p. 291). In other words, individuals belonging to a certain cohort share unique value systems, personalities, and behavioral traits that distinguish them from other generations. Warnick (1993, as in Chen and Shoemaker 2014) was one of the first scholars to examine cohort effects on domestic travel in the United States and found significant differences between baby boomers (i.e., individuals born between 1946 and 1964) and the "silent generation" (i.e. individuals born between 1925 and 1945). Based on a survey conducted in Canada and the United States, Lehto et al. (2008) corroborated Warnick's (1993) findings by comparing travel experiences between the baby boomers and the silent generation. The results show that there exist some cohort differences between the older baby boomers and the silent generation regarding the kind of tourism experience sought and the actual vacation activities taken. You and O'Leary (2000) conducted a generational cohort comparison between "young seniors" (55–64) in two time periods: 1986 and 1995. They also performed a longitudinal study between the 45–55-year-old group in 1986 and the 55–65-year-old group in 1995. The findings support the dominance of the cohort effect over the age effect.

Life-cycle theory, also called the "life span perspective" or "theory of human development stages," derives from psychology studies. Erikson (1963) identified eight phases in life that a person normally experiences: infant, toddler, preschooler, school-age, adolescent, young adult, middle-aged adult, and older adult. Later, scholars grouped these phases into four main phases: childhood, young adulthood, mid-adulthood, and elder adulthood. In the tourism literature, Lawson (1991) suggested that the relevant life-cycle stages are "young single," "young couple" (with no children), "full nest" (with children), "empty nest" (children have left home), and "solitary survivor" (the widow or widower). In each phase, individuals take different social roles and have different value systems. As individuals grow older, their beliefs, attitudes, values, and physical condition change and influence their behavior (e.g., Lepisto 1985). However, a common difficulty encountered by scholars addressing life-cycle theory is that not everyone fits into standardized family life-stage definition (Sund and Boksberger 2007). Based on Lawson's classification, Sund and Boksberger (2007, p. 6) argued that the relevant stages for the study of older tourists would be "empty nest I" (still working), "empty nest II" (retired) and "solitary survivor". For example, Romsa and Blenman (1989) divided older Germans into four age cohorts (30–39, 40–49, 60–69, and over 70) and emphasized that the use of two cohorts of older individuals was intended to help understanding that motivations change in the retirement stage.

Life-cycle theory has been recently addressed in older tourist studies with regard to the role of grandparents in intergenerational travels. The relevant stages for the

study of older tourists would presumably in this case be "empty nest I" (still working), "empty nest II" (retired) and "solitary survivor." Accordingly, in their study about Israeli older individuals, Fleischer and Pizam (2002) found that the number of vacation days taken tend to decrease in the 65-plus older cohort compared with the 55–65-year-old cohort. Recently, Chen and Shoemaker (2014) identified interactive effects between generations. In particular, life-cycle stages affect not only older tourists' perceived travel barriers, but also their attitude toward leisure travel, their destination selection, and their travel activities. Hence, Chen and Shoemaker (2014) stress that it is important to segment older tourists by life-cycle stage (e.g., 55–60, 61–70, 71–80) rather than by chronological age.

While life-cycle theory generally emphasizes differences between stages of life, continuity theory maintains that during the aging process, a large proportion of older individuals tend to show consistency in psychological characteristics as well as in behavioral traits. In other words, older adults tend to have the same values, attitudes, emotions, and behavior through time, despite their changing physical, mental, and social status (Chen and Shoemaker 2014). For example, Shoemaker (2000) divided respondents in two cohorts: 55–64 and 65-plus and compared their travel motivations, attitudes, destination selection, perceived barriers, and travel activities with the responses provided by older tourists in a study he had conducted ten years earlier (Shoemaker 1989). The findings showed that the older tourist market in Pennsylvania had remained relatively stable over a decade. In their study of German tourists, Lohmann and Danielsson (2001) found that travel propensity, or patterns of tourist behavior, remained the same for about 20 years for a given generation, and so they concluded that, in accordance with continuity theory, the travel patterns of individuals tend to be stable over time and therefore older tourist behavior might be predicted from their past experiences.

In line with continuity theory, Chen and Shoemaker (2014) found that the motives, attitudes, destination selection criteria, and travel activities of older tourists did not change radically across life-cycle stages and generations. Specifically, the same cohort of older tourists did not change as they advanced through the aging process in their travel motives, attitudes, destination selection criteria, or travel activities. In addition, older tourists at different life-cycle stages within the same generation did not differ across that same set of variables. Further, they found that tourists tended to be more homogeneous beyond 61 years of age. Finally, older tourists at the same life-cycle stage but belonging to different generations did not differ across the same variables.

2.4.3 Socio-demographics

Besides age and generation, some of the most frequently used demographic variables to segment older tourists include gender, country of origin, and occupation. Several empirical studies about older adults address gender differences between groups of the sample in a posteriori analyses. However, in line with the purpose of

this section, hereafter only those studies are presented that consider gender as a major a priori segmentation variable. Regarding this, some studies about older tourists have focused on gender-based segments. For example, Hawes (1988) explored the tourism-related lifestyle profiles of women aged 50 and older. The findings show that the socio-demographic profile of those interested in tourism experience included higher education and income levels, small household size, activeness, and acceptance of the uncertainty involved in traveling. More recently, Hughes and Deutsch (2010) conducted a qualitative study on older gay men living in the United Kingdom, thus including gender, lifestyle, and a specific country of origin.

Several studies of older tourists have focused on a specific market of origin, be it a region, a country, or a more circumscribed area. For example, one of the first segmentation studies about older tourists (Vincent and De Los Santos 1990) addressed older "winter Texans" (i.e., tourists who travel to Texas and stay at least for one month during the winter season). Traditionally, from a geographic point of view, most segmentation studies addressed countries where population aging is already a significant phenomenon, such as Australia (Horneman et al. 2002; Kim et al. 2003), the United States (Sangpikul 2008a; Jang and Ham 2009) and Japan (You and O'Leary, 2000). Other countries have been explored, as well. For example, Boksberger and Laesser (2009) explored older Korean tourists and identified travel constraints and the types of travel experiences these tourists demand. Nimrod and Rotem (2010) focused on Israeli retirees who had traveled abroad at least once in the year prior to the survey. More recently, some studies have addressed European countries. In this regard, Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) focused on French retirees, and Carneiro et al. (2013) investigated older Portuguese tourists undertaking social tourism initiatives.

Fewer studies have dealt with older tourists' country of origin in a comparative approach. For example, Caber and Albayrak (2014) compared the importance of hotel attributes for three market segments identified based on tourists' country of origin (German, Dutch, and British) and found significant differences between the three markets. For example, Dutch senior tourists gave more importance to food service attributes ("small food portions" and "special dietary menus") than did the other respondents. However, further research is needed to identify similarities and differences between tourists belonging to different countries of origin.

Retirement has traditionally been considered a discriminant variable to identify older individuals. Sund and Boksberger (2007) went as far as to define "real seniors" to be only those individuals over retirement age. Several studies have argued that because of their additional free time and increased flexibility, older individuals tend to dedicate their additional free time to leisure activities, traveling in particular (Nimrod and Rotem 2010; Jang and Wu 2006; Lehto et al. 2008). In addition, some scholars showed that older tourists tend to stay longer at the destination compared with non-retired tourists (Blazey 1992; Wang et al. 2005). Hence, several studies about older tourists have used retirement as an a priori segmentation variable (e.g., Cleaver et al. 1999; Nimrod and Rotem 2010; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012). A few studies (e.g., Tongren 1980; Blazey 1992) compared

differences in travel behavior between the retired and non-retired members, based on the consideration that retirement is more effective than age to segment older individuals because it concerns the stage in the life-cycle in which individuals share common characteristics. Blazey (1992) found that travel and interest in travel activities tend to remain constant after retirement. Conversely, Fleischer and Pizam (2002), in their study about Israeli retirees, argued that the age group between 60 and 70 (i.e., individuals who are just before or after retirement) present the longest vacation. Besides being used as an a priori segmentation criterion, retirement status has been often used to help profile clusters identified on the basis of a posteriori segmentation criteria, such as travel motivations or travel constraints.

2.4.4 *Importance of Tourism Activities for Quality of Life*

Tourism studies have long shown that travel contributes to QOL for older tourists (Javalgi et al. 1992) and creates new interests in their lives (Lee and Tideswell 2005). The QOL construct first emerged in the 1960s. QOL can be described as "a person's sense of well-being, satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life, or happiness or unhappiness" (Dolničar et al. 2013. p. 725) and a "conscious cognitive judgment of satisfaction with one's life" (Rejeski and Mihalko 2001, p. 23). It can be measured either uni-dimensionally or multi-dimensionally in terms of overall life satisfaction, or satisfaction about specific domains. Other authors argue that overall life satisfaction relates to happiness within many individual life domains (e.g., Lee and Sirgy 1995, as in Dolničar et al. 2013). According to Dolničar et al. (2013), travel and tourism play a triple role in contributing to QOL by providing: (1) physical and mental rest and relaxation; (2) personal development space and the pursuit of personal and social interests; and (3) symbolic consumption to enhance status. QOL is also a subjective and dynamic concept that can change over time, even for the same person.

Dolničar et al. (2013) extended the QOL literature in the context of tourism and introduced a new segmentation base that could beneficially be used to segment older tourists. Based on the assumption that not all people want to travel, Dolničar et al. (2013) proposed a "Grevillea Model of the Importance of Vacations for QOL" and tested it empirically among Australian respondents. The *Grevillea* is an Australian native flower known for its beautiful blossom, and it was used as a metaphor to explain the importance individuals attribute to tourism in their lives. Based on a survey, an a priori or commonsense segmentation study was conducted by separating respondents into three groups: those who dragged the vacations item onto the Grevillea's stem, indicating that vacations are core to their QOL; those who dragged the vacations item onto the Grevillea's flower, indicating that vacations enhance their QOL; and those who dragged the vacations item onto the grass next to the Grevillea, suggesting that vacations do not affect their QOL. The results revealed that a minority of Australians (10%) perceive vacations as critical to QOL, while the majority (about 60%) perceive vacations contribute to, but are not

essential to QOL. The remaining 30% indicated that traveling does not contribute to their QOL. The first cluster contained the highest proportion of retirees, as well as some full-time workers, and they tended to be high income earners. Individuals belonging to this group were motivated to experience new things and adventures, have fun and be entertained, gain social recognition, and escape from everyday routine. From a managerial perspective, this implies that it is worth promoting the positive effect of vacations on QOL. In addition, Dolničar et al. (2013) found that vacations' importance to QOL changes over the stages of life.

A recent study further investigated the role of tourism experiences for QOL in the framework of activity theory. As argued by Kim et al. (2015), to understand older tourists' behavior, major psychosocial theories such as disengagement theory and activity theory have been developed and applied. Disengagement theory, developed by Cumming et al. (1961), proposes that the aging process involves a reduction in activity, and therefore older tourists gradually choose to "withdraw from active life and focus on inner fulfillment" (Kim et al. 2015, pp. 465–466). Conversely, activity theory criticizes disengagement theory and supports an understanding that the increased discretionary or free time available to retired individuals provides the opportunity for maintaining high activity levels or roles that are essential for life satisfaction and enrichment. Based on this theory, Kim et al. (2015) hypothesized that "vacation experience" itself can contribute to older individuals' overall QOL. The findings of their study conducted among retirees in South Korea show that satisfaction with trip experience affects leisure life satisfaction, and leisure life satisfaction influences one's sense of well-being (one's QOL) and revisit intentions.

2.5 A Posteriori Segmentation

To cluster older tourists in a posteriori segmentation studies, some of the most frequently used criteria include psychographics, gerontographics, and behavioral variables.

2.5.1 Psychographics

Psychographics can be defined as "the development of psychological profiles of consumers and psychologically based measures of distinctive modes of living or lifestyles" (Hsu 2002, p. 4). Psychographics include, for example, the assessment of an individual's lifestyle, value orientation, personality, and opinions (e.g., about travel) (Kotler et al. 2006). In tourism studies, different definitions of psychographic variables can be found. The common ground for the use of psychographic segmentation is the idea that lifestyles, attitudes, opinions, and personalities of

individuals can affect people's travel behavior (Swarbrooke and Horner 2006). As a matter of fact, since tourism activities are highly related to self-concept and consumers are often highly involved in them, psychographics can represent an effective way to increase precision in market segmentation (Hsu 2002).

This section proposes a selection of psychographic variables often used to segment older tourists: lifestyles, values and travel preferences. The following subsections will then discuss in more detail some psychographic variables that are considered particularly relevant when grouping older individuals: subjective age or self-perceived age (Sect. 2.5.1.1), travel motivations (Sect. 2.5.1.2), and travel constraints (Sect. 2.5.1.3).

With regard to lifestyle-based segmentation studies, several scholars agree that lifestyle changes with age and that today's older tourists are more active and independent than those of the past (Hawes 1988; Muller 1996; Patterson 2006; Hung and Petrick 2009; Alén et al. 2014, 2015). Alén et al. (2015) argue that older tourists' lifestyle is now based more around entertainment and the enjoyment of traveling in their leisure time than it was for previous generations. Lifestyle has been used as a segmentation variable for older tourists since the 1980s. For example, Hawes (1988) identified three distinct travel-related lifestyle profiles for older women. Muller (1996) developed four lifestyle-based typologies for Australian baby boomers, which were adopted in a subsequent study (Muller and Cleaver 2000) to establish which of the baby-boomer lifestyle segments would be more attractive for adventure tourism products. Lifestyle in relation to sexual orientation has been explored in a qualitative United Kingdom–based study (Hughes and Deutsch 2010) to profile older gay men in terms of holiday requirements.

Some scholars also segmented older tourists based on their value orientation. For example, Mathur et al. (1998) segmented older travelers based on "value orientation" intended as lifestyle and attitudinal variables, while Cleaver et al. (1999) used personal values in combination with other psychographic variables to profile older tourists.

Finally, travel preferences represent an effective segmentation criterion in several studies. For example, Backman et al. (1999) segmented nature-based travelers according to activity, interest, and opinion scales describing nature-based benefits sought by tourists. Hsu and Lee (2002) classified motorcoach travelers on the basis of traveling preferences by using tour operator and tour package selection attributes. More recently, Borges Tiago et al. (2016) profiled tourists according to traveling preferences measured in terms of the quality of the accommodation, safety of the accommodations, natural features, general price levels, how tourists were welcomed, and the quality of the activities or services available. Based on the travel perceptions of older Koreans tourists, Lee and Tideswell (2005) identified four clusters: "constrained travelers" (the biggest cluster), "quality-of-life-seeking travelers," "ambivalent travelers", and "novelty-seeking travelers" (the smallest cluster). With particular regard to holiday type preferences, Horneman et al. (2002) used psychographics and demographic characteristics to segment the older Australian tourists and identified six segments, namely: "conservatives" (which represent the highest proportion in the sample), "pioneers", "aussies", "big

spenders", "indulgers", and "enthusiasts" (less than 5% of the sample—the lowest proportion of the sample). Sometimes, preferences for service factors can also be used to segment older adults. For example, Chen et al. (2013) segmented older tourists attending hot spring hotels in Taiwan based on their evaluation of the importance of key items for spa services.

2.5.1.1 Subjective Age or Self-perceived Age

The concept of subjective age was first introduced by Tuckman and Lorge (1953) in gerontology studies and has later developed to describe a set of non-chronological age variables (Barak and Gould 1985). As argued by González et al. (2009), the questioning of chronological age as a segmentation criteria for older tourists arises because numerous studies in geriatrics and psychology show that older individuals tend to see themselves as being younger than their actual age. Subjective age has also been described in terms of cognitive age. In their study, Mathur et al. (1998) found that the cognitive age of all the segments (value orientation–based as well as chronological age–based) was less than that of their respective chronological age. Also, the difference between chronological age and cognitive age for "new-age elderly" (i.e., as opposed to "traditional elderly") was almost 12 years. Muller and O'Cass (2001) conducted a study among the 55-plus age group dividing respondents into two segments: "the young at heart" and "the not so young at heart." The findings show that the subjectively "younger senior" felt in better health, sought fun and enjoyment in life, traveled for physical stimulation and a sense of accomplishment, and had higher expectations of a holiday. Subjective age was measured in two ways: felt age ("I feel as though I am in my …"), and activities age ("While on a travel holiday, the activities I would choose to experience or enjoy would be those of a person in their …"). The cognitive age scale developed by Barak and Schiffman (1981) was adapted and 14 half-decades were provided as response categories (early 20s, late 20s, early 30s, late 30s, right through to late 80s or older). The results showed a discrepancy between an individual's chronological age and his or her subjective age. The magnitude of the gap between actual and subjective ages was computed for each person by subtracting subjective age from actual age. About 8% of respondents considered themselves to be older than their chronological age, while the majority of respondents felt younger than their actual age (about half of them had gaps of nine years or less, and half had gaps of 10 years or more).

González et al. (2009) used cognitive age as a segmentation variable for people aged over 55. Cognitive age was measured with the following dimensions: actions, interests, feelings, health, thinking, and expectations. A survey among individuals aged 55 and older who had been involved in travel activities in the previous year was conducted. The cluster analysis identified two segments—"active livers" and "stable passives"—who differed both in travel motivations and behavior.

Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) deepened the investigation launched by prior researchers (e.g., Mathur et al. 1998; Sellick 2004) by introducing discrepancy age, defined as the gap between the cognitive age and the ideal age. The authors

developed a multivariate segmentation model combining travel motivations, travel perceived risks, discrepancy age, and demographic variables.

Overall, scholars tend to agree that how individuals feel and how they would like to be regarded can be used to predict their travel behavior more effectively than their chronological age.

2.5.1.2 Travel Motivations

Travel motivations are the "socio-psychological motives that predispose the individual to travel" (Yuan and McDonald 1990, p. 42). Understanding tourists' motivations is particularly significant for practitioners if they want to satisfy tourists' needs and desires more effectively (Sangpikul 2008b).

Travel motivations have long been used as a segmentation variable in tourism studies. Shoemaker (1989) was one of the first scholars to segment older tourists based on tourism motivation. He identified three market segments: "family travelers," "active resters," and "older set." The first cluster represents passive individuals who use pleasure tourism as a way to spend time with their immediate families and do not like to plan their trip in advance. The second cluster is composed of very active individuals who use tourism as a means to reach intellectual and spiritual enrichment; for relaxation purposes, to escape the everyday routine; and for socialization purposes, to meet people and socialize. The third cluster is also very active, but prefers all-inclusive hotels and resorts.

Building on Shoemaker's study, Vincent and De Los Santos (1990) explored older winter Texans and found their study group to resemble Shoemaker's "active resters" and "older set." These individuals preferred to plan their travels, stay for long vacations, and undertake several tourist activities. Those who stayed in parks matched closely the profile of "active resters," while those who rented apartments, homes, or condos had characteristics similar to those of the "older set."

Lieux et al. (1994) found that older tourists can be segmented into more detailed groups. They surveyed individuals aged 55-plus in the United States. Based on the motivations for choosing a pleasure destination and lodging preferences, three clusters were identified: "novelty seekers", "active enthusiasts", and "reluctant tourists." Only active enthusiasts could be readily interpreted in terms of tourism motivation. This group participated in many activities with enthusiasm. Novelty seekers and reluctant tourists were less easily interpreted by their travel reasons using multiple discriminant analysis.

Motivations are widely accepted as push factors for travel behavior (Pearce and Caltabiano 1983). The theory of push and pull factors assumes that tourists are pushed by their own needs and motivations and pulled by destination attractions (Dann 1981). In this framework, You and O'Leary (1999) used push and pull factors to segment older British tourists. They identified three clusters: "passive visitors," "the enthusiastic go-getters" and "the culture hounds." Push and pull factors were also considered by Horneman et al. (2002) who profiled older tourists according to their demographic and psychographic characteristics, including the

evaluation of different holiday settings. Six market segments were used to highlight the differences that exist in terms of holiday attractions, travel motivations, and information sources used among older tourists when planning and choosing a holiday. Sangpikul (2008a) also adopted the theory of push and pull motivations to investigate travel motivations of United States older travelers to Thailand. The results of factor analysis identified three push and four pull factor dimensions. Among them, novelty- and knowledge-seeking, and cultural and historical attractions are viewed as the most important push and pull factors, respectively. The cluster analysis revealed two distinct segments within the United States older tourist market: the "cultural and historical seekers" and the "holiday and leisure seekers." More recently, Ward (2014) segmented older Irish individuals based on an examination of their push and pull travel motivations. From this analysis, four distinctive segments were identified, namely enthusiastic travelers, cultural explorers, escapists, and spiritual travelers.

Boksberger and Laesser (2009) segmented older Swiss travelers by means of travel motivations and identified three clusters, two of which partially resemble life cycles: "time-honored bon vivants," who are toward the end of their professional life; "the grizzled explorers," who are retirees; and "the retro travelers," who differ from the previous groups in terms of education and professional positions. Based on travel motivations, Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) segmented French retirees in four groups: "the relaxed intellectual senior travelers;" "the knowledge hunter senior travelers;" "the hesitating, non-intellectual and non-sportive senior travelers;" and "the active and open-minded senior travelers." These segments differ considerably in terms of travel behavior characteristics.

More recently, Carneiro et al. (2013) conducted a market segmentation of Portuguese older tourists participating in a social tourism program based on motivations. Three clusters emerged: "the passive seniors," "the socio-cultural seniors," and "the active seniors." Chen and Shoemaker (2014) explored travel motivations across generations. Specifically, they used the responses to the variables measuring travel motivations for pleasure travel in the 2006 data to cluster individuals into mutually exclusive groups.

Alén et al. (2015) identified the existence of various profiles of older tourists by means of using socio-demographic variables, motivation, and travel characteristics. Five market segments were identified according to the behavioral variables analyzed that allow marketers to target older tourists in the most convenient manner and to exploit new market opportunities. Some scholars have also defined motivation-based segmentation as "benefits segmentation" (e.g., Ahmad 2003; Nimrod and Rotem 2010). This segmentation method focuses on the desirable consequences sought from tourism.

Overall, travel motivations have been widely used in older tourist studies and scholars argue that they provide an effective segmentation criterion. Sellick (2004) emphasized the importance of combining several psychological characteristics (e.g., travel motivations, travel risk perceptions, cognitive age, and demographic

characteristics) when segmenting the older tourist market. However, as pointed out by Le Serre and Chevalier (2012), few new motivations have been revealed in the last decades and further studies should be conducted to segment tourists on the basis of more aging-related criteria.

2.5.1.3 Travel Constraints

For older tourists, travel constraints represent a particularly important segmentation criterion since aging can be associated with a gradual decline or increased difficulties in mobility or health conditions. Travel constraints have been described as barriers or factors preventing older individuals' participation in tourism activities (Nielsen 2014) and the tourism literature has segmented tourists according to perceived travel constraints (e.g., Li et al. 2011). However, while motivation factors are often used to cluster older tourists, few contributions have used travel constraints as a segmentation variable for older adults. For example, Kim et al. (2003) explored the motivations and concerns of older West Australians (aged 50 and over) that were relevant to domestic and international holiday travel and identified four groups: "active learner", "relaxed family body", "careful participant", and "elementary vacationer." In addition, travel constraints is one of the six dimensions of travel perceptions that emerged in the study conducted among older Koreans by Lee and Tideswell (2005). In this study, constraints included difficulties related to travel organization (e.g., obtaining information), perceived health, affordability, and other people's conditionings (e.g., "Other people tell me I am too old to travel" or "My spouse dislikes travel"). This construct was then used as a clustering variable and four groups were identified. The largest segment (43% of respondents) was labeled "constrained travelers," and it consisted mainly of females who tended to be 65 years and older. This group faced several constraints and had low energy to travel (i.e., traveling and travel arrangements were considered tiring activities). Even though the constrained travelers did not consider travel to be important for their QOL, they thought that travel activities would alleviate their boredom.

2.5.2 The Gerontographic Approach to Older Tourists

The concept of gerontographics is based on several of social, psychological, and biophysical variables. As described by Moschis (1996), the gerontographic life-stage model classifies older adults into four groups based on the amount and type of aging they have experienced. The first of the four groups is the "healthy indulgers". This group represents 18% of the 55-and-older population. Because they have experienced the fewest life-changing events, members of this group behave like younger consumers. "Healthy hermits" are the second group and

represent 36% of the 55-and-older group. Moschis (1996) claims that members of this group are most likely to have experienced life events that have affected their self-concept and self-worth, such as the death of a spouse. Members of this group do not want to be considered old and often do not accept their limitations. The third group is the "ailing outgoers", which represents 29% of those 55 and older. Members of this group, unlike the healthy hermits, accept their "old age" status and acknowledge their limitations. The fourth group consists of "frail recluses", who make up 17% of those 55 and older. Members of this group have accepted their old age status and have adjusted their lifestyles to reflect physical declines and changes in social roles.

According to Sudbury and Simcock (2009), one weakness to these general models is that few demographic differences between segments emerge. To develop useful profiles of older consumers, it would be more effective to use a wide variety of variables, including demographics. Although Moschis (1996) did not discuss travel and tourism in his review of consumer typologies, it can be hypothesized that each group would have different attitudes toward travel. Even though the gerontographic approach has not been much used in tourism studies yet, it could offer the opportunity to target specific segments of older consumers with specific offerings.

2.5.3 Behavioral Variables

Behavioral segmentation has been used in the literature, both in a priori and in a posteriori approaches, depending on the specific behaviors investigated. For behaviors that can easily be divided into categories, the a priori method was used. For example, travel type is usually considered to comprise a priori segmentation criteria: nature-based tourism (Backman et al. 1999) or motorcoach tourism (Hsu and Lee 2002) are some examples. However, data-driven research is needed to segment older tourists on more complex behavioral variables.

For example, Littrell et al. (2004) focused on travelers aged 50 and over and explored their tourism activities and shopping behaviors during travel. Travel activities included outdoors, cultural, and sports and entertainment tourism. Consequently, three profiles of older tourists emerged, namely "active outdoor/cultural tourists", "cultural tourists," and "moderate tourists." These profiles differed according to the importance given to shopping during travel, the likelihood for shopping at retail venues, preferred shopping mall characteristics, and the sources of travel information about shopping.

Nimrod and Rotem (2010) examined the associations between older tourists' behavior and perceived benefits. In their study among Israeli retirees, who had traveled abroad at least once in the year prior to the survey, the authors identified four differentiated sub-segments based on their destination activities, but the differences between them in terms of the benefits gained were rather minor. Nimrod

and Rotem (2010) argued that a balance mechanism in older adults' tourism leads to maximization of benefits in different activities and/or circumstances.

Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) identified the profiles of older travelers using segmentation criteria based both on aging and on behavioral tourism variables. A questionnaire was submitted to retired French people. Using behavioral variables, cluster analysis was performed and four distinct segments were identified: each differed considerably from the others regarding a set of variables, including consumer behavior variables.

Alén et al. (2015) explored the existence of various profiles of older tourists by means of using socio-demographic variables, motivation, and characteristics of travel of seniors. In particular, Alén et al. (2015) considered sources of information as a travel characteristic that can be effectively used to segment older tourists.

In recent years, the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has also gained increased attention as a segmentation variable for older tourists. In this regard, Pesonen et al. (2015) adopted a qualitative approach to profile Finnish older tourists according to their use of online travel services. Three types of tourists emerged: "adventurous experimenters," "meticulous researchers," and "fumbling observers." In addition, Wang et al. (2017) explored the relationship between ICT usage and tourism behavior of Chinese older outbound travelers. Four clusters of ICT usage emerged, thus emphasizing the differences in the use of technology for travel purposes among older tourists. Nevertheless, more data-driven research on older tourist behavior is needed to identify new meaningful segmentation variables.

2.6 Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

From the literature review conducted in this chapter it emerges that, even though an age reference is useful in practical terms when addressing older individuals, it would not be of much value to define older tourist just in terms of age. Cohorts, or better, perceived age would provide a more useful segmentation criterion than just chronological age. The older segment is extremely heterogeneous in terms of socio-demographic characteristics, psychographics, attitude, and travel behavior. In this sense, future research should use multiple segmentation criteria, which could help to grasp more deeply the multi-faceted nature of this heterogeneous group (Faranda and Schmidt 1999). The importance of tourism for QOL should also be addressed in more detail to distinguish lack of interest in traveling from possible travel barriers. Future research could further explore the role of gender differences in travel motivations and behavior and the role of travel companions. Recent statistics (Laesser et al. 2009) highlighted the increased number of solo travelers who require specific guarantees, for example in terms of personal safety, and who expect not to be penalized by the tourism industry, which often imposes "price penalties" (i.e., supplements for solo travelers) rather than seize the opportunity presented by this specific segment.

Table 2.2 A selection of segmentation studies

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Anderson and Langmeyer (1982)	x		50+	A priori	Age	The study revealed that under-50 and over-50 travelers differ on a number of important dimensions. The findings show that the over-50 travelers have needs and expectations for vacation that could result in their responding to promotions, advertising, and travel packages that would be ignored by the under-50 group
Hawes (1988)	x		50+	A posteriori	Lifestyles	This study focused on older travelers. The results suggest three distinct travel-related lifestyle profiles, distinct differences between some of the age groups, and managerially useful media preference pattern differences
Romsa and Blenman (1989)	x		60–69; 70+	A priori	Cohorts	This paper analyzes vacation patterns of older Germans within the contextual framework of an environmental motivational model. The influence of age and environmental factors on tourist participation is examined by comparing the behavior of four age groups (younger vs. older). Motivations inducing tourist travel were found to be similar across age cohorts, while spatial patterns vary. The older travelers tend to seek less stressful modes of transportation and vacation habitats

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Vincent and De Los Santos (1990)	x		Retired	A priori	Type of travel and destination	The older winter traveler to Texas is profiled and an existing market segmentation theory is compared and extended to this specific market
Ananth (1992)	x		59+	A posteriori	Age	The median age (59 years) of the respondents was used to define the two segments under study: mature and younger travelers. The mature travelers have certain needs and expectations that influence them to ignore certain marketing promotions that may well be successful with younger travelers, and vice versa. Furthermore, some specific attributes are very important to mature travelers, yet are not promoted in lodging operators' marketing campaigns (e.g., grab bars, night lights, extra blankets, and medical facilities)
Javalgi et al. (1992)	x		55+	A priori	Age	The study focused on the behavior of senior citizens in the pleasure travel marketplace of the United States. The demographic differences among consumers under 55, 55 to 64 and 65+ are explained. It also explains the differences between senior and non-senior pleasure travelers with respect to types of pleasure trips taken

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Mathur et al. (1998)	x		55+	A posteriori	Value orientation	This study segmented older individuals based on value orientation. Two clusters emerged: new-age elderly and traditional elderly. These segments were compared with two age-based segments (55–64 and 65 +). The findings show that older consumers' value orientations are an effective segmentation approach for travel services
Backman et al. (1999)	x		55+	A priori/a posteriori	Psychographics	This study explored differences and similarities in the older nature-based traveler market in the United States. The study supports the use of psychographic variables to differentiate the older nature-based market
Cleaver et al. (1999)	x		Retirees	A posteriori	Travel motives and values	This study focused on retirees and addressed their travel motivations, preferences for holiday destination types, favorite mode of travel, and personal values. The findings led to the identification of seven travel motive segments: nostalgics, friendlies, learners, escapists, thinkers, status-seekers, and physicals
Faranda and Schmidt		x		A priori/a posteriori	Multiple segmentation (e.g., cohort, self-perceived age, and life satisfaction)	This study examined the key factors that affect travel decision making, attitudes, and behavior of older tourists. After discussing relevant segmentation research, it recommended additional variables to improve the effectiveness of segmentation models

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Hong et al. (1999)	x		55+	A priori	Age	Using the 1995 Consumer Expenditure Survey, this study (a) examined the travel-related expenditure patterns of United States households headed by individuals 55 years old and older; and (b) used a double-hurdle model to identify factors that influence the decision to travel and the level of travel expenditure among the older segment. The total sample was divided into three groups: young-old (aged 55–64), old (aged 65–74) and very old (aged 75+). Older households spend the most on transportation, followed by food, lodging, sightseeing and entertainment, and other travel expenses. Travel expenditures increase at early stages of aging, but decreasing at late stages of aging
Fleischer and Pizam (2002)	x		55+	A priori	Age cycles/cohorts; country of origin	A survey of Israeli senior citizens was conducted to identify factors that affect their decision to take vacations for differing lengths of time. Their tourism motivation was found to be a function of income and health, but their trip duration changes with age. Between 55 and 65 years of age, expanding leisure time and increased household income cause an increase in the number of vacation days taken. In the older age group (65+), declining incomes and deterioration of health cause a decrease in the number of vacation days taken

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
You and O'Leary (1999)	x		50+	A priori	Travel push and pull factors	Using travel push and pull factors, the older British travelers' market is segmented into three distinct groups: passive visitors, the enthusiastic go-getters and the culture hounds. The three segments exhibit distinct differences in demographics as well as their destination participation patterns, travel philosophies, trip frequencies and other travel characteristics
Muller and O'Cass (2001)	x		55+	A priori	Subjective age	This study explored how older individuals feel, how healthy they feel, and their personal values, travel motives, travel risk perceptions, travel patterns and holiday destination preferences. This study divides older individuals into two groups: the young at heart and the not so young at heart. The findings show that the subjectively younger travelers feel in better health, look for fun and enjoyment in life, travel for physical stimulation and a sense of accomplishment, and have higher expectations of the holiday. In addition, they are more easily disappointed if the holiday is not satisfying

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Smith and MacKay (2001)	x		60–75	A priori	Age (younger vs. older)	This study investigated age-related differences in memory for pictures of tourist destinations. Ninety younger and 90 older adults viewed four pictures of tourist destinations and later recalled the content of the pictures. With destination familiarity and education variables statistically controlled, there were no age differences found in pictorial memory performance
Horneman et al. (2002)	x	x	60+	A posteriori	Push and pull factors	This study profiled older travelers according to their demographic and psychographic characteristics. Six market segments emerged with differences in terms of holiday attractions, travel motivations, and information sources used when planning and choosing a holiday
Hsu and Lee (2002)	x		55+	A priori (motorcoach travelers) + a posteriori based on tours selection criteria	Motorcoach tour selection attributes	This study focused on older motorcoach travelers. Three segments are identified on the basis of motorcoach tour selection attributes: the dependents, sociables, and independents. The three market segments also had significantly different age, retirement status, education, and income

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Lawton (2002)	x		65+	A priori	Type of travel; age	A survey of 1140 ecolodge patrons in Australia found that the older adult (65 years and older) component was similar to their younger counterparts in adhering to the basic ecotourism criteria of preferring natural environments, learning experiences, and sustainable practice. However, older adults differed with respect to the facilitation of these experiences, preferring a higher level of comfort and less risk
Kim et al. (2003)	x		50+	A posteriori	Demographics, motivations attributes, concerns attributes	This paper presents a descriptive analysis of neural network methodology and provides a research technique that assesses the weighting of different attributes and uses an unsupervised neural network model to describe a consumer-product relationship. This analysis is used to identify what trade-offs older travelers make as they decide their travel plans. Four segments were identified: active learner, relaxed family body, careful participants, and elementary vacation
Littrell et al. (2004)	x		50+	A posteriori	Tourism activities	This study developed profiles of older travelers based on travel activities (outdoors, cultural, and sports and entertainment tourism). In addition, it compared profiles on shopping variables. Three profiles of older tourists included "active

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
						outdoor/cultural tourists," "cultural tourists" and "moderate tourists." Profiles differed on the importance attached to shopping during travel, likelihood for shopping at retail venues, preferred shopping mall characteristics, and sources of travel information about shopping
Reece (2004)	x		55+	A priori	Age; destination	This explored the demand for household leisure travel to South Carolina for senior and non-senior households. The results show that two variables affect senior households' leisure travel behavior differently from non-senior households' behavior: housing type and distance. Housing type may represent unmeasured income arising from homeowners' equity
Lee and Tideswell (2005)	x		60+	A priori/a posteriori	Cohort; travel perceptions	Through a self-completion survey of 200 Korean residents over the age of 60 years, this study explored the attitudes of this market toward leisure travel. The constraints that may restrict the travel propensity of senior Koreans and the types of travel experiences they demand are revealed. Four distinct segments of senior Koreans were obtained: quality-of-life-seeking travelers; constrained travelers; ambivalent travelers; novelty-seeking travelers

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Sund and Boksberger (2007)	x		50+	A priori	Age	This study explored the willingness to pay for holiday rentals and travel preferences, among Swiss households. The findings show significant differences between both non-seniors and seniors, as well as between pre-seniors (50–59-year-olds) and seniors (age 60+)
Lehto et al. (2008)	x		Born between 1925 and 1964	A priori	Cohorts	This research explored two generational cohorts: the "silent generation" (individuals born between 1925 and 1945) and the baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964). The study examined the differences in travel experience preferences of the two generational cohorts and assessed how inter-cohort differences manifest themselves in behavioral and vacation activity participation patterns
Sangpikul (2008a)	x		55+	A posteriori	Pull motivational factors (destination-based)	This study explored the United States older segment in terms of travel-related behavior and motivations to visit Thailand. This study also examined the possibility of segmenting the United States senior travel market by utilizing attribute-based benefits segmentation (pull motivational factors). The study revealed two distinct segments within the United States older travel market (i.e., "cultural and historical seekers" and "holiday and leisure seekers")

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Boksberger and Laesser (2009)	x		60+	A posteriori	Travel motivations	The article reports on the segmentation of Swiss older travelers on the basis of their travel motivation. Switzerland is considered a mature market which is why this country serves as a role model for future travel behavior. In contrast to previous studies, which identified up to six clusters, the results revealed three clusters: time-honored bon vivants, grizzled explorers, retro travelers
Jang and Ham (2009)	x		50+	A priori	Cohorts	This study examined the socio-demographic and economic determinants of travel expenditure and explored differences between baby boomer senior households (BBSH, i.e., headed by individuals aged 50–59) and older senior households (OSH, i.e., headed by individuals 60+) in the United States. The results revealed that more BBSH participated in leisure travels than OSH. However, the mean expenditure of the OSH was higher than for BBSH
Patterson and Pegg (2009)		x	50+	A priori	Cohorts, Psychographics variables (age, income, gender, education, and health)	This article aimed to understanding of the demographic characteristics of baby boomers and to investigate their changing needs for more challenging tourism and leisure experiences. In addition, it focused on segmentation according to a range of socio-demographic variables

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
González et al. (2009)	x		55+	A posteriori	Cognitive age	The purpose of this study was to gain a broader knowledge of the concept of cognitive age and its use as a variable when segmenting the older Spanish market. Two segments were identified on the basis of cognitive age, i.e., active livers and stable passives. These groups differed in terms of travel motivations and behavior as tourists
Nimrod and Rotem (2010)	x		50+	A posteriori	Destination activities	This study explored the associations between older tourists' behavior and benefits gained by focusing on Israeli retirees. Results indicated four differentiated segments based on their destination activities, but the differences between them in terms of benefits gained were rather minor
Le Serre and Chevalier (2012)	x		50+	A posteriori	Travel motivations	This study identified the profiles of French older travelers (retired people) based on four factors of travel motivations (social motivation, relaxation motivation, sport motivation and (intellectual motivation). Four distinct segments were identified, which differed considerably from one another regarding a set of variables, including consumer behaviors variables

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Carneiro et al. (2013)	x		63+	A posteriori	Motivations to participate in social tourism programs	This paper presents a market segmentation of a Portuguese social tourism program for older tourist based on motivations. Three clusters emerged: "the passive seniors", "the socio-cultural seniors", and "the active seniors". The groups were compared on the basis of socio-demographic profile, travel behavior, benefits obtained, satisfaction, and loyalty
Chen et al. (2013)	x		50+	A priori (type of travel)/A posteriori (service factors)	Service factors	This study adopted a two-phase approach to incorporate the perspectives of older adults and operators in wellness tourism into the service factors. Seven customer service factors were identified, which served as a basis to segment older adults. Three groups emerged: a holistic group, a physiocare group, and a leisure and recreation group
Ward (2014)	x		50+	A posteriori	Travel motivations	This study focused on older Irish individuals. Based on push and pull travel motivations, four distinctive segments were identified, namely enthusiastic travelers, cultural explorers, escapists, and spiritual travelers
Caber and Albayrak (2014)	x		50–64 (pre-seniors) 65 + (seniors)	A priori	Age, geographic variables	This study identified the importance of hotel attributes for pre-senior, senior and younger (<50) tourists when selecting a hotel. Three market segments (German, Dutch, and British) were selected as the sample of the

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
						research. The findings showed that "value for money" and "availability of organized entertainment in the hotel" were important attributes for older British tourists. Dutch tourists attached more importance to food service attributes than did the other respondents. The findings confirmed the importance of staff attributes for customer satisfaction
Chen Chen and Shoemaker (2014)	x		55+	A posteriori	Travel motivations for pleasure travel	This study employed time-series data along with the theory of generations, life-cycle theory, and continuity theory to analyze the psychological characteristics and travel behavior of American senior leisure tourists. Three generations were compared—the silent generation, the lucky few, and the baby boomers—using empirical data collected in 1986, 1996, and 2006. The findings support the applicability of life-cycle theory and continuity theory to the senior travel market. They also indicate that the theory of generations might be limited in explicating this market
Alén et al. (2015)	x		55+	A posteriori	Socio-demographic variables, motivation and travel characteristics of travel	This study identified profiles of older Spanish tourists by means of using socio-demographic variables, motivation, and travel characteristics. Five market segments were identified according to behavioral variables

(continued)

Table 2.2 (continued)

Author(s) (year)	Quantitative method	Qualitative method	Age	Segmentation approach	Segmentation criteria	Main findings
Pesonen et al. (2015)		x	Retired	A posteriori	Use of Information Technology	This study examined senior travelers as users of tourism Information Technology. A qualitative approach was adopted to provide insights into the topic, and nine Finnish seniors were interviewed. The study presents a tentative typology of three different types of senior travelers based on their use of online travel services: adventurous experimenters, meticulous researchers and fumbling observers
Borges Tiago et al. (2016)	x		65+	A posteriori	Traveling preferences	This study classified the factors that most influence older travelers' decisions. Using a database of respondents from 35 European countries, four subgroups were identified: "explorers," "livewires," "vacationers," and "homebodies," to reflect different preferences and behaviors
Wang et al. (2017)	x		55+	A posteriori	Information Technology usage	This study explored the relation between Information Technology usage and tourism behavior of Chinese older outbound travelers. The results revealed four segments of IT usage, which differ in terms of socio-demographics, travel motivation, and travel intention

References

Ahmad R (2003) Benefit segmentation: a potentially useful technique of segmenting and targeting older consumers. Int J Mark Res 45:373–390

Alén E, Nicolau JL, Losada N, Domínguez T (2014) Determinant factors of senior tourists' length of stay. Ann Tour Res 49:19–32. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2014.08.002

Alén E, Losada N, de Carlos P (2015) Profiling the segments of senior tourists throughout motivation and travel characteristics. Curr Issues Tour. doi:10.1080/13683500.2015.1007927

Ananth M (1992) Marketplace lodging needs of mature travelers. Cornell Hotel Restaur Adm Q 33:12–24. doi:10.1016/0010-8804(92)90005-P

Anderson BB, Langmeyer L (1982) The under-50 and over-50 travelers: a profile of similarities and differences. J Travel Res 20:20–24. doi:10.1177/004728758202000405

Backman K, Backman S, Silverberg KS (1999) Investigation into the psychographics of senior nature-based travellers. Tour Recreat Res 24:12–22. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014853

Bailey KD (1994) Typologies and taxonomies: an introduction to classification techniques. Sage, London

Barak B, Gould S (1985) Alternative age measures: a research agenda. NA-Adv Consum Res 12:53–58

Barak B, Schiffman LG (1981) Cognitive age: a nonchronological age variable. Adv Consum Res 8:602–606

Blazey MA (1992) Travel and retirement status. Ann Tour Res 19:771–783

Bieger T, Laesser C (2002) Market segmentation by motivation: the case of Switzerland. J Travel Res 41:68–76

Boksberger PE, Laesser C (2009) Segmentation of the senior travel market by the means of travel motivations. J Vacat Mark 15:311–322. doi:10.1177/1356766709335829

Borges Tiago MTPM, de Couto JP, Tiago FGB, Faria SMCD (2016) Baby boomers turning grey: European profiles. Tour Manag 54:13–22. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.10.017

Caber M, Albayrak T (2014) Does the importance of hotel attributes differ for senior tourists? Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 26:610–628. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-02-2013-0103

Calantone R, Schewe C, Allen CT (1980) Targeting specific advertising messages at tourist segments. In: Hawkins DE, Shafer EL, Rovelstad JM (eds) Tourism marketing and management issues. George Washington University, Washington DC, pp 149–160

Carneiro MJ, Eusébio C, Kastenholz E, Alvelos H (2013) Motivations to participate in social tourism programmes: a segmentation analysis of the senior market. Anatolia 24:352–366. doi:10.1080/13032917.2013.767212

Chen SC, Shoemaker S (2014) Age and cohort effects: the American senior tourism market. Ann Tour Res 48:58–75. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2014.05.007

Chen KH, Liu HH, Chang FH (2013) Essential customer service factors and the segmentation of older visitors within wellness tourism based on hot springs hotels. Int J Hosp Manag 35: 122–132. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.05.013

Cleaver M, Muller TE, Ruys HFM, Wei S (1999) Tourism product development for the senior market, based on travel motive research. Tour Recreat Res 24:5–11. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014852

Cumming E, Henry WE, Damianopoulos E (1961) A formal statement of disengagement theory. Grow old Process Disen. New York, Basic Books 210–218

Dann GMS (1981) Tourist motivation an appraisal. Ann Tour Res 8:187–219

Dolničar S (2002) A review of data-driven market segmentation in tourism. J Travel Tour Mark 12:1–22

Dolničar S (2004) Beyond "commonsense segmentation": a systematics of segmentation approaches in tourism. J Travel Res 42:244–250. doi:10.1177/0047287503258830

Dolničar S (2008) Market segmentation in tourism. In: Woodside A, Martin D (eds) Tourism management: analysis, behaviour and strategy. Cabi, Wollingford, pp 129–150

Dolničar S, Lazarevski K, Yanamandram V (2013) Quality of life and tourism: a conceptual framework and novel segmentation base. J Bus Res 66:724–729. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.09.010

Erikson EH (1963) Childhood and society. WWNorton, New York

Faranda W, Schmidt SL (1999) Segmentation and the senior traveler: implications for today's and tomorrow's aging consumer. J Travel Tour Mark 8:3–27. doi:10.1300/J073v08n02

Fleischer A, Pizam A (2002) Tourism constraints among Israeli seniors. Ann Tour Res 29:106–123. doi:10.1016/S0160-7383(01)00026-3

González AM, Rodríguez C, Miranda MR, Cervantes M (2009) Cognitive age as a criterion explaining senior tourists' motivations. Int J Cult Tour Hosp Res 3:148–164. doi:10.1108/17506180910962159

Haley R (1968) Benefit segmentation: a decision-oriented research tool. J Mark 32:30–35. doi:10.2307/1249759

Hawes DK (1988) Travel-related lifestyle profiles of older women. J Travel Res 27:22–32. doi:10.1177/004728758802700204

Hong GS, Kim SY, Lee J (1999) Travel expenditure patterns of elderly households in the US. Tour Recreat Res 24:43–52. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014856

Horneman L, Carter RW, Wei S, Ruys H (2002) Profiling the senior traveler: an Australian perspective. J Travel Res 41:23–37. doi:10.1177/004728750204100104

Hsu CHC (2002) Psychographic and demographic profiles of niche market leisure travelers. J Hosp Tour Res 26:3–22. doi:10.1177/1096348002026001001

Hsu CHC, Lee E-J (2002) Segmentation of senior motorcoach travelers. J Travel Res 40:364–373. doi:10.1177/004728750204000403

Hughes HL, Deutsch R (2010) Holidays of older gay men: age or sexual orientation as decisive factors? Tour Manag 31:454–463. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2009.04.012

Hung K, Petrick JF (2009) How do we get baby boomers and future seniors on motorcoaches? Tour Anal 14:665–675. doi:10.3727/108354209X12597959359338

Jang S, Wu CME (2006) Seniors' travel motivation and the influential factors: an examination of Taiwanese seniors. Tour Manag 27:306–316. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2004.11.006

Jang SCS, Ham S (2009) A double-hurdle analysis of travel expenditure: baby boomer seniors versus older seniors. Tour Manag 30:372–380. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2008.08.005

Javalgi RG, Thomas EG, Rao SR (1992) Consumer behavior in the us pleasure travel marketplace: an analysis of senior and nonsenior travelers. J Travel Res 31:14–19. doi:10.1177/004728759203100203

Kim J, Wei S, Ruys H (2003) Segmenting the market of West Australian senior tourists using an artificial neural network. Tour Manag 24:25–34. doi:10.1016/S0261-5177(02)00050-X

Kim H, Woo E, Uysal M (2015) Tourism experience and quality of life among elderly tourists. Tour Manag 46:465–476. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2014.08.002

Knutson B (2008) Reaching the matures: the 1st hump in your generational marketing. Hot Bus Rev. http://hotelexecutive.com/business_review/1387/keys-to-reaching-the-mature-segment-the-1st-hump-in-your-hotel%E2%80%99s-generational-marketing. Accessed 10 Jan 2017

Kotler P, Bowen JT, Makens JC (2006) Marketing for hospitality and tourism. Pearson Prentice-Hall, Upper Saddle River, London

Laesser C, Beritelli P, Bieger T (2009) Solo travel: explorative insights from a mature market (Switzerland). J Vacat Mark 15:217–227. doi:10.1177/1356766709104268

Lawson R (1991) Patterns of tourist expenditure and types of vacation across the family life cycle. J Travel Res 29:12–18

Lawton LJ (2002) A profile of older adult ecotourists in Australia. J Hosp Leis Mark 9:113–132. doi:10.1300/J150v09n01_08

Le Serre D, Chevalier C (2012) Marketing travel services to senior consumers. J Consum Mark 29:262–270. doi:10.1108/07363761211237335

Lee D-J, Sirgy MJ (1995) Determinants of involvement in the consumer/marketing life domain in relation to quality of life: a theoretical model and research agenda. Dev Qual life Stud Mark 13–18

Lee SH, Tideswell C (2005) Understanding attitudes towards leisure travel and the constraints faced by senior Koreans. J Vacat Mark 11:249–263. doi:10.1177/1356766705055716
Lehto XY, Jang S, Achana FT, O'Leary JT (2008) Exploring tourism experience sought: a cohort comparison of baby boomers and the silent generation. J Vacat Mark 14:237–252. doi:10.1177/1356766708090585
Lepisto LR (1985) A life-span perspective of consumer behavior. NA-Advances Consum Res 12:47–52
Li M, Zhang H, Mao I, Deng C (2011) Segmenting Chinese outbound tourists by perceived constraints. J Travel Tour Mark 28:629–643. doi:10.1080/10548408.2011.598747
Lieux EM, Weaver PA, McCleary KW (1994) Lodging preferences of the senior tourism market. Ann Tour Res 21:712–728. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(94)90079-5
Littrell MA, Paige RC, Song K (2004) Senior travellers: tourism activities and shopping behaviours. J Vacat Mark 10:348–362. doi:10.1177/135676670401000406
Lohmann M, Danielsson J (2001) Predicting travel patterns of senior citizens: how the past may provide a key to the future. J Vacat Mark 7:357–366. doi:10.1177/135676670100700405
Mannheim K (1952) The problem of generation. Essays on the Sociology of Knowledge. P. Kecskemeti, London
Mathur A, Sherman E, Schiffman LG (1998) Opportunities for marketing travel services to new-age elderly. J Serv Mark 12:265–277. doi:10.1108/08876049810226946
Mazanec JA (1984) How to detect travel market segments: a clustering approach. J Travel Res 23:17–21
Mazanec JA (1992) Classifying tourists into market segments: a neural network approach. J Travel Tour Mark 1:39–60
Morritt R, Weinstein A (2012) Segmentation strategies for hospitality managers: Target marketing for competitive advantage. Routledge, New York
Moschis GP (1996) Gerontographics: life-stage segmentation for marketing strategy development. Greenwood Publishing Group, Westport, Connecticut
Moschis GP, Lee E, Mathur A (1997) Targeting the mature market: opportunities and challenges. J Consum Mark 14:282–293
Muller TE (1996) Baby boomer lifestyle segments and the imminence of eight trends. N Z J Bus 18:1–24
Muller TE, Cleaver M (2000) Targeting the CANZUS baby boomer explorer and adventurer segments. J Vacat Mark 6:154–169. doi:10.1177/135676670000600206
Muller TE, O'Cass A (2001) Targeting the young at heart: seeing senior vacationers the way they see themselves. J Vacat Mark 7:285–301. doi:10.1177/135676670100700401
Nielsen K (2014) Approaches to seniors' tourist behaviour. Tour Rev 69:111–121. doi:10.1108/TR-05-2013-0021
Nimrod G, Rotem A (2010) Between relaxation and excitement. Int J Tour Res 78:65–78. doi:10.1002/jtr
Patterson I (2006) Growing older: tourism and leisure behaviour of older adults. Cabi, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, Cambridge
Patterson I, Pegg S (2009) Marketing the leisure experience to baby boomers and older tourists. J Hosp Mark Manag 18:254–272. doi:10.1080/19368620802594136
Pearce PL, Caltabiano ML (1983) Inferring travel motivation from travelers' experiences. J Travel Res 22:16–20
Pesonen J, Komppula R, Riihinen A (2015) Typology of senior travellers as users of tourism information technology. Inf Technol Tour 15:233–252. doi:10.1007/s40558-015-0032-1
Pilcher J (1994) Mannheim's sociology of generations: an undervalued legacy. Br J Sociol 45:481–495
Reece WS (2004) Are senior leisure travelers different? J Travel Res 43:11–18. doi:10.1177/0047287504265507
Rejeski WJ, Mihalko SL (2001) Physical activity and quality of life in older adults. J Gerontol Ser A Biol Sci Med Sci 56:23–35

Romsa G, Blenman M (1989) Vacation patterns of the elderly German. Ann Tour Res 16: 178–188. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(89)90066-2
Sangpikul A (2008a) A factor-cluster analysis of tourist motivations: a case of US senior travelers. Tourism 56:23–40
Sangpikul A (2008b) Travel motivations of Japanese senior travellers to Thailand. Int J Tour Res 10:81–94. doi:10.1002/jtr.643
Sellick MC (2004) Discovery, connection, nostalgia. J Travel Tour Mark 17:55–71. doi:10.1300/J073v17n01_04
Shoemaker S (1989) Segmentation of the senior pleasure travel market. J Travel Res 27:14–21. doi:10.1177/004728758902700304
Shoemaker S (2000) Segmenting the mature market: 10 years later. J Travel Res 39:11–26. doi:10.1177/004728750003900103
Smith MC, MacKay KJ (2001) The Organization of information in memory for pictures of tourist destinations: are there age-related differences? J Travel Res 39:261–266. doi:10.1177/004728750103900303
Sund KJ, Boksberger PE (2007) Senior and non-senior traveller behaviour: some exploratory evidence from the holiday rental sector in Switzerland. Tour Rev 62:21–26. doi:10.1108/16605370780000317
Sudbury L, Simcock P (2009) A multivariate segmentation model of senior consumers. J Consum Mark 26:251–262. doi:10.1108/07363760910965855
Swarbrooke J, Horner S (2006) Consumer behaviour in tourism, 2nd edn. Routledge, London
Tongren HN (1980) Travel plans of the over-65 market pre and postretirement. J Travel Res 19:7–11
Tkaczynski A, Rundle-Thiele SR, Beaumont N (2009) Segmentation: a tourism stakeholder view. Tour Manag 30:169–175. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2008.05.010
Tuckman J, Lorge I (1953) "When aging begins" and stereotypes about aging. J Gerontol 8: 489–492
Vincent VC, De Los Santos G (1990) Winter Texans: two segments of the senior travel market. J Travel Res. 29:9–12. doi:10.1177/004728759002900103
Wang W, Wu W, Luo J, Lu J (2017) Information technology usage, motivation, and intention: a case of Chinese urban senior outbound travelers in the Yangtze River Delta region. Asia Pacific J Tour Res 22:99–115. doi:10.1080/10941665.2016.1182037
Wang Y, Norman WC, McGuire FA (2005) A comparative study of leisure constraints perceived by mature and young travelers. Tour Rev Int 8:263–279
Warnick R (1993) Back to the future: U.S. domestic travel and generational trends, 1979 to 1991. Paper presented at the Resort and Commercial Recreation Association, Mohonk Mountain House, New Paltz
Ward A (2014) Segmenting the senior tourism market in Ireland based on travel motivations. J Vacat Mark 20:1356766714525775. doi:10.1177/1356766714525775
Wedel M, Kamakura WA (2012) Market segmentation: conceptual and methodological foundations. Springer Science & Business Media, Philadelphia
You X, O'leary JT (1999) Tourism recreation research destination behaviour of older UK travellers. Tour Recreat Res 24:23–34. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014854
You X, O'leary JT (2000) Age and cohort effects: an examination of older Japanese travelers. J Travel Tour Mark 9:21–42
Yuan S, McDonald C (1990) Motivational determinates of international pleasure time. J Travel Res 29:42–44

Part II
Older Tourist Behavior: The Demand-Side Perspective

Chapter 3
Older Tourists' Travel Planning Behavior

Abstract The travel planning process comprises all the steps that occur from the perception of a travel need to the post-consumption phase. During this process, older tourists take several decisions which are interrelated and evolve over time. Core travel decisions are usually planned in advance and concern elements such as destination choice, length of the trip, type of travel organization, and travel companions. This chapter explores older tourists' travel planning behavior by investigating some crucial determinants of core travel decisions. Specifically, internal determinants include travel needs and motivations, and travel constraints, while external determinants include information sources and pull attributes of the destination.

3.1 Understanding the Travel Planning Process

The tourism product is a combination of heterogeneous elements. It has been described as "an amalgam of tangible and intangible factors" (Hall and Lew 2009, p. 33) that includes everything that tourists experience. Since travel services are intangible in nature, tourists cannot evaluate them before actual consumption and therefore travel decisions imply a certain level of perceived risks. From a tourist's perspective, the travel planning process comprises all the phases from the perception of a travel need to the post-travel phase (Horner and Swarbrooke 2016).

Tourism scholars have proposed several travel planning models in which decisions are thought to evolve in sequential phases (Mathieson and Wall 1982; Moutinho 1987; Um and Crompton 1990). One of the most widely known is the travel-buying behavior model by Mathieson and Wall (1982). According to the authors, the decision-making process involves five main steps: (1) felt need or desire for travel, (2) information collection and evaluation, (3) travel decisions, (4) travel preparations and travel experience, and (5) travel satisfaction evaluation. Moutinho (1987) elaborated to consider not only the present decision-making process, but also future travel decisions, which are influenced by the actual decision-making process. Specifically, the model consists of a flow chart with three

V. Vigolo, *Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools*,
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0_3

parts: (1) pre-decision and decision-making process, (2) post-purchase evaluation, and (3) future decision-making. Conversely, Um and Crompton (1990) proposed a framework for the destination selection process, which includes three stages: (1) composition of awareness, (2) evoked set, and (3) final destination set.

Even though these models have contributed greatly to the advancement of knowledge in travel behavior, recent research has expressed criticism toward their simplified approach and deterministic view of the decision-making process (Fesenmaier and Jeng 2000; Jeng and Fesenmaier 2002). Scholars argue that the decision to travel is a complex, multifaceted, and dynamic process involving many determinants. In relation to this, the advent of low-cost flights has changed the order in which travel choices are made: tourists with a limited budget may place the availability of budget flights before decisions concerning the destination selection. Further, travel decision-making presents a hierarchical structure in which travel decisions are "temporal, dynamic, successive, multistage, and contingent processes that evolve though the course of travel planning" (Choi et al. 2012, p. 27). In other words, the decisions tourists make (for example, the destination) are not single independent choices about separate elements, but rather are complex decisions in which multiple choices are interrelated and evolve over time (Fesenmaier and Jeng 2000; Choi et al. 2012). Fesenmaier and Jeng (2000) proposed a multistage hierarchical trip decision model in which all the sub-decisions have different levels of perceived importance. Specifically, the authors identified three stages of decisions:

(1) core decisions, which are planned in advance, are inflexible, and include, for example, the primary destination, length of trip, travel companions, accommodations, and travel budget;
(2) secondary decisions, which are planned prior to the trip, but are still subject to possible changes, and include, for example, secondary destinations, activities, and attractions;
(3) en route decisions, which are taken when tourists are actually on vacation and are seeking alternatives, for example, about rest stops, restaurants, and shopping places.

This model was further extended by Jeng and Fesenmaier (2002), who proposed that the travel planning process includes a sequential information search, information processing, and decision processing. Based on these premises, Choi et al. (2012) empirically tested the multidimensionality, sequential, and hierarchical nature of travel decision-making among Chinese tourists. The respondents were asked to indicate the approximate timing of different travel choice components in a multistage sequence (before purchase, at time of purchase, after purchase, after arriving at destination). The findings validated the study by Fesenmaier and Jeng (2000) and showed that destination, departure dates, trip lengths, and travel budgets were decided early in the decision-making process, in the before-purchase and before-the-trip phase.

In addition, Horner and Swarbrooke (1996, 2016) emphasized the complexity of the travel planning process by showing how the tourist decision is influenced both by internal factors, such as socio-demographic and psychographic characteristics, and external factors, such as available information, available travel services and destination characteristics.

The remainder of the chapter analyzes older tourists' travel planning process by combining the model on internal–external factors proposed by Horner and Swarbrooke (1996) and the theoretical framework proposed by Fesenmaier and Jeng (2000). The internal factors considered for the purpose of this study comprise travel needs and motivations, and travel constraints (Sect. 3.3), while external factors include information sources, pull factors, and destination choice (Sect. 3.4). Next, Sect. 3.5 reviews some of the core decisions older tourists make in their travel planning process. These are primary decisions that are usually taken in advance in the pre-trip phase (Fesenmaier and Jeng 2000) and they concern destination choice, accommodation choice, length of stay, travel organization, and travel companions.

3.2 The Travel Planning Process Among Older Tourists

Depending on several factors, such as tourists' characteristics or the availability of travel-related information, the travel planning process can vary in terms of complexity and length of time required. With regard to older tourists, Ross (2005) argues that tourists with higher needs for cultural contact, family and friends, and sociability tend to prefer to plan their trip in advance. Hence, older tourists can present a variety of problem-solving preferences regarding travel planning. Specifically, Ross (2005) found that about half of the sample preferred to plan most of the travel details before going on vacation, while about one third of the respondents preferred the freedom of a day-to-day planning approach, facing problems as they arose during the travel experience. In addition, research has shown that travel planning might be related to tourists' age in that older tourists tend to plan their trips more in detail than younger tourists (Hyde 2008).

The preparation for travel is also believed to generate meaning in itself in the life of older adults. As explained by Moal-Ulvoas and Taylor (2014, p. 549), travel preparation enables the older traveler to:

> … create meaning at home in the form of learning about the future travel destination through the Internet and travel brochures, preparing his [sic] personal belongings for the trip, and projecting himself [sic] as a traveler to a specific destination.

In addition, Alén et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of knowing the time tourists spend on planning their travels for all those involved in the tourism industry in order to develop effective communication and marketing campaigns. However, despite the importance of the topic, little has been researched with regard to older tourists.

3.3 Determinants of Core Decisions: Internal Factors

3.3.1 Travel Needs and Motivations

People travel to respond to a certain need that has become strong enough to motivate them to act. In this sense, a travel need can be described as a sense of deficiency or deprivation perceived in the difference between an individual's ideal state and actual state, which generates an inner tension (Fodness 1994). When someone becomes aware of that need, a travel motivation arises and directs a person's behavior to satisfy that need. Recent literature has supported that travel needs and motivations continue to evolve and change over time (Tiago et al. 2016); however, some studies argue that travel motivations remain stable over time (Cleaver et al. 1999; Shoemaker 2000; Boksberger and Laesser 2008). For example, Chen and Shoemaker (2014) used empirical data collected in 1986, 1996 and 2006 among Pennsylvanian residents and found that the travel motivations of older tourists do not change dramatically across life cycle stages and generations. Specifically, five factors for travel motivation emerged: to experience new things, to socialize, to rest and relax, to engage in physical activities, and to visit casinos and tell friends. In general, the tourism literature has long recognized the importance of investigating travel motivations in order to develop successful marketing strategies to satisfy tourists' needs and expectations (Crompton 1979; Sangpikul 2008a).

Motivation has been defined as the state of need that pushes the individual toward actions that are likely to generate satisfaction (Moutinho 1987). Guinn (1980) conducted an early study about the leisure motivations of retired recreational vehicle tourists and identified five types of travel motivations: rest and relaxation, association with friends and family, physical exercise, learning experience, and self-fulfillment. Later, Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987) identified two main dimensions in travel motivations: escaping and seeking. While some older individuals would be motivated to travel to escape from routine and stressful environments, some others would be motivated to travel in order to seek personal or interpersonal rewards (Mannell and Iso-Ahola 1987). Escapism and seeking also emerged as key travel motivations in several subsequent studies. For example, Boksberger and Laesser (2008) segmented the older travel market in Switzerland by travel motivation. They identified three key segments—namely, time honored bon vivants, grizzled explorers and retro travelers. The authors emphasize that "exploration" and "relaxation" proved to be the core motives among older tourists, thus recalling the dimensions of escaping and seeking provided by Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987).

The tourism literature has often classified travel motivations according to push and pull factors. As argued by Boksberger and Laesser (2009), the underlying push and pull theoretical framework assumes that tourists are pushed by their own needs and motivations and pulled by the elements of destination attractiveness (Dann 1981). Push factors have been addressed in several studies about older tourists as motivations or desires for traveling (You and O'Leary 1999; Norman et al. 2001; Huang and Tsai 2003; Jang and Wu 2006; Sangpikul 2008b); they have also been

used as a segmentation variable for older tourists (Chap. 2). In contrast, pull factors refer to destination attractiveness elements rather than to internal motivations (Sangpikul 2008a), and they therefore will be addressed in a dedicated section of this chapter (Sect. 3.4.2). Based on the analysis of push and pull factors, You and O'Leary (1999) explored older British travelers and grouped them into three segments: "passive visitors," "the enthusiastic go-getters," and "the culture hounds." The authors argued that these segments differed in terms of demographic characteristics, activity participation, and travel philosophy. In particular, the push factors that motivate passive visitors are visiting friends and relatives. Those that motivate the enthusiastic go-getters are relationship purposes (being together as a family), novelty seeking, knowledge enhancement, and escapism. Finally, cultural and heritage-related activities are the main push factors for the culture hounds.

Further, Norman et al. (2001) explored push factors, defined as travel benefits, among older tourists in the United States. The study revealed six underlying motivations to travel: escape, education, family, action, relaxation, and ego. The findings also pointed out significant differences in travel motivations between "neo-mature market members" (aged 50–64) and "veteran-mature market members" (aged 65+) for four push factors (escape, education, action, and relaxation). Similarly, Huang and Tsai (2003) studied Taiwanese older tourists' travel motivations. The majority of respondents traveled to "get rest and relaxation," followed by those who traveled to "meet people and socialize." The next most important travel motivation factor was "to spend time with family," followed by "visiting new places," and "seeking intellectual and spiritual enhancement." Telling their friends about their trip and engaging in physical activities were the least important motivations in travel decisions. In contrast, the findings of a study conducted in the Taiwanese market by Jang and Wu (2006) reveal that "knowledge-seeking" was considered the most important motivation by older tourists, especially among older women. Other motivations factors were "ego-enhancement" and "self-esteem." These results are corroborated by Sangpikul (2008b), who explored the motivations of older Japanese tourists traveling to Thailand. Sangpikul (2008b) identified three push factors: "novelty and knowledge-seeking," "rest and relaxation," and "ego-enhancement." Among them, "novelty and knowledge-seeking" was the most important motivation to travel abroad. The same push factors to travel to Thailand emerged also in a study conducted among older American tourists (Sangpikul 2008a) and, once again, "novelty and knowledge-seeking" was found to be the most important push factor for traveling to overseas destinations.

The conceptual framework of push motivations was also used by Musa and Sim (2010) in their study of older adults in Malaysia. The findings show that the main travel motivations are related to social interaction, thus supporting previous studies (e.g., You and O'Leary 1999; Huang and Tsai 2003). Specifically, "to spend time with friends or family" was the most frequently quoted reason for travel, in both domestic and foreign travel. The second most frequent motivation was "relaxation," followed by the motivation "to give self a treat," which could be interpreted as a kind of self-fulfillment desire (Jang and Wu 2006). Learning and religious purposes were less important among respondents.

More recently, Ward (2014) segmented older Irish tourists based on push and pull motivations. The travel motivations considered included "escaping," "exploring," "spiritual and social," "physical and entertainment," and "family focused." These motivations differed among the clusters. The "enthusiastic travelers" were motivated mainly by exploring and socialization factors. In this sense, they are similar to the enthusiastic go-getters identified by You and O'Leary (1999). The "cultural explorers" were motivated by the exploring factor and a desire to learn. The "escapists," which represent the largest segment, were motivated mostly by a desire to escape the daily routine, while the "spiritual travelers" presented spirituality and socialization as the dominant motivations.

Following a different approach, Horneman et al. (2002) profiled older travelers according to their demographic and psychographic characteristics and they identified significant differences in travel motivations among market segments. The most important motivations for travel included "traveling while their health is good," "spending time with family and friends," "visiting places" they had always wanted to see, and "having a break from routine." Conversely, "spending money," "being able to tell others," "a partner's preference for travel," and "being adventurous" were not important motivations. The role of health as a key travel motivation for older individuals also emerged in subsequent studies. For example, a study conducted by Kim et al. (2003) on the over 50s market in Australia, which examined the motivations pushing older persons into travel, indicates that health and well-being, making new friends, companionship, and taking part in activities were the most significant factors. In recent years, several studies have pointed out that older individuals are animated by well-being motives. In particular, wellness tourism activities are pursued by individuals who want to maintain and enhance their personal health and well-being (Smith and Puczkó 2014). Extant studies have shown that older tourists travel to health resorts and spas seeking the benefits of natural resources combined with recreational facilities (Erfurt-Cooper and Cooper 2009). Freire (2013) emphasized that the majority of thermal tourists are older travelers. Similarly, Kurtulmuşoğlu and Esiyok (2016) explored the motivations of thalassotheraphy[1] tourists across two age groups: 54 years and under, and 55 years and over. The findings show that the older age group was more sensitive to income levels but less sensitive to distance and education than the under-54 age group. The authors concluded that emphasis placed on health-related issues and a longer life expectancy increases the demand for thalassotherapy.

Other studies identified the role of nostalgia as a travel motivation for older adults. For example, Cleaver et al. (1999) identified seven travel motivation-based clusters, namely "nostalgics," "friendlies," "learners," "escapists," "seekers," "status-seekers," and "physicals." The first four segments accounted for 83% of the analyzed market. Nostalgics tended to renew memories, to achieve family togetherness, and to revisit places that recall pleasant aspects of their past. Friendlies were

[1]Thalassotherapy is a type of thermal tourism and consists in the use of the special features of the marine environment for protective and treatment purposes.

motivated by the desire to meet new people and make new friends. Learners were moved by a desire to make new experiences, discover the world, and learn new things. Finally, escapists traveled to get away from the responsibilities of daily life and to rest and relax. In a subsequent study, Sellick (2004) found that nostalgia was an important travel motive for the largest segment of older travelers. However, the cognitively younger, wealthier, healthier, and better educated older individuals were motivated to travel for discovery and self-enhancement. In another study, Tung and Ritchie (2011) identified nostalgia reenactment as one of the factors related to memorable travel experiences for older tourist.

In addition, by adopting a grounded theory approach, Hsu et al. (2007) proposed a tourism motivations model for older Chinese tourists. The model consists of two main components: (1) external conditions, such as societal progress, personal finance, time, and health; and (2) internal desires, such as improving well-being, escaping routines, socializing, seeking knowledge, pride and patriotism, personal reward, and nostalgia. In particular, Hsu et al. (2007) argue that, compared with more developed countries, Chinese have a greater emotional attachment to their roots and their nostalgic desire as a travel motivation is stronger.

In their study among older Koreans, Lee and Tideswell (2005) found that the most popular motivations for travel were to experience natural attractions, to visit new places and experience new things, to rest and relax, and to occupy free time. Most respondents also stated that they traveled to stay healthy, thus supporting previous studies (Horneman et al. 2002; Kim et al. 2003). Conversely, to meet new people or to socialize were not considered relevant motivations. In addition, older Koreans did not travel to tell other people about their trip.

The role of self-actualization as a travel motivation was addressed by Le Serre and Chevalier (2012). Self-actualization could be described as a process whose purpose is "to reduce the gap between the individual's actual self-concept and his/her ideal self-concept" (Le Serre and Chevalier 2012, p. 263). Self-actualization recalls the self-fulfillment and self-enhancement motivations identified by Jang and Wu (2006). Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) argue that with older age, self-actualization becomes increasingly important as a travel motivation. In their study among French retirees, four travel motivations were identified and were used to profile clusters: "social motivation" (e.g., spending time with friends and building friendships), "relaxation," "sport," and "intellectual motivation," which was described as the desire to increase knowledge and discover new places and things.

While exploring the motivations of baby boomers in a large European survey, Tiago et al. (2016) found that the main travel motivation was the sun or the beach, followed by visiting family and friends, and nature adventures. The secondary motivations were wellness, spa and health treatments, and city trips. Even though overall similarities in travel motivations emerged between men and women, women were slightly more inclined than men to travel in order to spend time with their families, relatives, and friends.

In addition, recent research has emphasized the connection between travel motivation, travel intention, and time perspectives, which describes the degree of emphasis a person places on the past, the present or the future (Scheibe and

Carstensen 2010). In a study conducted among older Chinese individuals, Lu et al. (2016) explored these relationships with regard to outbound travel. While several travel motivation factors emerged, "knowledge enhancement" was the most important. "Self-fulfillment," "socializing," "pleasure seeking," and "sensation seeking" were rated as moderately important, and "escape" was not considered an important motive for outbound travel. The findings of this research also suggest that although time orientation is critical in determining older tourists' inner desire to travel abroad, it is mediated by travel motivation. Specifically, an individual's present-time orientation is a crucial stimulus of the desire to travel through sensation seeking and self-fulfillment, while future-time orientation influences outbound travel intention through self-fulfillment and knowledge enhancement.

Table 3.1 reports the main types of travel motivation emerging from the literature review.

Table 3.1 Travel motivations of older tourists

Travel motivation	Author(s) (year)		
	Eighties/nineties	2000–2009	2010–2016
Escapism/relaxation	Guinn (1980) Shoemaker (1989)	Shoemaker (2000) Norman et al. (2001) Huang and Tsai (2003) Cleaver Sellick (2004) Lee and Tideswell (2005) Boksberger and Laesser (2008) Sangpikul (2008b)	Musa and Sim (2010) Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) Ward (2014)
Seeking/exploration	Mannell and Iso-Ahola (1987)	Lee and Tideswell (2005) Boksberger and Laesser (2008)	Chen and Shoemaker (2014) Ward (2014)
Social interaction	Guinn (1980) Shoemaker (1989) Cleaver et al. (1999)	Huang and Tsai (2003) Cleaver Sellick (2004) Lee and Tideswell (2005)	Musa and Sim (2010) Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) Ward (2014) Tiago et al. (2016) Lu et al. (2016)
Health/wellbeing		Horneman et al. (2002) Kim et al. (2003) Lee and Tideswell (2005)	Freire (2013) Kurtulmuşoğlu and Esiyok (2016)
Learning/education	Guinn (1980) Cleaver et al. (1999)	Norman et al. (2001) Cleaver Sellick (2004)	Lu et al. (2016)
Self-esteem	Cleaver et al. (1999)	Cleaver Sellick (2004) Jang and Wu (2006) Sangpikul (2008b)	Musa and Sim (2010) Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) Lu et al. (2016)
Nostalgia	Cleaver et al. (1999)	Cleaver Sellick (2004)	Tung and Ritchie (2011)

Source Author's elaboration

3.3.2 Travel Constraints

As argued by Romsa and Blenman (1989, p. 180) both "perceived and real constraints modify the spatial patterns of vacations over time." If the motivation to travel is strong enough, barriers to travel may be negotiated, even though they have the potential to influence the means of travel as well as destination choices (Gladwell and Bedini 2004). Therefore, understanding what factors prevent or limit tourists from traveling is crucial both for tourism scholars and for practitioners. However, this topic has received little attention with regard to older tourists (Hung et al. 2015; Kazeminia et al. 2015).

As reported by Alén et al. (2016), one of the first studies on the barriers to older tourists include that conducted by McGuire (1984), who identified the main barriers to leisure time of this group as being: external resources (lack of information, too much planning required, lack of money, lack of appropriate clothing and lack of transport); time factors (lack of time, need to work, interruption of normal routine, and too many other things to do); lack of approval (disapproval by family and friends, fear of making a mistake, having to make too many decisions); lack of skills or company (not knowing how to do it, lack of skills, and lack of company); and physical well-being (lack of energy, health reasons, the climate, and being too old or too dependent). These findings also suggest a relationship between socio-demographic variables and barriers to traveling for older tourists. For example, individuals who do not travel because of a lack of time usually possess a higher educational level and higher income, and those who do not travel for health reasons are usually older and less educated (McGuire 1984).

Concerns about physical well-being also emerged as the main travel barriers in subsequent studies. Fleischer and Pizam (2002) studied how travel constraints are not homogeneous among older tourist and tend to change with age. They found that among older tourists (aged 65+) the health constraint becomes prominent and reduces the length of vacation. Similarly, Kim et al. (2003) found that older Israelis considered falling ill, doctor availability, theft, personal security and peace of mind, safety, and hygiene and sanitation were the highest concerns among older tourist. In addition, in a qualitative study of British individuals aged between 57 and 81, Hunter-Jones and Blackburn (2007) explored the role of self-assessed health in travel decisions. Respondents expressed anxieties about visiting a long-haul or less developed destination, injections, flight durations, humidity, and risk as critical aspects. Some respondents also expressed concerns about health insurance. Nyaupane et al. (2008) found that younger age groups (59 years old or younger) were more likely to be constrained by time and money, whereas older individuals (aged 75 years and older) were constrained by health issues.

In addition, in their study of the Taiwanese population, Huang and Tsai (2003) identified three dimensions of travel barriers. The first is travelers' capability, which refers to tourists' physical ability, fear of leaving their home unattended, financial considerations, and the lack of travel companions. The second factor relates to travel direct suppliers and includes attributes such as dietary considerations, lack of information on where to go, and fear of not having a good time and wasting money.

The third factor concerns indirect travel motivation and includes items regarding fear of hassles, finding the time, and age-related problems.

In their study among older Koreans, Lee and Tideswell (2005) also found that psychological barriers (i.e., older tourists' perceptions about being "too old to travel" or friends/family members telling them so) played a major role in affecting travel intentions, whereas few constraints emerged from a physical, financial, or practical point of view.

Some studies found that concerns about safety can act as a travel barrier for older tourists. For example, Lindqvist and Björk (2000) argued that perceived safety is an important factor in older Finnish tourists' decision-making and that the perceived importance of this factor increases with aging. Safety and security represent an important concern for older Taiwanese (Jang and Wu 2006) and for older Malaysians (Musa and Sim 2010). In a recent qualitative study, Gao and Kerstetter (2016) specifically explored the travel constraints of older Chinese women. The main concerns regarding travel were "limited knowledge of tourism," "health and safety concerns," "culture shock," "lack of travel partners," "low quality service facilities," "limited availability of information," "negative reputation of tour guide," and "few employer-paid vacations."

Several scholars explored travel barriers in relation to occupation status, often in association with economic and time constraints. Blazey (1992) also argued that older tourists' work situation could act as a travel barrier. Specifically, older individuals who are still working are more influenced by economic and time barriers than are those who are retired. Conversely, for retired individuals, health represents a bigger barrier to traveling than it does to those who are not retired. Retired individuals are generally considered to have more available time (Fleischer and Pizam 2002; Sund and Boksberger 2007; Alén et al. 2014; Losada et al. 2016), even though economic constraints might emerge in later stages of life. In this regard, Fleischer and Pizam (2002) found that availability of time and income constraints expand until the age of 65, while after retirement, the time constraint no longer exists and income is at its peak. From then on, income decreases and becomes a constraint, thus affecting the number of vacation days taken. Chen and Shoemaker (2014) also identified time and financial concerns among perceived travel barriers.

In a qualitative study, Gladwell and Bedini (2004) explored the impact of caregiving on the leisure travel behaviors of the family caregivers of older adults. The analysis showed that physical, social, and emotional barriers to pursuing or maintaining leisure travel emerged. Analysis indicated that barriers to leisure travel for informal family caregivers fell into three distinct areas (physical, social, and emotional). Physical barriers include, for example, accessibility and architectural barriers, and the loss of energy experienced by the care recipients during travel. The social obstacles addressed include the scarcity or lack of financial, family, and human service supports. The emotional obstacles include fear of the unknown, loss of freedom, and loss of spontaneity. It seemed that the three areas of barriers were potentially hierarchical, in that emotional barriers represented the higher barrier.

Other studies also highlighted that the lack of a partner or travel companion may represent an important barrier to travel for older tourists (e.g., Huang and Tsai 2003; Lee and Tideswell 2005; Nyaupane et al. 2008; Kazeminia et al. 2015; Gao and Kerstetter 2016). The lack of a travel companion has been classified as a type of

interpersonal travel constraint. In relation to this, Hung et al. (2015) explored the travel constraints of older individuals in public and private housing and classified constraints in three dimensions: intrapersonal (feeling guilty about traveling), interpersonal (e.g., lack of travel partner), and structural (e.g., lack of time or money). Based on a literature review, Hung et al. (2015) argued that older tourists in Western countries were more susceptible to structural barriers, whereas their Asian counterparts reported more intrapersonal or interpersonal travel constraints. Similarly, based on a content analysis of older tourists' narratives on the Internet, Kazeminia et al. (2015) argued that the most prominent travel constraint for older tourists are relation-driven or interpersonal constraints, such as not having a partner or friend to travel with. At the next level of priority are health-related constraints, followed by structural barriers.

Table 3.2 summarizes the main travel constraints emerging from the literature review.

Table 3.2 Travel constraints

Travel constraints	Studies
Time	McGuire (1984) Blazey (1992) Huang and Tsai (2003) Chen and Shoemaker (2014) Hung et al. (2015)
Money	McGuire (1984) Blazey (1992) Fleischer and Pizam (2002) Huang and Tsai (2003) Gladwell and Bedini (2004) Lee and Tideswell (2005) Sund and Boksberger (2007) Alén et al. (2014) Chen and Shoemaker (2014) Hung et al. (2015) Losada et al. (2016)
Health	McGuire (1984) Blazey (1992) Lindqvist and Björk (2000) Fleischer and Pizam (2002) Kim et al. (2003) Gladwell and Bedini (2004) Jang and Wu (2006) Hunter-Jones and Blackburn (2007) Nyaupane et al. (2008) Musa and Sim (2010) Gao and Kerstetter (2016)
Lack of travel companion	Huang and Tsai (2003) Lee and Tideswell (2005) Nyaupane et al. (2008) Hung et al. (2015) Kazeminia et al. (2015) Gao and Kerstetter (2016)

Source Author's elaboration

3.4 Determinants of Core Decisions: External Factors

Several external factors influence older tourists' core decisions, such as traditional information sources and word-of-mouth (see Chap. 4 for e-word-of-mouth), pull factors, availability of suitable products (see Chap. 6), as well as climate, weather, visa restrictions, and vaccination requirements. Information sources and pull factors are considered particularly important in influencing travel decisions, as discussed in Sects. 3.4.1 and 3.4.2.

3.4.1 Information Sources

When tourists feel motivated to travel, they usually start to look for information concerning several aspects of their trip, such as the destination, the accommodation, the transport, and the travel organizers, just to mention a few (Gursoy and Umbreit 2004). The information search phase can be more or less complex and detailed according to the type of travel, the occasion, and the level of involvement.

In recent years, the variety of information sources have expanded, thus increasing tourists' possibilities regarding information searches and evaluation of alternatives (Brunetti et al. 2005). A widely accepted broad classification in marketing studies distinguishes between internal and external sources. Internal sources include personal experience and retrieval of knowledge from memory (Gursoy and McCleary 2004; Gursoy and Umbreit 2004), while external sources include marketing sources, such as advertising or promotional activities. Sources can also be classified as interpersonal communication (e.g., with friends) and impersonal sources (e.g., commercial, travel guides, travel brochures).

Regarding internal sources, several authors found that family, friends, and neighbors were the most important sources of information for older tourists, indicating a preference for word of mouth (Littrell et al. 2004; Patterson 2007; Alén et al. 2015). Capella and Greco (1987), on the other hand, concluded that printed media, together with word of mouth, were most important for the over 60s. In contrast, McGuire et al. (1988) held that friends (40.6%), followed by travel agents (19.3%), were the main sources of information for older tourists; while newspapers, travel magazines, tourist offices, and airlines also constituted an important source of information for this group.

In their study of older Australians, Horneman et al. (2002) found that print material (e.g., travel guides, pamphlets, brochures), word-of-mouth recommendation, and travel agents tended to rank highly, while the Internet, clubs and associations, reward programs, and non-travel magazines were the least used. The mass media (e.g., television, radio, newspaper) tended to fall between these information sources. The authors also found that the use of information sources changed greatly

between segments. While some tourists generally used a variety of sources of information to determine their holiday type and destination in order to reduce risk, other tourists were almost "anti-information, seeking to discover firsthand" (Horneman et al. 2002, p. 33), and were particularly unfavorable toward travel agents, the mass media, and clubs as sources of travel information.

Batra (2009) conducted a survey among a sample of older foreign tourists at the Bangkok international airport. Respondents were divided in two age groups: 65–74 and 74-plus. Older respondents mentioned previous experience as their main source of information. Word of mouth was preferred by those who had higher education levels, while most of the respondents in the 65–74 age group used the Internet as a tool to find information. Similarly, recent research (Tiago et al. 2016) found that the Internet, travel agencies, word of mouth, and phone conversations are the most frequently used type of information sources among older European tourists. The role of the Internet in the travel planning process will be addressed more in depth in Chap. 4.

Additionally, the sources of information used by older tourists are strongly related to the activities carried out at the destination. It is considered that older tourists who use a greater number of sources of information to prepare for the trip tend to take part in a greater number of activities at the destination (Littrell et al. 2004). Littrell et al. (2004) classified information sources for shopping activities at the destination into two factors. The first, tourism sources, includes print material, such as tourist brochures, travel agents and tour guides, travel magazines and newspapers, and travel documents available at hotels. The second factor, interpersonal sources, relies on local people or friends for recommendations for where to shop when traveling. Littrell et al. (2004) argued that older tourists consult the same sources to shop when traveling as those used for general travel information. The relationship between sources used and activities at the destination was also explored in a recent study, in particular with regard to older tourists who travel for cultural purposes (Alén et al. 2015). As to the type of sources of information, word of mouth prevailed among the "oldest seniors" and among those who traveled to visit family and/or friends, whereas the Internet was most often used by the "younger seniors" with higher education levels and higher incomes. Retirees who traveled off-season for leisure motives had a lower education, relied mostly on travel agents as a source of information, and preferred organized trips (Alén et al. 2015).

3.4.2 Pull Factors

Pull factors refer to those elements able to attract older tourists. Available research has explored pull factors mainly in relation to tourism destinations. With regard to

destination, a variety of pull factors have been identified that affect older tourists' travel decisions. For example, Jang and Wu (2006) found that "cleanliness and safety," "easy-to-access," and "economical deal" were the most important pull factors attracting British travelers to overseas destinations. Similarly, Jang and Wu (2006) identified three pull factors: "cleanliness and safety," "facilities, event, and cost," and "natural and historical sights."

You and O'Leary (1999) identified different pull factors according to tourist clusters. For example, for passive visitors the most important pull forces were "good public transportation," "good standard of hygiene and cleanliness," "personal safety," and "opportunities to meet and socialize with people." In addition, for the enthusiastic go-getters, "nice weather" rather than opportunities for socialization represents an important pull factor. For cultural tourists (i.e., the culture hounds) the most important pull motives were "arts and cultural activities," and "historical or archeological places." Like the passive visitors and enthusiastic go-getters, destination infrastructure and facilities such as personal safety or standards of hygiene and cleanliness were equally important for this group.

Norman et al. (2001) emphasized the role of natural surroundings, good weather, tourism infrastructure, budget dining and accommodations, cultural and historical attractions, artificial attractions, people, upscale facilities and outdoor recreation opportunities. Similarly, Prayag (2012) found that "weather and climate," "beaches and watersports," and "beautiful scenery and attractions" were the three most important pull factors for visiting the city of Nice, France.

Sangpikul (2008a, b) identified four pull factors that attracted older tourists to Thailand: "cultural and historical attractions", "travel arrangements and facilities," "shopping and leisure activities," and "safety and cleanliness." The findings reveal that cultural and historical attractions was considered the most important pull factor attracting both American and Japanese respondents to Thailand.

In line with previous studies, Alén et al. (2015) found that destinations' attributes that are relevant for older tourists include hygiene and cleanliness, safety, climate, total cost, events and attractions, ease of transport, shopping areas, historical/artistic sites, natural sites/landscapes, and distance. In addition, medical coverage at the destination represents an important pull factor, especially for women of advanced age who travel for health reasons.

Recently, Lee and King (2016) explored the factors that determine the tourism attractiveness of an age-friendly destination, drawing upon an expert panel. The results identified the essential pull factors of an age-friendly destination as barrier-free public transportation facilities, barrier-free accommodation facilities, a variety of accommodation options dedicated exclusively to older tourists, barrier-free facilities along customized travel routes, and a variety of public transport options.

3.5 Core Decisions

In line with Fesenmaier and Jeng (2000), the following paragraphs review the core travel decisions relevant to older tourists: destination choice, accommodation choice,[2] length of stay, travel organization, and travel companions. These decisions are usually taken before the trip and are not easily subject to change.

3.5.1 Destination Choice

Destination choice represents a key decision in the travel planning process. It is influenced by several factors which include, for example, travel motivations and constraints (i.e., internal factors), information sources, and destination attractiveness (i.e., pull factors). Based on the literature review presented in the previous sections, it can be argued that older tourist prefer destinations that combine attractions (e.g., natural or cultural) with other elements such as hygiene and cleanliness (Jang and Cai 2002; You and O'Leary 1999), safety (You and O'Leary 1999; Sangpikul 2008b), accessibility (Lee and King 2016), opportunities to socialize (You and O'Leary 1999), facilities, and shopping activities (Jang and Wu 2006; Alén et al. 2015), as well as medical coverage (Alén et al. 2015). In addition, older tourists prefer destinations with a good public transport system (You and O'Leary 1999; Lee and King 2016) and a good weather (Prayag 2012). In a recent study, Lee and King (2016, p. 15) explored the characteristics of age-friendly destinations and emphasized the urgency for both the government and business sectors "to adapt their policies and strategies in accordance with the increasing average ages of travellers".

3.5.2 Length of Stay

The literature offers a disparity of opinions regarding the length of trips among older tourists (Alén et al. 2016). Several studies have argued that older tourists' stays tend to be longer than those of the rest of the population. For example, Romsa and Blenman (1989) argued that reduced time barriers among retirees enable older individuals to partake with a greater frequency in vacations of a short or long duration than they do for those who are still working.

However, drawing from studies by various authors, Bai et al. (1999) showed that the trips taken by older tourists are for one to three overnight stays, increasing to four or five overnight stays, and even reaching up to nine overnight stays. Blazey

[2]Accommodation choices, which are included among core decisions, are not presented in this chapter because they will be addressed in detail in Chap. 5.

(1992) stated that, generally, retired tourists take longer stays at the destination than do those who are not retired. Fleischer and Pizam (2002) argued that there is a positive relationship between age, income, and the self-assessed health of older tourists, and the length of stay, although the relationship becomes negative once a certain age has been reached. Regarding package tours, Huang and Tsai (2003) found that the preferred trip duration is one of 6–10 days (54.2% selecting this option). The second most popular period is 11–15 days (26.4%), followed by below 5 days, 16–20 days, and over 20 days. With regard to the length of group package tours in Taiwan and China, that is, about 6.8 nights, Wang et al. (2013) argued that as the duration of a trip increases, older tourists' involvement levels will increase.

In addition, regarding the time of year in which the trip takes place, several studies support that older tourists tend to travel off-season (Patterson 2006; Hunter-Jones and Blackburn 2007; Jang et al. 2009; Tiago et al. 2016; Lee and King 2016).

Alén et al. (2014) concluded that the length of stay at the destination is positively related to age, visiting friends and relatives, the "climate" attribute of the destination, and staying in a holiday apartment or in a second home. In addition, the findings showed that older tourists who travel alone or in tours organized by public organizations tend to stay longer at their destination than do those who travel with a companion. Further, the length of stay was shown to increase if the destination offered a wide and varied range of activities, such as shopping, organized day trips, and physical/sports activities. Losada et al. (2016) conducted a survey among Spanish tourists aged 55-plus. It was observed that, overall, trips were not very long, as more than half of the trip undertaken had a length of between one and seven days. Conversely, Kurtulmuşoğlu and Esiyok (2016) found that tourists aged 55 and over preferred to stay more than seven days when on a thalassotherapy holiday and that these tourists were more likely to seek thalassotherapy in the off-peak season.

Therefore, no consensus exists about trip length and this is possibly because older tourists are not a homogenous group in the tourism market.

3.5.3 Travel Organization

Travel types may be classified as organized trips or "package tours", escorted or "guided tours", and individual or "fully independent travel" (Patterson 2006). Regarding the type of trip, the tourist package is traditionally reported to be one of the preferred options for older tourists (Alén et al. 2015; Johann and Padma 2016). By comparing the under 50s and the over 50s, Anderson and Langmeyer (1982) stated that the over 50 group preferred non-hectic, preplanned, group-based, leisurely travel, and to travel in couples or as members of a package tour. Package tours are preferred mainly for convenience and safety, and for traveling accompanied (Javalgi et al. 1992). This type of travel mode is preferred by older individuals who are single, widowed, or divorced (Patterson 2006). Batra (2009)

established a connection between a preference for package holidays and lower education levels. However, older tourists also travel independently, especially those who are younger and prefer to prepare the trip by themselves (Batra 2009).

González et al. (2009) identified two profiles of Spanish tourists with opposite preferences in terms of travel organization. One group, termed "active livers," show no interest in traveling in an organized group, or in becoming acquainted with other people or cultures at their destinations. They consider travel to be necessary for maintaining their health and balance. Conversely, the "stable passives," who are quite inactive and indifferent to specific motivations, take simple decisions that do not require much involvement and they very often limit themselves to leisure organized by associations specializing in travels for older tourists. Similarly, Horneman et al. (2002) segmented Australian travelers and found relevant differences in terms of travel preferences among the segments. Specifically, "conservative travelers" represent a major component of older tourists (45%). They have a variety of education levels and come from the full range of incomes and age groups. Individuals in this group are motivated to travel while their health is good and they look for a reliable holiday package with quality services that meet their special requirements at the right price. Conversely, "pioneers," who represent about 25% of older tourists, are the younger and better educated older individuals. They are still active and they seek new adventures and experiences, but they still prefer a level of assured safety and security. Pioneers like to travel independently, they make bookings themselves rather than through a travel agency, and they prefer self-learning and exploration to guided activities. In their study of older Malaysians, Musa and Sim (2010) found that the majority of respondents preferred to travel in group tour packages and to visit familiar destinations. The authors argued that this behavior can be explained by the fact that older adults in Malaysia do not have much travel experience, hence they prefer to travel in group tour packages in order to obtain organizational and psychological support when needed. In addition, Kazeminia et al. (2015) argued that aging is associated with alterations in the order of salient constraints and, thus, older tourists tend to prefer "safe" options such as packaged tours.

In a different study, Huang and Tsai (2003) asked older Taiwanese tourists to rate the attributes that most affected their selection of an all-inclusive package tour. Results showed that "convenience" (60.9%) was rated the most important attribute, followed by "unfamiliar tour sights and language problems" (18.3%), and "travel safety" (17.3%). The findings also show that these tourists look for typical all-inclusive package tours. However, they demand quality tour content and services, and they want a more elegant and less rigid itinerary than those proposed in non-personalized tours. The authors concluded that an emotional connection is important in this travel market and that older tourists want to buy from travel agents that understand their needs. Lee and Tideswell (2005) explored the travel preferences of older Koreans and how well the travel industry was catering for their travel needs. The majority of respondents hoped that people would change their stereotypical views about travel for older individuals. They also agreed that the costs of package travel should be cheaper and that travel companies should provide fully

independent tours for older adults. Similarly, they believed they would travel more often if there were more travel packages specifically developed to meet their travel interests and requirements. Tour package characteristics were analyzed in more detail in terms of services characteristics in a study conducted among experienced older tourists from Taiwan and China (Wang et al. 2013). The authors developed a scale to measure the perceptions of group package-tour service features. The importance of package characteristics differed according to older tourists' country of origin. Specifically, five factors emerged among Taiwanese tourists (i.e., tour leader and tour guide, restaurant, hotel, coach, and scenic spot), and three factors among older Chinese tourists (i.e., pre-tour briefing, restaurant, and optional tour).

Overall, while several studies support the view that conservative older tourists tend to prefer package tours, it also emerges that older tourists are demanding personalization and high quality services at a reasonable price. In addition, recent research has shown that there is a tendency for older tourists to travel fully independently, thus "demystifying the relevance of package holidays and organized trips" (Alén et al. 2014, p. 26). This could be explained by an increased variety of information sources (see Chap. 4), which makes it possible for older tourists to plan their travels independently.

3.5.4 Travel Companions

As shown in previous Sects. 3.3.1 and 3.3.2, travel companions have a great influence on older tourists' travel decisions. They can act both as a motivation or as a barrier to travel decisions. Even though the majority of older tourists tend to travel accompanied by a partner or family members and/or friends (Batra 2009; Alén et al. 2014), other tourists may prefer to travel as a member of a package tour or alone. For example, as reported by Sie et al. (2015) in the United Kingdom, older solo travelers, especially women, are an increasing niche market. Older women are technology savvy, they are inspired to plan new trips and to travel for memorable experiences, and they are willing to pay more for good value. Ross (2005) also emphasized that traveling with others can have an influence upon individual behavior.

The variable related to whether older tourists travel accompanied is strongly linked to the type of trip (i.e., independent travel or package tour). Batra (2009) showed that older tourists prefer to travel accompanied, usually by their partner or family members and/or friends, while younger travelers do not mind traveling alone if they do so as part of a group. In addition, tourists with a lower education prefer to travel with people from their own age group. Sociability needs related to family and friends (either as travel companions or domiciled at the destination) emerged as the most important factors of older tourist satisfaction (Ross 2005). Therefore, travel companions, both intended as friends and relatives or as members of an organized tour, play an important role in older tourists' travel planning behavior and affect overall satisfaction.

Companies interested in the older tourist market need to improve their understanding of the whole travel planning process. To develop successful marketing strategies and suitable product offerings, tourism organizations should be aware of how older tourists plan their travels and, in particular, how they are affected by internal and external factors.

References

Alén E, Nicolau JL, Losada N, Domínguez T (2014) Determinant factors of senior tourists' length of stay. Ann Tour Res 49:19–32. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2014.08.002

Alén E, Losada N, de Carlos P (2015) Profiling the segments of senior tourists throughout motivation and travel characteristics. Curr Issues Tour. doi:10.1080/13683500.2015.1007927

Alén E, Losada N, Domínguez T (2016) The impact of ageing on the tourism industry: an approach to the senior tourist profile. Soc Indic Res 127:303–322. doi:10.1007/s11205-015-0966-x

Anderson BB, Langmeyer L (1982) The under-50 and over-50 travelers: a profile of similarities and differences. J Travel Res 20:20–24. doi:10.1177/004728758202000405

Bai B, Smith W, Cai LA et al (1999) Senior sensitive segments: looking at travel behavior. Pract Grad Res Hosp Tour 75–89

Batra A (2009) Senior pleasure tourists: examination of their demography, travel experience, and travel behavior upon visiting the Bangkok metropolis. Int J Hosp Tour Adm 10:197–212. doi:10.1080/15256480903088105

Blazey MA (1992) Travel and retirement status. Ann Tour Res 19:771–783. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(92)90066-X

Boksberger P, Laesser C (2008) Segmenting the senior travel market by means of travel motivation—insights from a mature market—Switzerland. CAUTHE Council of Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Education. Griffith University, Gold Coast, pp 1–13

Boksberger PE, Laesser C (2009) Segmentation of the senior travel market by the means of travel motivations. J Vacat Mark 15:311–322. doi:10.1177/1356766709335829

Brunetti F, Testa F, Ugolini M (2005) Il cliente nell'agenzia viaggi. Sinergie Ital J Manag 66: 181–211

Capella LM, Greco AJ (1987) Information sources of elderly for vacation decisions. Ann Tour Res 14:148–151. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(87)90058-2

Chen SC, Shoemaker S (2014) Age and cohort effects: the American senior tourism market. Ann Tour Res 48:58–75. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2014.05.007

Choi S, Lehto XY, Morrison AM, Jang S (2012) Structure of travel planning processes and information use patterns. J Travel Res 51(1):26–40. doi:10.1177/0047287510394191

Cleaver M, Muller TE, Ruys HFM, Wei S (1999) Tourism product development for the senior market, based on travel motive research. Tour Recreat Res 24(1):5–11. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014852

Crompton JL (1979) Motivations for pleasure vacation. Ann Tour Res 6:408–424. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(79)90004-5

Dann GMS (1981) Tourist motivation an appraisal. Ann Tour Res 8:187–219. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(81)90082-7

Erfurt-Cooper P, Cooper M (2009) Health and wellness tourism: spas and hot springs. Channel View Publications, Bristol

Fesenmaier DR, Jeng JM (2000) Assessing structure in the pleasure trip planning process. Tour Anal 5(1):13–27

Fleischer A, Pizam A (2002) Tourism constraints among Israeli seniors. Ann Tour Res 29:106–123. doi:10.1016/S0160-7383(01)00026-3

Fodness D (1994) Measuring tourist motivation. Ann Tour Res 21:555–581. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(94)90120-1
Freire NA (2013) How to manage French thermalism specificities? Int Bus Res 6:29–39
Gao J, Kerstetter DL (2016) Using an intersectionality perspective to uncover older Chinese female's perceived travel constraints and negotiation strategies. Tour Manag 57:128–138. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2016.06.001
Gladwell N, Bedini LA (2004) In search of lost leisure: the impact of caregiving on leisure travel. Tour Manag 25:685–693. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2003.09.003
González AM, Rodríguez C, Miranda MR, Cervantes M (2009) Cognitive age as a criterion explaining senior tourists' motivations. Int J Cult Tour Hosp Res 3:148–164. doi:10.1108/17506180910962159
Guinn R (1980) Elderly recreational vehicle tourists: motivations for leisure. J Travel Res 19:9–12. doi:10.1177/004728758001900102
Gursoy D, McCleary KW (2004) An integrative model of tourists' information search behavior. Ann Tour Res 31:353–373. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2003.12.004
Gursoy D, Umbreit WT (2004) Tourist information search behavior: cross-cultural comparison of European union member states. Int J Hosp Manag 23:55–70
Hall CM, Lew AA (2009) Understanding and managing tourism impacts: an integrated approach. Routledge, London
Horneman L, Carter RW, Wei S, Ruys H (2002) Profiling the senior traveler: an Australian perspective. J Travel Res 41:23–37. doi:10.1177/004728750204100104
Horner S, Swarbrooke J (1996) Marketing tourism, hospitality and leisure in Europe. International Thomson Business Press, London
Horner S, Swarbrooke J (2016) Consumer behaviour in tourism. Routledge, London
Hsu CHC, Cai LA, Wong KKF (2007) A model of senior tourism motivations-Anecdotes from Beijing and Shanghai. Tour Manag 28:1262–1273. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2006.09.015
Huang L, Tsai HT (2003) The study of senior traveler behavior in Taiwan. Tour Manag 24:561–574. doi:10.1016/S0261-5177(03)00008-6
Hung K, Bai X, Lu J (2015) Understanding travel constraints among the elderly in Hong Kong: a comparative study of the elderly living in private and in public housing. J Travel Tour Mark 33:1051–1070. doi:10.1080/10548408.2015.1084975
Hunter-Jones P, Blackburn A (2007) Understanding the relationship between holiday taking and self-assessed health: an exploratory study of senior tourism. Int J Consum Stud 31:190–195. doi:10.1111/j.1470-6431.2009.00842.x
Hyde KF (2008) Information processing and touring planning theory. Ann Tour Res 35:712–731. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2008.05.001
Jang S, Cai LA (2002) Travel motivations and destination choice: a study of British outbound market. J Travel Tour Mark 13:111–133. doi: 10.1080/10548400209511570
Jang S, Wu CME (2006) Seniors' travel motivation and the influential factors: an examination of Taiwanese seniors. Tour Manag 27:306–316. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2004.11.006
Jang S, Bai B, Hu C, Wu C-ME (2009) Affect, travel motivation, and travel intention: a senior market. J Hosp Tour Res 33:51–73. doi:10.1177/1096348008329666
Javalgi RG, Thomas EG, Rao SR (1992) Consumer behavior in the U.S. pleasure travel marketplace: an analysis of senior and nonsenior travelers. J Travel Res 31:14–19. doi:10.1177/004728759203100203
Jeng J, Fesenmaier DR (2002) Conceptualizing the travel decision-making hierarchy: a review of recent developments. Tour Anal 7:15–32. doi:10.3727/108354202108749925
Johann M, Padma P (2016) Benchmarking holiday experience: the case of senior tourists. Benchmarking An Int J 23:1860–1875. doi: 10.1108/BIJ-04-2015-0038
Kazeminia A, Del Chiappa G, Jafari J (2015) Seniors' travel constraints and their coping strategies. J Travel Res 54:80–93. doi:10.1177/0047287513506290
Kim J, Wei S, Ruys H (2003) Segmenting the market of West Australian senior tourists using an artificial neural network. Tour Manag 24:25–34. doi:10.1016/S0261-5177(02)00050-X

Kurtulmuşoğlu FB, Esiyok B (2016) Motivations and destination selection of mature international thalassotherapy tourists. Curr Issues Tour 1–19. doi:10.1080/13683500.2016.1170109
Le Serre D, Chevalier C (2012) Marketing travel services to senior consumers. J Consum Mark 29 (4):262–270. doi:10.1108/07363761211237335
Lee C-F, King B (2016) Determinants of attractiveness for a seniors-friendly destination: a hierarchical approach. Curr Issues Tour 1–20. doi:10.1080/13683500.2016.1250725
Lee SH, Tideswell C (2005) Understanding attitudes towards leisure travel and the constraints faced by senior Koreans. J Vacat Mark 11:249–263. doi:10.1177/1356766705055716
Lindqvist LJ, Björk P (2000) Perceived safety as an important quality dimension among senior tourists. In: Tourism economics. pp 151–158
Littrell MA, Paige RC, Song K (2004) Senior travellers: tourism activities and shopping behaviours. J Vacat Mark 10:348–362. doi:10.1177/135676670401000406
Losada N, Alén E, Domínguez T, Nicolau JL (2016) Travel frequency of seniors tourists. Tour Manag 53:88–95. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.09.013
Lu J, Hung K, Wang L, Schuett M, Hu L (2016) Do perceptions of time affect outbound-travel motivations and intention? An investigation among Chinese seniors. Tour Manag 53:1–12. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.09.003
Mannell RC, Iso-Ahola SE (1987) Psychological nature of leisure and tourism experience. Ann Tour Res 14:314–331. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(87)90105-8
Mathieson A, Wall G (1982) Tourism, economic, physical and social impacts. Longman, London
McGuire FA (1984) A factor analytic study of leisure constraints in advanced adulthood. doi:10.1080/01490408409513038
McGuire FA, Uysal M, McDonald C (1988) Attracting the older traveller. Tour Manag 9:161–164. doi:10.1016/0261-5177(88)90027-1
Moal-Ulvoas G, Taylor VA (2014) The spiritual benefits of travel for senior tourists. J Consum Behav 13:453–462. doi:10.1002/cb.1495
Moutinho L (1987) Consumer-behavior in tourism. Eur J Mark 21:1–44. doi:10.1108/EUM0000000004718
Musa G, Sim OF (2010) Travel behaviour: a study of older Malaysians. Curr Issues Tour 13: 177–192. doi:10.1080/13683500902854104
Norman WC, Daniels MJ, McGuire F, Norman CA (2001) Whither the mature market. J Hosp Leis Mark 8:113–130. doi:10.1300/J150v08n03_08
Nyaupane GP, McCabe JT, Andereck KL (2008) Seniors' travel constraints: stepwise logistic regression analysis. Tour Anal 13:341–354
Patterson I (2006) Growing older: tourism and leisure behaviour of older adults. Cabi, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, UK—Cambridge, MA
Patterson I (2007) Information sources used by older adults for decision making about tourist and travel destinations. Int J Consum Stud 31:528–533. doi:10.1111/j.1470-6431.2007.00609.x
Prayag G (2012) Senior travelers' motivations and future behavioral intentions: the case of nice. J Travel Tour Mark 29:665–681. doi:10.1080/10548408.2012.720153
Romsa G, Blenman M (1989) Vacation patterns of the elderly German. Ann Tour Res 16: 178–188. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(89)90066-2
Ross GF (2005) Senior tourists sociability and travel preparation. Tour Rev 60:6–15. doi:10.1108/eb058451
Sangpikul A (2008a) A factor-cluster analysis of tourist motivations: a case of US senior travelers. Tourism 56:23–40
Sangpikul A (2008b) Travel motivations of Japanese senior travellers to Thailand. Int J Tour Res 10:81–94. doi:10.1002/jtr.643
Scheibe S, Carstensen LL (2010) Emotional aging: recent findings and future trends. J Gerontol Psychol Sci 65B:135–144. doi: 10.1093/geronb/gbp132
Sellick MC (2004) Discovery, connection, nostalgia. J Travel Tour Mark 17:55–71. doi:10.1300/J073v17n01_04
Shoemaker S (1989) Segmentation of the senior pleasure travel market. J Travel Res 27:14–21

Shoemaker S (2000) Segmenting the mature market: 10 years later. J Travel Res 39:11–26. doi:10.1177/004728750003900103

Sie L, Patterson I, Pegg S (2015) Towards an understanding of older adult educational tourism through the development of a three-phase integrated framework. Curr Issues Tour 3500:1–37. doi:10.1080/13683500.2015.1021303

Smith M, Puczkó L (2014) Health, tourism and hospitality: wellness, spas and medical travel. Routledge, London

Sund KJ, Boksberger PE (2007) Senior and non-senior traveller behaviour: some exploratory evidence from the holiday rental sector in Switzerland. Tour Rev 62:21–26. doi:10.1108/16605370780000317

Tiago MTPMB, de Almeida Couto JP, Tiago FGB, Dias Faria SMC (2016) Baby boomers turning grey: European profiles. Tour Manag 54:13–22. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.10.017

Tung VWS, Ritchie JRB (2011) Investigating the memorable experiences of the senior travel market: an examination of the reminiscence bump. J Travel Tour Mark 28:331–343. doi: 10.1080/10548408.2011.563168

Um S, Crompton JL (1990) Attitude determinants in tourism destination choice. Ann Tour Res 17:432–448

Wang KC, Ma AP, Hsu MT et al (2013) Seniors' perceptions of service features on outbound group package tours. J Bus Res 66:1021–1027. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.12.026

Ward A (2014) Segmenting the senior tourism market in Ireland based on travel motivations. J Vacat Mark 20:1356766714525775. doi:10.1177/1356766714525775

You X, O'Leary JT (1999) Destination behaviour of older UK travellers. Tour Recreat Res 24: 23–34. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014854

Chapter 4
Information and Communication Technologies: Impacts on Older Tourists' Behavior

Abstract In the last couple of decades, the increasing pervasiveness of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has radically transformed travel behavior, also among older tourists. This chapter retraces the development of ICT in the tourism industry and discusses the extent and nature of the age-related digital divide. In addition, it describes the effects of ICTs on the travel experience, with a focus on older tourists. In particular, it addresses the interface between everyday life and tourism, the subjectivity of the tourist experience, the pluralization of motivations and alternatives, and complementarity between simulated and authentic experiences. In addition, the impact and potentialities of ICTs in key travel planning activities are discussed, with specific regard to information searching, information sharing, booking, and experiential moments at the destination.

4.1 Information and Communication Technology Development in Tourism

The role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the tourism industry has widely been addressed in the literature (Buhalis and Law 2008; Sigala et al. 2012). ICTs have revolutionized the tourism industry and the whole travel experience for tourists, including the information search, booking, experience at the destination, and information sharing. For example, ICT development has determined the flourishing of online travel agencies (such as Booking.com or Expedia.com), meta-search websites (such as Skyscanner.com or Trivago.com), and travel review websites (such as TripAdvisor.com or Yelp.com) (Buhalis and O'Connor 2005; Minazzi 2015). To understand the impact and potentialities of ICT regarding tourism, it is necessary to recall the evolution of Web 1.0–Web 3.0.

While Web 1.0 represents the first stage of the World Wide Web, characterized by a unidirectional communication in which users were passive receivers, Web 2.0

V. Vigolo, *Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools*,
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0_4

shifts the approach to an active and dynamic mode in which users can share knowledge and experiences (Minazzi 2015). Web 2.0 has been described as an environment where social interactions occur, generating content (Leung et al. 2013). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010, p. 61) emphasized the role of Web 2.0 in the evolution of social media, described as:

> … a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User-Generated Content.

Scholars have proposed different taxonomies of social media. Based on Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) and Fotis et al. (2012), nine types of social media can be identified:

- social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn)
- blogs (e.g., Nomadic Matt)
- content communities (e.g., YouTube, Flickr, Scrib, Slideshare)
- collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia, Wikitravel)
- virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life)
- virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft)
- microblogs (e.g., Twitter)
- consumer review and rating websites (e.g., TripAdvisor.com, Silvertraveladvisor)
- Internet forums (e.g., ThornTree, Fodor's Travel Talk).

From a travel behavior perspective, the application of Web 2.0 to tourism is called Travel 2.0 and is characterized mainly by the significant transformation from offline to online booking and the use of social media (Buhalis and Law 2008).

Scholars and practitioners have different perspectives on the evolution of Web 2.0–Web 3.0. Minazzi (2015) identified three main positions on Web 3.0. The first focus is on the relational and social aspects linked to semantic Web technology and artificial intelligence. The second views the increase of speed and graphic improvements as the main feature of Web 3.0, while another position believes that interoperability, three dimensional experiences, and co-creation will represent the main changes in Web evolution.

In recent years, several scholars have addressed in detail the relationship between ICTs and older adults, focusing on ICT adoption (e.g., Millward 2003; Friemel 2014; Yu et al. 2015), barriers to and perceived risk in online purchases (e.g., Buhalis and Law 2008; Kazeminia et al. 2015; Pesonen et al. 2015), and use of social media (Fotis et al. 2012; Thébault et al. 2013). However, limited research has been conducted regarding the relationship between ICT and travel behavior for older adults. After presenting an overview of ICT adoption among older persons in Sects. 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4 examine the impact of ICTs and social media on the tourist experience, and specifically on four main activities related to travel planning behavior: information searching, information sharing, booking, and experiencing.

4.2 Information and Communication Technology Adoption Among Older Persons

Several studies have addressed the relationship between age and technology adoption, emphasizing that Internet access is strongly correlated with various socio-demographic variables, such as income, education, gender, and age (Loges and Jung 2001; Helsper 2010; Korupp and Szydlik 2005; Zickuhr and Smith 2012). Millward (2003) conceptualized the existence of a "gray digital divide," intended to refer to the lower usage of ICT by older persons in comparison with younger generations. The term "divide" suggests the existence of a gap in digital technology that needs bridging to reach social inclusion and equal distribution of resources and life chances (Van Dijk and Hacker 2003). In fact, individuals who are digitally disadvantaged are often those who are socially disadvantaged (Mossberger et al. 2003). Scholars consider that the digital divide is a complex phenomenon that includes the differentiation of adoption, usage, and skills regarding the Internet (Pearce and Rice 2013; Friemel 2014). Specifically, two levels of digital divide can be identified (Friemel 2014):

- first-level or first-order digital divide, which describes an access gap related to Internet adoption (i.e., those who have used the Internet versus those who have never used the Internet) and Internet usage (i.e., frequency of Internet use)
- second-level or second-order digital divide, which describes differences in Internet-related technology use, skills, and literacy.

While the first-level digital divide is about to be overcome in several countries, major differences exist between countries and within societies regarding Internet-use skills (Norris 2001). Several factors explain the digital divide besides the lack of technical devices to access the Internet—mainly motivational indifference (i.e., the perceived uselessness of information found on the Internet or the lack of relevance of information to one's life), and lack of knowledge (Friemel 2014). Regarding older people in particular, Lee et al. (2011) explored the barriers to Internet usage in different age segments, namely "the pre-senior" (50–64 years), "the young-old" (65–74 years), and "the older-old" (75+ years). Four main dimensions of constraints emerged:

- intrapersonal limitations, such as motivation and self-efficacy
- functional limitations, such as decline of memory or spatial orientation
- structural limitations, such as costs
- interpersonal limitations, such as the lack of support to start using the Internet.

Intrapersonal and functional dimensions refer to an individual's perception and ability in handling new technologies (internal factors), while structural and interpersonal dimensions refer to living conditions beyond physical and mental status (external factors). Overall, the findings showed that internal constraint factors were slightly higher than external constraint factors. Consistent with previous research (Rosenthal 2008), Lee et al. (2011) found that the over-75s had to face a much

higher level of challenge to start learning and using ICTs than did the younger age group (50–64 years). Similarly, Friemel (2014) addressed the "gray divide" among older individuals aged 65-plus years. Based on a representative survey in Switzerland, the findings revealed that that older individuals aged 70-plus are partially excluded from Internet usage. The study also showed that gender differences in usage disappear if controlled for education, income, technical interest, pre-retirement computer use, and marital status. In addition, the social context exerts an influence on Internet use: encouragement by family and friends is a strong predictor for Internet use, and older persons prefer private learning settings over professional courses. The findings thus support the results of previous research that emphasizes the importance of help from peers and relatives in the use of the Internet and online purchases of older persons (Eastman and Iyer 2004; Eisma et al. 2004; Zickuhr and Madden 2012).

According to recent statistics (Eurostat 2016), 39% of the population aged 16–74 reported having used the Internet for travel-related purposes in the three months preceding the study. In addition, in 2015, 65% of Europeans who used the Internet bought or ordered goods or services online and, among these, more than half bought travel services, mainly accommodation. The propensity to purchase online steadily increased from 56% in 2010 to 65% in 2015, and a similar pattern was observed for travel-related services. Specifically, recent European statistics (Eurostat 2016) on ICT show than 38% of older individuals (aged 65–74) in the EU-28 use the Internet on a regular basis, at least once a week. Only a decade before, just 7% of older people were using the Internet at least once a week. Across the whole of the EU-28, about 20% of older persons used the Internet for making online purchases in 2014 (Eurostat 2015). According to the most recent data available, in the United States, in 2016 the proportion of older individuals using the Internet was higher than in Europe (64%) (Smith 2017).

Overall, a growing proportion of older persons use the Internet and this could be explained by the process of younger generations who have used the Internet moving into the older age classes, or by some individuals developing Internet skills as they grow older.

4.3 The Impact of Information and Communication Technology and Social Media on the Tourist Experience

The tourist experience is a core concept in tourism studies (Ryan 2002; Mossberg 2007; Ritchie and Hudson 2009; Volo 2009). In a study about older tourists, Milman (1998, p. 166) emphasized the impact of travel experience on psychological well-being:

> Actual tourism and travel experience is not only composed of physical activities such as flying, riding a bus, or eating and drinking, but also a wide range of cognitive activities

> pertaining to the mind. These cognitive activities may have a possible impact on the traveler's perception, awareness, imagination, and reasoning. They also have an effect on the psychological well-being of the traveler, both positive and negative.

The multifaceted nature of the tourist experience emerged also in subsequent studies (Larsen 2007; Volo 2009; Ritchie and Hudson 2009). For example, Tung and Ritchie (2011, p. 1369) described the tourist experience as:

> An individual's subjective evaluation and undergoing (i.e., affective, cognitive, and behavioural) of events related to his/her tourist activities which begins before (i.e., planning and preparation), during (i.e., at the destination), and after the trip (i.e., recollection).

From early conceptualization in the 1970s, scholars have addressed the tourist experience from a variety of perspectives. By analyzing the conceptual developments of the tourist experience over the years, Uriely (2005) identified four major shifts:

1. from differentiation to re-differentiation of everyday life and tourism
2. from generalizing to pluralizing portrayals of the tourist experience
3. from focusing on the toured objects to the attention given to the role of subjectivity in the constitution of experiences
4. from contradictory and decisive statements to relative and complementary interpretations.

Building on Uriely's (2005) analysis, it can be argued that the rapid development of ICT and social media have further emphasized (1) the interface between everyday life and tourism; (2) the pluralization of motivations, alternatives and travel types, (3) the subjectivity of the tourist experience, and (4) the complementary of simulational or hyperreal experiences with authentic experiences.

1. **The interface between everyday life and tourism**. If early literature about travel experiences emphasized the distinctiveness of tourism from everyday life (e.g., Cohen 1972, 1979), in the 1990s the post-modern perspective argued that there is a blurred delimitation between tourism and daily activities (Lash and Urry 1994). For example, through the use of the Internet, many activities that were once limited to tourism experience, such as engaging with different cultures, are now available without needing to move from one's place of residence. Several museums (e.g., the Louvre in France or the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in the United States) provide interactive virtual tours so that people can move around and observe the exhibition, as well as digital content to enhance the visiting experience (Cavriani 2016). The Google Art Project is a unique collaboration between Google and over 250 art institutions to enable people to discover and view artworks online in detail. The project is a kind of virtual gallery, which proposes super high resolution images of famous artworks and 360 degree tours of individual galleries using Street View "indoor" technology. A wide range of institutions, art museums and other settings collaborate, such as the White House in Washington DC, the Museum of Islamic Art in Qatar, or the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, France. Further, tourism

destinations provide virtual tours among the main attractions and have live webcams so that people can experience the destination without being there. Moreover, the interface between the tourism experience and everyday life is guaranteed by the intense use of social media, social networks in particular, to share—even on a moment-by-moment basis—the travel experience. Winstead et al. (2013) conducted a longitudinal qualitative study among older adults from assisted living communities to explore whether the use of technology such as Google Maps with Street View and virtual tours of cultural institutions could help to overcome health and social barriers. The findings revealed that these visits reduced the level of loneliness and social isolation. In addition, Kostoska et al. (2015) explored the possibility for older tourists to participate in remote museum visits with virtual environments. They found that participants particularly liked the guided tours and to follow another person in the visit, thus emphasizing the social motivation. Further, Signoretti et al. (2015) described the design approach and the testing of the app "Trip 4 All" (T4A), that is, a gamified virtual assistant for older tourists during walking visits. The aim of the app is to improve visitors' motivation while increasing ease of use and enjoyment. T4A is based on georeferenced maps where the users' geoposition is a trigger to launch storytelling content and/or challenges based on the aspects of the visited site (e.g., geographical, art, religious, historic, cultural, and human). If users succeed in the challenges, they obtain prizes, new resources, and abilities to try more complex challenges.

2. **Pluralization of motivations and travel alternatives**. ICT and the Internet have given a strong impulse to the emergence of new travel motivations. An analysis of segmentation studies based on travel motivations and travel behavior have shown that the older tourist market is far from being homogeneous and that several tourist profiles can be identified (see Chap. 2). In addition, the chance to compare alternative offerings has greatly increased, and tourists have the possibility to access an unlimited number of diverse and plural experiences (Chap. 3). Several virtual communities offer advice to older people about many aspects of their lives, including travel. For example, Sixtyandme.com is an online community for women aged 60-plus, providing tutorials (e.g., yoga courses), and sections about games, health, travel, money, life, family, mindset, dating, and beauty; it also has a chat facility where users can exchange ideas.
3. **Subjectivity of the tourist experience**. As explained by Uriely (2005, p. 206), the concept of the tourist experience has changed its focus over time, moving toward the increasing centrality of the tourist:

> The current notion of the tourist experience as a diverse phenomenon is accompanied by another development in which attention is shifted from the displayed objects provided by the industry to the tourist subjective negotiation of meanings as a determinant of the experience.

Over the years, tourism literature has progressively focused on the role of the tourist as the creator of subjective meanings (Wang 2000). For example, the massive use of the selfie (i.e., a picture of oneself taken with a digital camera)

over the last years embodies well the centrality of the self in tourist practices. Scholars have described the selfie as a mode of self-presentation (Murray 2015; Dinhopl and Gretzel 2016; Rettberg 2016). Building on the concept of the tourist gaze (Urry 1990), Magasic (2016) developed the concept of the "selfie gaze" to explain how the presence of a social media audience influences the tourist's perception of travel. From this perspective, the practice of taking photos of oneself during daily life is justified by the existence of an audience to view these images. This "gaze" is described as "the mode of conception which helps us decide when, where and how we produce these self-referential" contents (Magasic 2016, p. 180). The role of subjectivity emerges also in the proliferation of travel review websites (see Sect. 4.4.2).

In addition to the subjectivity of the tourist experience, the literature has emphasized the role of tourists as prosumers and co-creators of their experiences (Payne et al. 2008; Grönroos and Voima 2013). Web 2.0 technologies facilitate the co-creation of value by a customer and a firm by boosting the opportunity for interaction (Harrison and Barthel 2009; Cassia et al. 2016). Through Web 2.0, customers are not "passive receivers" of value created by service organizations (Park and Allen 2013), but rather they participate in co-creating value by means of their own interactions (Negri et al. 2016). Accordingly, tourists and companies, as well as destinations, collaborate in the co-creation of unique experiences (Binkhorst and Den Dekker 2009) with the support of technology. For example, smartphones are considered the core technology of Smart Tourism (Gretzel et al. 2015), where ICTs enable and mediate the co-creation of personalized and unique experiences on site (Neuhofer et al. 2012; Buhalis and Foerste 2015; Gretzel et al. 2015).

4. **Complementary of simulational experiences with authentic experiences**. Early theories about tourist experience presented two opposed approaches: on the one hand, the tourist experience was regarded as a superficial quest for artificial attractions, such as theme parks (Lash and Urry 1994); on the other, it was considered a quest for the authentic, for example nature travels (e.g., MacCannell 1973). From the late 1970s to the early 1980s, these two approaches started to coexist in a complementary perspective (Uriely 2005). In addition, with the development of augmented reality the border between authentic and fictitious has become difficult to identify. In this regard, some applications offer the opportunity to see buildings and places as they were in the past or as they could be in the future. Concerning older tourists, previous studies have identified nostalgia as a travel motivation (Sellick 2004; Sie et al. 2015); therefore, these apps could enrich the tourist experience by recreating a view of the places as they were years ago.

Overall, the aspects of interface, subjectivity, complementarity and pluralization represent different facets of the same phenomenon. The rapidly reducing digital divide leads to the thought that ICT will have an increasing role for older tourists in the near future.

4.3.1 *Micro-moments in the Tourist Experience: The Role of Mobile Devices*

Mobile technology allows the use of the Internet while on the move by using the Internet on a portable computer or handheld device, via mobile or wireless connections (Law et al. 2014). Mobile Internet has rapidly gained popularity (Baccarani and Golinelli 2005). For example, while in 2012, 36% of individuals aged 16–74 within the EU-28 used a mobile device to connect to the Internet, in 2015, this share had risen to 57% (Eurostat 2016). The most common mobile devices for Internet connections are mobile or smart phones, laptops, notebooks, netbooks, and tablet computers. In the United States, about 77% of older people aged 50–64 are now smartphone owners, as are 42% of those 65 and older (Smith 2017). Even though tourists use mobile devices during all phases of travel, the mobile devices' biggest impact is regarded to be on site, that is, while the tourist is at the destination (Neuhofer et al. 2012; Wang and Fesenmaier 2013). Wang et al. (2011) argued that the information services of smartphone apps are personalized and they can support several micro-moments in the travel process. For example, mobile devices can help tourists find a restaurant, local transport or other facilities at the destination. One such app, developed to help families to find playground areas for children while at the destination, is Playground Around the Corner. Google describes a micro-moment as "an intent-rich moment when someone acts on a need," and it identifies four main types of micro-moments: "I-want-to-know moments," "I-want-to-go moments," "I-want-to-do moments," and "I-want-to-buy moments" (www.thinkwithgoogle.com). During the ongoing travel planning, micro-moments happen throughout the journey, and people face many decisions and increasingly rely on their smartphones for immediate answers to their travel questions. According to Google (2015), the United States' mobile's share of visits to travel sites in 2015 has grown by 48%, and times spent per session on mobile travel sites is down by 7%, thus indicating that mobiles respond to tourists' needs more quickly. In addition, mobile Web conversion rates for travel sites have grown 88% (Gevelber and Heckmann 2015). This data reveals that people are increasingly using their smartphones for travel planning, and they do that in smaller moments across more sessions on their phones. Google defines these moments as "I-want-to-get-away" (i.e., dreaming about the travel), "Time-to-make-a-plan" (i.e., planning), "Let's-book-it" (i.e., booking), and "Can't-wait-to-explore moments" (i.e., experiencing).

Eriksson and Fabricius (2015) conducted a qualitative study among retired people aged between 60 and 75 to develop an understanding of the participants' potential use of mobile devices during a trip. The sample was drawn from a Swedish speaking pensioners' association in Helsinki, Finland. Participants expressed experiencing added-value by using the Internet with mobile devices during a trip. Overall, technology anxiety did not seem to be a great barrier. Usage barriers were related to travelers' style of traveling, their personal knowledge of using technology, and the support available from a younger family member. These

findings are in line with previous studies that found older people may rely on help for the adoption and use of mobile devices (Mallenius et al. 2007).

In addition, Kim et al. (2013) investigated the relationships among motivations (ease of use, usefulness, and enjoyment), as well as attachment and usage intention regarding older tourists' (aged 55+) use of mobile devices. They also explored the moderating role of knowledge in these relationships. The findings revealed that ease of use has significant effects on usefulness and enjoyment. These motivations significantly affect attachment, which in turn influences usage intention.

4.4 Information and Communication Technology and Social Media in Tourism Activities

As explained in Sect. 4.3, ICTs and the Internet affect the whole travel experience. However, the tourism literature emphasizes that the role of technology and Web 2.0 is particularly evident in the following activities:

- information searching
- information sharing
- booking
- experiencing

Each of these activities can be performed in either one or multiple moments of the tourist experience (before the trip, during the trip, and after the trip), and can involve different types of technologies and social media.

4.4.1 Online Information Searching

While some studies have shown that older tourists prefer traditional sources of information (as discussed in Chap. 3), recent research has revealed that the Internet is becoming an important source of information for older tourists. For example, Alén et al. (2016) found that 26% of respondents mainly used the Internet for the trip's preparation, while 30.2% opted for travel agencies, 23.5% based travel decisions mainly on previous travel experience, and 22.1% relied on family and friends.

Online information sources include commercial sources (e.g., a hotel website), and non-commercial or non-transactional sources, such as meta-search websites (Buhalis and Law 2008) and user-generated sources (e.g., personal blogs, social network profiles, travel review websites). According to Graeupl (2006), flight information and accommodation are the most searched topics for consumers aged between 50 and 60 years old, and most of these consumers are not interested in package holidays (cited in Buhalis and Law 2008). In a qualitative enquiry among

Finnish retirees, Pesonen et al. (2015) found that before an international trip, respondents searched for information about the destination concerning, for example, history, number of inhabitants, culture, weather, sights, activities, events, local transportation, shopping opportunities and opening times, restaurants, and local specialties, as well as health-related recommendations such as vaccinations. In addition, respondents spent much time and effort searching for information about the accommodation booked. Visual material such as photographs played a major role regarding both the destination and the accommodation. Travel websites rather than social media were the main source of online information.

Online information searching mostly occurs before the trip, when tourists look for inspiration about where to travel, or search for means of transport, accommodation, and activities to perform at the destination. In this step, they also compare competing offerings and evaluate between different forms of travel organizations (e.g., independent travel vs. package tour). Sometimes tourists can also look for travel companions. However, the travel experience at the destination can also stimulate older tourists to look for further information about the destination's history, culture, or attractions when they return home after the travel (Pesonen et al. 2015). In fact, as discussed in Sect. 4.3.1, online search at the destination is supported principally by mobile devices, it occurs in micro-moments and regards mainly urgent information (e.g., about where to eat, or where to find a gasoline station).

In addition, the widespread use of mobile devices, even among older tourists, has increased online information searching during the trip. As explained in Chap. 3, while core activities are usually decided well in advance of the trip, secondary activities such as where to eat at the destination are usually taken while already traveling. For these types of activities, online information searches during the trip are fundamental. However, Pesonen et al. (2015) reported that although older tourists use the Internet at home while looking for information, they do not use it on their trips abroad because they are concerned about the costs and the security of the Internet usage. At the destination, they prefer traditional sources of information, such as tour operators or hotel brochures, television, and pre-printed material brought from home. In addition, they prefer to ask tour guides and hotel personnel for information.

Research has shown the existence of heterogeneity in digital skills among the population (the digital divide). Accordingly, some studies investigated older persons' approaches to and use of ICT and the Internet for travel purposes. Findings revealed different tourist typologies or segments (see Chap. 3 for segmentation studies). For example, Thébault et al. (2013) explored the experience of older individuals with regard to online navigating for information regarding travel planning. Based on semi-directed interviews among French and Canadian older tourists who used the Internet to research their tourism destinations, a conceptual typology of tourists emerged with regard to Internet use: "senior-opportunist," "senior-disinclined," "senior-Web 2.0," and "senior-altruist." The "opportunists" seek information and exchange with other like-minded Web users. Among these individuals, some take advantage of the advice of other people while not

contributing themselves. The "disinclined" do not look for the advice of unknown Internet users, nor do they provide any. Some are totally hostile to any form of exchange of information, while others exchange information with close relatives and friends. In the minority, "senior-Web 2.0" tourists recognize that the Internet has considerably changed their way of researching information. Even though not one of the interviewees belonged to this category, Thébault et al. (2013) theorized the existence of a profile defined the "senior-altruists." Being individuals who offer free advice to others without asking for reciprocity, they are moved by the desire to help others. This category recalls the concept of altruism explored by Kim et al. (2016).

Thébault et al.'s (2013) study also revealed that social interactions help improve the pertinence and specificity of information sought. Similar findings about the importance of social interaction emerged in other studies. For example, Vigolo and Confente (2013) demonstrated that help with online purchases was a significant predictor of online purchase intentions for travel services among older Italian tourists.

4.4.1.1 Information Searching: The Case of the TripAdvisor Senior Travel Forum

The senior travel forum was introduced on TripAdvisor in 2009 as a space where individuals aged 50 years and older ask for advice and opinion about a variety of aspects concerning the type of travel, evaluation of alternative offerings, and seeking travel companions. It now counts 915 topics and 8134 posts. Hereafter are examples of travel threads and related comments presented according to the type of content.

Content: type of travel
Thread: "You too can backpack at 70." A user posted an inspirational message about her experience as a backpacker at 70. A female user responded with the following comment:

> My dream is to backpack and travel when I retire but my parents and husband think I am off my rocker. They think as you get older you need to be more comfortable and closer to good medical care. I think their idea of retirement is the typical rocking chair with grandkids staying on weekends and knitting club. How do you balance the comfort and medical issues with a budget backpacking lifestyle?

Content: comparing alternative offerings
Thread: "Company A versus company B."[1] Users asked for advice about competing tour operators offering the same type of travel:

[1]The names of the companies have intentionally been removed.

> I am interested in getting recommendations for travel to Vietnam/Cambodia with these two companies. Which company has better guides, hotels, itineraries?

Content: looking for travel companions:
Thread: "Is there a safe way to find a travel buddy?" Within this thread, users discussed whether looking for a travel companion over the Internet might be safe.

> Here are many threads on both the Senior Travel and Solo Travel forums started by those seeking travel companions. While I do understand that it can be nice to have someone to share with, the Internet is not a very safe place for such a project.

While some users suggested travel sites or organized tours, some others encouraged solo travelers to enjoy the travel experience on their own:

> The idea that solo travel is "unsafe" and that it is "safer" to travel with another person, even someone who you know very little about seems daft to me. … I am female and certainly qualify as "senior" but as much as I love my husband, some of my best trips have been taken by myself. … If you really can't imagine enjoying yourself without companions, a small group tour surely is the best and safest way to do that?

Interestingly, in this forum younger people also participated looking for information on behalf of or for their parents or grandparents, thus emphasizing the role of social support as a travel motivation (Chap. 3):

> I am trying to book a tour of Italy for my 78-year-old mother and 82-year-old aunt. They are mobile but slow. Neither have been to Italy and want to try for Rome, Florence and Venice. Any suggestions?

> Hello! I'm a 21-year-old (male) college student and I'm looking at possibly taking my grandma on one last "big" trip. She has never been abroad, so I'd like to take her across the ocean for a 2ish-week summer trip. Do you have any suggestions or advice on places that would be good to have her consider? She has said that her biggest criteria would be the culture aspect and scenery. I'm looking for a mix of culture, scenery and some adventure. I don't even know where to start and I want to make sure it's a great trip for her. Please let me know what kinds of things I can ask her in order to help narrow it down.

This travel forum is extremely rich in information and Kazeminia et al. (2015) used it as a source to collected the narratives of older people and explore their travel constraints and coping strategies. Building on the framework of age as a cognitive phenomenon, the narratives were analyzed and several types of constraints were identified. In the pre-travel stage conversations, two major themes emerged: physical issues and lack of companion. Packaged tour and insurance are the strategies used by older tourist to overcome these constraints. In the post-travel conversations, four main themes emerged: "travel," "hotel," "time," "use," and "insurance."

4.4.2 Online Information Sharing

On social media, tourists share user-generated content (UGC) or consumer-generated content (CGC), which include text, images, photos, videos,

podcasts, and other forms of media generated by users. For example, Age-CAP is a smartphone and web application which aims to create a user-generated database of age-friendly and accessible locations. Users can rate the age-friendliness of locations such as restaurants, libraries, crosswalks, shopping centers, and share their opinion with other users.

According to recent statistics (Eurostat 2016), one of the most common online activities in the EU-28 in 2015 was participation in social networking. About half of individuals aged 16–74 used the Internet for social networking, even though large differences exist among countries. For example, about 73% of people in Norway used social networking sites, while in France, Italy, and Slovenia, the users were less than 40% (2014 data). In the United States, currently, a majority of ages 30–49 (80%) and 50–64 (64%) use social media, but only 34% of individuals aged 65 and older use social media. However, this latter datum has grown intensely in recent years (it was only 10% in 2010) (Smith 2017).

Several studies have examined the effect of UGC on tourism (e.g., Litvin et al. 2008; Xiang and Gretzel 2010; Fotis et al. 2012; Munar and Jacobsen 2014). In addition, some scholars explored the motivations for older tourists involved in social media (e.g., Berger and Schwartz 2011; Bronner and de Hoog 2014; Yoo and Gretzel 2009).

In particular, Yoo and Gretzel (2009) investigated the role of UGC in travel decision-making across different age groups: "Generation Y" (18–24 years), "Generation X" (25–44 years), "baby boomers" (45–64 years) and "seniors" (65 or older). Yoo and Gretzel (2009) found generational differences between travelers' Internet affinity and their travel-related use, perceptions, and creation of UGC. In general, the use of social networking sites generate several benefits for older individuals, mainly social benefits (e.g., staying in touch with friends and relatives or reconnecting with lost friends), informational benefits (e.g., medical and financial support), and personal enrichment (e.g., by reading literary publications) (Moran 2013). In addition, social networking sites provide an easy way of sharing information and helping unknown people, which indirectly demonstrates general altruistic behavior. With this regard, Kim et al. (2016) explored the relationship between social capital, altruism, common bond and identity, and intention to revisit a social networking site for travel purposes among individuals aged 50 years and older. Social capital is intended as a kind of informal norm that encourages co-operation between two or more individuals, it is commonly referred to as "prestige" and "reputation" (Fukuyama 2001). Common bond "defines that members of a group are attached to individual members in the group," whereas common identity "defines that members of a group are attached to the group as a whole" in the context of social networks (Kim et al. 2016, p. 98). The findings revealed that older tourists' common bond attachment to social networking sites is more affected by altruism, whereas common identity attachment is more affected by social capital. In addition, the use of social networking sites provides greater benefits to users experiencing low self-esteem and low life satisfaction by assessing bonding and bridging related to social capital (Ellison et al. 2007).

Social media, including travel review websites (Lu and Stepchenkova 2012) and blogs (Carson 2008), have gained increasing importance as information sources for tourists (Xiang and Gretzel 2010). But most of all, older tourists use social media after the holiday to share experiences with friends and/or other travelers, and to share reviews and evaluations (Fotis et al. 2012), thus activating electronic word of mouth (eWOM). As concerns travel review websites, some of them explicitly target older individuals, such as Silvertraveladvisor.com, a review website that defines itself as "the voice of mature travelers." The website is run by a team of travel industry professionals specializing in travels for older tourists. Users can read and post their own reviews about travels, attractions, and hotels. According to the definition of Schmallegger and Carson (2008, p. 101):

> … blogs provide commentary and personal thoughts on a particular subject (for example a specific trip or destination), are frequently updated and displayed in reverse chronological order. Blogs tend to be interactive in nature and allow readers to post comments.

Blogs contain primarily textual information, although photographs, audio, and video files have become increasingly popular. Individual travel blogs can be hosted on public travel blog sites such as Travelblog.org and Travelpod.com. In addition, travel blogs are published on virtual travel communities. For example, Startsat60.com is a blog and information website, as well as an online community targeting people aged 60 and over in Australia and New Zealand. It covers topics such as travel, gray nomads, health, money matters, and retirement. In addition, travel-related companies, such as travel agencies (e.g., Tui.com) or well-known travel guides (e.g., Lonelyplanet.com, community.roughguides.com), provide free Web space to tourists to publish their travel stories. Further, some bloggers have their own website; for instance, Debbie and Michael Campbell, a retired couple from Seattle, Washington, have been traveling non-stop around the world since 2013 and they regularly post their experiences on their blog (http://www.beseniornomads.com/blog):

> As we were closing in on retirement, we felt we had "one more adventure in us" so in July of 2013 we rented our townhouse, sold our sailboat and a car, and reduced our stuff to fit in a small storage unit. We waved goodbye to our family and friends and headed off to explore the world!

They refer to themselves as "the senior nomads" and their claim or motto is: "Living life and loving each other one Airbnb at a time".

Regarding the motivation for the creation of UGC, Yoo and Gretzel (2011) found that United States travelers are motivated mainly by altruistic and hedonic benefits and that there is a significant relationship between tourists' personality types and motivational factors. In addition, Munar and Jacobsen (2014) distinguished motivational factors into personal and community-related benefits as well as social capital. Their study revealed a dominance of visual content, along with the relevance of altruistic and community-related motivations. In particular, sharing practice through social media appeared to be a manifestation of sociability and emotional support. However, UGC seemed to have less relevance as a source of travel information.

Erickson (2011) explored the role of online communities in the lives of older people in a study conducted in the United States. Specifically, qualitative interviews aimed to assess the impact of Facebook on social capital. Thematic analysis revealed that Facebook facilitates connections to loved ones and it may indirectly facilitate social capital through other channels. However, some potentially negative impacts of Facebook emerged with regard to the open access to personal information. Interviewees expressed concerns related to privacy, comfort with technology, and the inappropriate content sometimes found on Facebook (e.g., vulgar language).

4.4.3 Online Booking

In 2014, rented tourist accommodation was booked online for 55% of the trips made by residents of the EU. The prevalence of online booking was slightly higher for international trips (59%), but also for 52% of domestic trips, accommodation arrangements were booked online Eurostat (2016). The age pattern of online booking of rented accommodation and transport was in line with the overall Internet use by age group. While abundant literature has devoted attention to online information searching and the creation of UGC, fewer studies have addressed online booking activities, especially regarding older tourists.

As reported by Reisenwitz et al. (2007), lack of trust is one of the most frequently mentioned reasons preventing older consumers from shopping online. With regard to the online context, the concept of trust entails both the consumer's interpersonal trust of the online firm and their institutional trust of the Internet (Lee et al. 2001). Reisenwitz et al. (2007) explored online behavior of consumers aged 65-plus. The findings revealed that older consumers feel more confident about using the Internet, since their use of the Internet was shown to have increased in terms of hours and frequency. These same consumers were also more likely to purchase online. Hence, the results supported previous research of Kuhlmeier and Knight (2005), who found that the number of hours of use per week was more important than the number of years of use ("experience") in determining Internet purchasing.

In a qualitative study conducted in Finland among older individuals, Pesonen et al. (2015) found that respondents booked their trips on the Internet either independently or with the help of a family member. Individuals who bought packaged tours considered the booking as easy and safe. These respondents preferred to buy a package tour not because they were afraid of problems buying the flights and accommodations from the Internet separately, but rather because they were worried about possible problems at the destination, including, for example, not knowing a foreign language.

Overall, older tourists still show some resistance toward online booking, and tend to overcome these difficulties with personal interaction with the service provider, as will be discussed in Chap. 6.

4.4.4 *Experiencing*

According to Google (2015), in 2015, mobile queries per user from hotel properties grew by 49% from the previous year, with many including the phrase "near me." In fact, an increasing number of people are looking either for a place to stay ("hotels near me" is a common term) or for a restaurant or a bar (e.g., "breakfast near me," "restaurants near me," "bars near me"). Liang (2015) argued that because of the increased use of mobile devices among older people, it is possible to use augmented reality (AR) systems to support older people in terms of mobility and independence. AR as a technological enabler is becoming popular in different fields such as medicine, education, design, navigation, and tourism. By combining virtual information with the real environment in real time, AR enhances the user's perceptions in terms of vision, hearing, touch, and smell. Based on a literature review, Liang (2015) identified four domains of application of AR: transportation, entertainment, aging-in-place (i.e., enabling older adults to maintain independence in their home environment), and training (e.g., rehabilitation training).

Malik et al. (2015) addressed the possible barriers older people might face in engaging AR applications. Results showed that AR applications could be useful for certain occasions or conditions, such as people with disabilities' use of mobile applications in outdoor or remote situations.

Researchers Tom Dieck and Jung (2016) argued that in the tourism industry there has been an increase in AR adoption to enhance the visitor's experience, specifically for attractions, museums, and art galleries. Based on the consideration that smaller organizations often fear high investments' risks of failures, the authors presented a case study based on the experience of a small museum in Manchester. Specifically, one focus group with five visitors aged 60-plus was conducted to explore their opinions about AR experience. Some of the respondents declared that the enhanced availability of information would improve interactivity and add learning to the experience. Interestingly, respondents who did not own a smartphone also perceived that AR applications would add value to the experience.

To conclude, tourism companies and organizations should not underestimate the propensity of older individuals to explore new travel behaviors during the whole travel experience. In fact, older tourist, especially retirees, might compensate the lack of ICT experience with availability of time to learn and familiarize with technology, even at an advanced age.

References

Alén E, Losada N, Domínguez T (2016) The impact of ageing on the tourism industry: an approach to the senior tourist profile. Soc Indic Res 127:303–322. doi:10.1007/s11205-015-0966-x

Baccarani C, Golinelli GM (2005) Tecnologie della comunicazione e creatività Sinergie 66:V–IX

Berger J, Schwartz EM (2011) What drives immediate and ongoing word of mouth? J Mark Res 48:869–880
Binkhorst E, Den Dekker T (2009) Agenda for co-creation tourism experience research. J Hosp Mark Manag 18:311–327
Bronner AE, de Hoog R (2014) Social media and consumer choice. Int J Mark Res 56:51–71
Buhalis D, Foerste M (2015) SoCoMo marketing for travel and tourism: empowering co-creation of value. J Destin Mark Manag 4:151–161
Buhalis D, Law R (2008) Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet-The state of eTourism research. Tour Manag 29:609–623. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2008.01.005
Buhalis D, O'Connor P (2005) Information communication technology revolu-tionizing tourism. Tour Recreat Res 30(3):7–16
Cassia F, Magno F, Ugolini M (2016) Does social couponing stimulate positive eWOM and online referrals? Sinergie Ital J Manag 34:113–124
Cavriani E (2016) Everyone's collections at Art Museums: groundbreaking digital business strategy as cornerstone for synergies. Sinergie Ital J Manag 34:89–115
Cohen E (1972) Toward a sociology of international tourism. Soc Res 39:164–182
Cohen E (1979) A phenomenology of tourist experiences. Sociology 13:179–201
Dinhopl A, Gretzel U (2016) Selfie-taking as touristic looking. Ann Tour Res 57:126–139
Eastman JK, Iyer R (2004) The elderly's uses and attitudes towards the Internet. J Consum Mark 21:208–220
Eisma R, Dickinson A, Goodman J et al (2004) Early user involvement in the development of information technology-related products for older people. Univers Access Inf Soc 3:131–140
Ellison NB, Steinfield C, Lampe C (2007) The benefits of Facebook "friends:" Social capital and college students' use of online social network sites. J Comput Commun 12:1143–1168
Erickson LB (2011) Social media, social capital, and seniors: the impact of Facebook on bonding and bridging social capital of individuals over 65. In: AMCIS 2011 Proceedings. http://aisel.aisnet.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1084&context=amcis2011_submissions. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Eriksson N, Fabricius S (2015) Young-elderly travelers as potential users and actual users of Internet with mobile devices during trips. In: Janssen M et al (eds) Open and big data management and innovation. 14th IFIP WG 6.11 Conference on e-Business, e-Services, and e-Society, I3E 2015 Delft, The Netherlands, October 13–15, 2015, Proceedings. Lecture Notes in Computer Science, vol 9373. Springer, Cham, p 24–35
Eurostat (2015) People in the EU—Statistics on an ageing society. Eurostat. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People_in_the_EU_%E2%80%93_statistics_on_an_ageing_society#Elderly_tourists. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Eurostat (2016) Statistics on ICT use in tourism. http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Statistics_on_ICT_use_in_tourism. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
Fotis J, Buhalis D, Rossides N (2012) Social media use and impact during the holiday travel planning process. Inf Commun Technol Tour 13–24. doi:10.4018/ijom.2011100101
Friemel TN (2014) The digital divide has grown old: determinants of a digital divide among seniors. New Media Soc 18(2):1–19. doi:10.1177/1461444814538648
Fukuyama F (2001) Social capital, civil society and development. Third World Q 22:7–20
Gevelber L, Heckmann O (2015) Travel trends: 4 mobile moments changing the consumer journey. https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/articles/travel-trends-4-mobile-moments-changing-consumer-journey.html. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Graeupl A (2006) 'Silver Surfers' and their online information search behaviour. In: Hitz M, Sigala M, Murphy J (eds) Information and communication technologies in tourism 2006. Springer, Cham, pp 236–247
Gretzel U, Sigala M, Xiang Z, Koo C (2015) Smart tourism: foundations and developments. Electron Mark 25:179–188
Grönroos C, Voima P (2013) Critical service logic: making sense of value creation and co-creation. J Acad Mark Sci 41:133–150

Harrison TM, Barthel B (2009) Wielding new media in Web 2.0: exploring the history of engagement with the collaborative construction of media products. New Media Soc 11:155–178

Helsper EJ (2010) Gendered Internet use across generations and life stages. Communication research 37:352–374

Kaplan AM, Haenlein M (2010) Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. Bus Horiz 53:59–68

Kazeminia A, Del Chiappa G, Jafari J (2015) Seniors' travel constraints and their coping strategies. J Travel Res 54:80–93. doi:10.1177/0047287513506290

Kim MJ, Kim WG, Kim JM, Kim C (2013) Does knowledge matter to seniors' usage of mobile devices? Focusing on motivation and attachment? Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 28:1702–1727. doi:10.1108/MRR-09-2015-0216

Kim MJ, Lee CK, Bonn M (2016) The effect of social capital and altruism on seniors' revisit intention to social network sites for tourism-related purposes. Tour Manag 53:96–107. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.09.007

Korupp SE, Szydlik M (2005) Causes and trends of the digital divide. Eur Sociol Rev 21:409–422

Kostoska G, Baez M, Daniel F, Casati F (2015) Virtual, remote participation in museum visits by older adults: a feasibility study. In: PATCH'15 Proceedings of the 8th International Conference on Personalized Access to Cultural Heritage 1352:10–13

Kuhlmeier D, Knight G (2005) Antecedents to internet-based purchasing: a multinational study. Int Mark Rev 22:460–473

Larsen S (2007) Aspects of a psychology of the tourist experience. Scand J Hosp Tour 7:7–18

Lash S, Urry J (1994) Economies of signs and space. Sage, London

Law R, Buhalis D, Cobanoglu C (2014) Progress on information and communication technologies in hospitality and tourism. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 26:727–750. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-08-2013-0367

Lee B, Chen Y, Hewitt L (2011) Age differences in constraints encountered by seniors in their use of computers and the Internet. Comput Human Behav 27:1231–1237. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2011.01.003

Lee MKO, Turban E, Matthew KO, Lee ET (2001) A trust model for consumer Internet shopping. Int J Electron Commer 6:75–91. doi:10.1080/10864415.2001.11044227

Leung D, Law R, Van Hoof H, Buhalis D (2013) Social media in tourism and hospitality: a literature review. J Travel Tour Mark 30:3–22

Liang S (2015) Research proposal on reviewing augmented reality applications for supporting ageing population. Procedia Manuf 3:219–226. doi:10.1016/j.promfg.2015.07.132

Litvin SW, Goldsmith RE, Pan B (2008) Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. Tour Manag 29:458–468

Loges WE, Jung JY (2001) Exploring the digital divide: Internet connectedness and age. Communication research 28:536–562

Lu W, Stepchenkova S (2012) Ecotourism experiences reported online: classification of satisfaction attributes. Tour Manag 33:702–712

MacCannell D (1973) Staged authenticity: arrangements of social space in tourist settings. Am J Sociol 79:589–603

Magasic M (2016) The "selfie gaze"and "social media pilgrimage": two frames for conceptualising the experience of social media using tourists. In: Inversini A, Schegg R (eds) Information and communication technologies in tourism 2016. Springer, Cham, pp 173–182

Malik SA, Azuddin M, Abdullah LM, Mahmud M (2015) Exploring older people's experience with augmented realirt (AR) applications. J Eng Appl Sci 10:18004–18011

Mallenius S, Rossi M, Tuunainen VK (2007) Factors affecting the adoption and use of mobile devices and services by elderly people–results from a pilot study. In: Proceedings of the 6th annual global mobility roundtable

Millward P (2003) The "grey digital divide": perception, exclusion and barriers of access to the Internet for older people. First Monday (online) 8

Milman A (1998) The impact of tourism and travel experience on senior travelers' psychological well-being. J Travel Res 37:166–170. doi:10.1177/004728759803700208
Minazzi R (2015) Social media marketing in tourism and hospitality. Springer International Publishing, Cham
Moran K (2013) The overlooked: social media marketing for senior citizens. http://www.forbes.com/sites/sap/2013/05/20/the-overlooked-social-media-marketing-for-senior-citizens/#3ac07d4c183e. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Mossberg L (2007) A marketing approach to the tourist experience. Scand J Hosp Tour 7:59–74
Mossberger K, Tolbert CJ, Stansbury M (2003) Virtual inequality: beyond the digital divide. Georgetown University Press, Washington DC
Munar AM, Jacobsen JKS (2014) Motivations for sharing tourism experiences through social media. Tour Manag 43:46–54. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2014.01.012
Murray DC (2015) Notes to self: the visual culture of selfies in the age of social media. Consum Mark Cult 18:490–516. doi:10.1080/10253866.2015.1052967
Negri F, Vigolo V, Bonfanti A (2016) Managing responses to online reviews: an opportunity for value co-creation? Mercati e Competitività 1:103–122
Neuhofer B, Buhalis D, Ladkin A (2012) Conceptualising technology enhanced destination experiences. J Destin Mark Manag 1:36–46
Norris P (2001) Digital divide: civic engagement, information poverty, and the Internet worldwide. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge
Park S-Y, Allen JP (2013) Responding to online reviews: problem solving and engagement in hotels. Cornell Hosp Q 54:64–73
Payne AF, Storbacka K, Frow P (2008) Managing the co-creation of value. J Acad Mark Sci 36:83–96
Pearce KE, Rice RE (2013) Digital divides from access to activities: comparing mobile and personal computer internet users. J Commun 63:721–744
Pesonen J, Komppula R, Riihinen A (2015) Senior travelers as users of online travel services: a qualitative enquiry. In: Tussyadiah I, Inversini A (eds) Information and communication technologies in tourism 2015. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp 831–843
Reisenwitz T, Iyer R, Kuhlmeier DB, Eastman JK (2007) The elderly's Internet usage: an updated look. J Consum Mark 24:208–220. doi:10.1108/07363760710834825
Rettberg JW (2016) Seeing ourselves through technology: how we use selfies, blogs and wearable devices to see and shape ourselves. Palgrave MacMillan, New York
Ritchie JR, Hudson S (2009) Understanding and meeting the challenges of consumer/tourist experience research. Int J Tour Res 11:111–126
Rosenthal RL (2008) Older computer-literate women: their motivations, obstacles, and paths to success. Educ Gerontol 34:610–626. doi:10.1080/03601270801949427
Ryan C (2002) The tourist experience. Continuum, London, UK
Schmallegger D, Carson D (2008) Blogs in tourism: changing approaches to information exchange. J Vacat Mark 14:99–110
Sellick MC (2004) Discovery, connection, nostalgia. J Travel Tour Mark 17:55–71. doi:10.1300/J073v17n01_04
Sie L, Patterson I, Pegg S (2015) Towards an understanding of older adult educational tourism through the development of a three-phase integrated framework. Curr Issues Tour 3500:1–37. doi:10.1080/13683500.2015.1021303
Sigala M, Christou E, Gretzel U (2012) Social media in travel, tourism and hospitality: theory, practice and cases. Ashgate Publishing, Farnham
Signoretti A, Martins AI, Almeida N et al (2015) Trip 4 all: a gamified app to provide a new way to elderly people to travel. Procedia Comput Sci 67:301–311. doi:10.1016/j.procs.2015.09.274
Smith A (2017) Record shares of Americans now own smartphones, have home broadband. Pew Research Center. http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/01/12/evolution-of-technology/. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Thébault M, Picard P, Ouedraogo A (2013) Seniors and tourism: an international exploratory study on the use of the Internet for researching recreational information. Int Bus Res 6:22

Tom Dieck MC, Jung T (2016) Value of augmented reality to enhance the visitor experience: a case study of manchester Jewish museum. In: eReview of Tourism Research—ENTER 2016, 7 Research Notes

Tung VWS, Ritchie JRB (2011) Exploring the essence of memorable tourism experiences. Ann Tour Res 38:1367–1386. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2011.03.009

Uriely N (2005) The tourist experience. Conceptual developments. Ann Tour Res 32:199–216. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2004.07.008

Urry J (1990) The tourist gaze. Sage, Newbury Park CA

Van Dijk J, Hacker K (2003) The digital divide as a complex and dynamic phenomenon. Inf Soc 19:315–326

Vigolo V, Confente I (2013) Older tourists: an exploratory study on online behaviour. In: Xiang Z, Tussyadiah I (eds) Information and communication technologies in tourism 2014. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp 439–452

Volo S (2009) Conceptualizing experience: a tourist based approach. J Hosp Mark Manag 18:111–126

Wang D, Fesenmaier DR (2013) Transforming the travel experience: the use of smartphones for travel. In: Xiang Z, Tussyadiah I (eds) Information and communication technologies in tourism 2013. Springer International Publishing, Cham, pp 58–69

Wang D, Park S, Fesenmaier DR (2011) An examination of information services and smartphone applications. http://works.bepress.com/dan_wang/1/. Accessed 20 Jan 2017

Wang N (2000) Tourism and modernity: a sociological analysis. Pergamon Press, Oxford

Winstead V, Anderson WA, Yost EA et al (2013) You can teach an old dog new tricks: a qualitative analysis of how residents of senior living communities may use the web to overcome spatial and social barriers. J Appl Gerontol 32:540–560. doi:10.1177/0733464811431824

Xiang Z, Gretzel U (2010) Role of social media in online travel information search. Tour Manag 31:179–188

Yoo K, Gretzel U (2009) Generational differences in CGM perceptions and use for travel planning. In: Tourism Travel and Research Association: Advancing tourism research globally 2009. http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1501&context=ttra. Accessed 20 Jan 2017

Yoo K-H, Gretzel U (2011) Influence of personality on travel-related consumer-generated media creation. Comput Human Behav 27:609–621

Yu RP, Ellison NB, McCammon RJ, Langa KM (2015) Mapping the two levels of digital divide: Internet access and social network site adoption among older adults in the USA. Inf Commun Soc 4462:1–20. doi:10.1080/1369118X.2015.1109695

Zickuhr K, Smith A (2012) Digital differences. Pew Research Center. http://www.pewinternet.org/2012/04/13/digital-differences/. Accessed 20 Jan 2017

Zickuhr K, Madden M (2012) Older adults and Internet use: for the first time, half of adults ages 65 and older are online. Pew Internet & American Life Project. http://www.pewinternet.org/files/old-media/Files/Reports/2012/PIP_Older_adults_and_internet_use.pdf. Accessed 20 Jan 2017

Chapter 5
Hospitality and Older Tourists: A Focus on Accommodation Choices

Abstract Hospitality and accommodation services play a crucial role in the tourist experience. After defining hospitality and presenting a broad classification of accommodations, the chapter provides an overview of the types of accommodation used by older tourists. Next, it describes some models of service quality and satisfaction that have been used in hospitality studies. Since extant studies have shown that hotels represent a preferred type of accommodation for older tourists, the second part of the chapter addresses the importance of hotel attributes for improving customer satisfaction and obtaining customer delight. Finally, the potentialities of peer-to-peer accommodation offered by online platforms such as Airbnb are discussed.

5.1 Defining Hospitality

The concept of hospitality has been much debated in the literature. Hence, before addressing older tourist behavior with regard to hospitality preferences, is it worth recalling how scholars define hospitality to provide a conceptual background for this chapter. Brotherton (1999) contributed a critical review of the main interpretations of hospitality. For example, Cassee (1983, p. 14) supplied a holistic definition of hospitality, intended as a combination of tangible and intangible elements, such as "food, beverages, beds, ambience and environment, and behavior of staff." Hepple et al. (1990) proposed from their review of the literature that hospitality has four distinct characteristics:

- It is provided by a host to a guest who is away from home.
- It is interactive—in hospitality, provider and receiver are simultaneously together.
- It includes both tangible and intangible factors.
- The host provides for the guest's security, psychological and physiological comfort.

V. Vigolo, *Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools*,
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0_5

King (1995, quoted in Kandampully et al. 2014), suggested that hospitality broadly spans three overlapping spheres: private, commercial, and social. While the private domain refers to hospitality in one's home to friends and family, the commercial domain represents the transition of hospitality from an unconditional offering to one where profit plays the prevailing role. Finally, the social domain emphasizes hospitableness and the generous provisions of food, beverage, and shelter to travelers.

According to Brotherton (1999, p. 167), these authors (Cassee 1983; Hepple et al. 1990; King 1995) fail to adequately define hospitality because:

> … they confuse hospitable behavior, or hospitableness, with hospitality and fall into the trap of suggesting that one of the important features of hospitality is making the guest "feel at home."

Brotherton (1999) also criticized some definitions of hospitality that are strongly weighted on the supply-side (e.g., Pfeifer 1983; Jones 1996) because they concentrate exclusively on one side of the hospitality exchange. Brotherton (1999) rather proposed a concept of hospitality that is based on what is defined as the "holy trinity" of hospitality: accommodation, food, and drink, with a focus on the priority of accommodation. Accordingly, hospitality is defined as a contemporaneous human exchange designed to be mutually beneficial for the parties involved (Brotherton 1999). Accommodation is to be intended not strictly as traditional accommodation forms, such as hotels, but rather as any type of accommodation where hospitality is provided, such as public restaurants or cafes, as well as any domestic accommodation. Therefore, Brotherton (1999) defined accommodation per se rather than the accommodation industry.

Slattery criticized Brotherton (1999) and other scholars for their definition of hospitality and argued that in the hospitality industry the critical relationship is not between host and guest, but rather between sellers and buyers or customers. In addition, according to Slattery (2002), defining hospitality as providing accommodation food and drink is reductive because customers do not buy only products, but also services and facilities that must be carefully designed and organized by the hospitality industry. Instead, Slattery (2002) highlighted the diversity and complexity of the hospitality industry, which includes for example a wide range of venues whose primary function is not hospitality. For example, Las Vegas casinos include facilities such as rooms, restaurants, theaters, a conference and exhibition center, a shopping mall, and a health club.

Other scholars focused more on the service and customer dimension of hospitality. In this regard, Hemmington (2007) considered hospitality as a commercial phenomenon and concluded that hospitality businesses must concentrate on the host-guest relationship and strive to deliver memorable service experiences. Moreover, Kandampully et al. (2014) viewed hospitality as a special type of service industry, "where service is vital but where the emphasis on service dimensions can be quite different from other service sectors." In a broad sense, Barrows et al. (2015) argued that, in the literature, hospitality refers to any kind of institution that offers

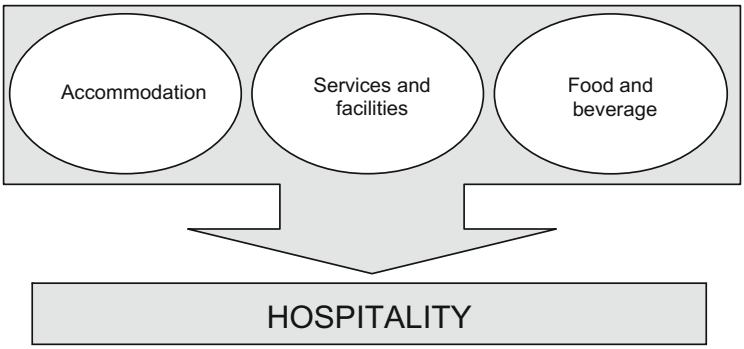

Fig. 5.1 The hospitality concept. *Source* Author's elaboration on Barrows et al. (2015)

shelter, food, or other types of service to people away from home, as represented in Fig. 5.1.

Without elaborating on these definitions, what emerges is a great variety of positions toward hospitality. In this chapter, a specific element of hospitality will be addressed for its relevance to the nature of the tourist experience: accommodation. In fact, while hospitality services such as restaurants or cafes are used both by residents and by tourists, accommodations are typically used by travelers, that is, individuals spending a night away from their usual residence. Accommodation therefore represents a crucial element from a tourism perspective.

5.2 Older Tourists' Preferred Types of Accommodation: An Overview

Although to a lesser extent than for hospitality, definitional issues also arise when referring to accommodation. Scholars distinguish between traditional or mainstream accommodation (such as hotels, motels, resorts, campsites, and trailer and recreational vehicle (RV)[1] parks) and specialist accommodation (Morrison et al. 1996; Mcintosh and Siggs 2005), also known as the parahotel business (Schwaninger 1989) or the supplementary accommodation sector (Seekings 1989). Specialist accommodation includes a variety of solutions whose prices range from the budget to the expensive ends, such as bed-and-breakfast, guesthouses, country inns, stately homes and mansions, country cottages, farms, ranches, wilderness and nature retreats, and boutique hotels (Liu et al. 2015).

[1]The majority of RVs are travel trailers and caravans, even though motorhomes, van campers, fifth-wheel trailers, and tent trailers are also utilized by RV tourists (Brooker and Joppe 2013).

In addition, some scholars distinguish between formal and informal accommodation. The first covers regular, taxed, registered activities, while the latter includes legal activities that are unregulated by the public authorities for tax, social security and/or labor law purposes. Informal accommodation includes both registered companies (e.g., hotels not declaring their full activity) and unregistered entities carrying out economic activities, often small-scale enterprises such as small guesthouses or bed and breakfasts (Horodnic et al. 2016). With technology development, in addition to these "traditional" informal competitors, new forms of informal accommodation have emerged, as will be discussed in Sect. 5.5 (Guttentag 2015). A classification of accommodation is proposed in Fig. 5.2.

Concerning older tourists' preferences for types of accommodation, several scholars found that the older tourist prefers traditional accommodation and especially hotels (Romsa and Blenman 1989; Batra 2009; Boksberger and Laesser 2009; Alén et al. 2016). In particular, travelers attracted to places of historical or artistic interest show a greater predisposition to stay in hotels than they do in more economical alternatives, such as hostels or family accommodation (Lieux et al. 1994). The preference of older tourists for hotel accommodation is confirmed by a recent study by Alén et al. (2016), who explored accommodation choices among Spanish individuals aged 55-plus. The most preferred accommodation by far was the hotel (70.9%), followed at a great distance by family and friends' house (17.4%). Holiday apartments (3.1%) and rural establishments (1.4%) were the least preferred options.

Other scholars (e.g., Bai et al. 1999; Blazey 1992) found that older tourists favor the home of friends and/or family as their accommodation option, although this inclination is influenced by the individual's age (Bai et al. 1999; Batra 2009) and by the attractiveness of the destination's attributes (Lieux et al. 1994). In relation to this, a recent study among older Australians conducted by Backer and King (2016) found that older people (aged 65 and above) represent a high proportion (23.9%) of travelers visiting friends and relatives (VFRs), compared with 14.8% of non-VFRs.

Laesser et al. (2009) explored the travel preferences of solo travelers. Based on a conceptual model, the authors divided Swiss travelers into four groups and found significant differences between the groups in terms of accommodation choice. The characteristics of each group are described below:

- Single-solo: Tourists who come from single households and travel alone; their favorite accommodation is either with friends or with relatives.
- Single-group: Tourists who come from single households but travel with a group of other people; they choose to stay at hotels.
- Collective solo: Tourists who do not live alone but they travel alone; they prefer to stay at holiday residences.
- Collective group: Tourists who come from collective households but they decide to travel by themselves as part of a group; they opt to stay at hotels.

Other studies emphasized the preferences of older tourists for camping. Over time, this concept has developed from basic tenting to caravanning, RVs and luxury offerings. Camping accommodation is referred to with several terms in different

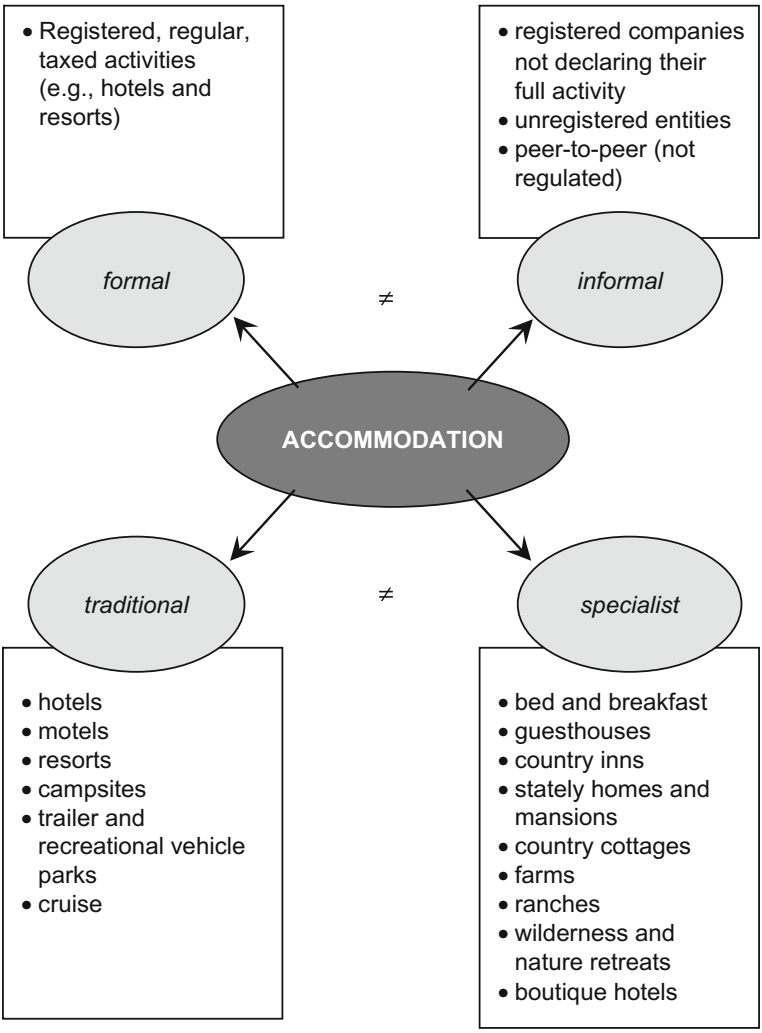

Fig. 5.2 A classification of accommodation *Source* Author's elaboration

countries, including, for instance, caravan parks, holiday parks, and tourist parks. For example, while North Americans incline toward terms such as campground, trailer park, travel park, RV park, or RV resort, in Europe the word campsite is favored. RV use is widespread among older tourists in certain countries, such as Australia, New Zealand, the United States, and South Africa. The RVs are used in drive tourism, in which the vehicle serves both as a transport means and as accommodation, as explained by Patterson et al. (2015, p. 540):

> Today caravans have become more than just a "bedroom on wheels" as they were in the past, and now feature well-appointed kitchen spaces, internal shower and toilet features, and comfortable living areas, often focused around flat-screen televisions connected to the global media by satellite dishes.

In a broad sense, camping is supported by outdoor hospitality (Brooker and Joppe 2013), which includes campgrounds, caravan parks, RV parks, and glamping.[2] Outdoor hospitality can refer to several forms of accommodation, for example camping and caravanning in rural areas with no services as well as camping in commercial parks (or outdoor hospitality parks) with luxury facilities such as saunas, massages, outdoor and indoor pools, beauty treatments, steam baths, gym/fitness facilities, Jacuzzis, and solariums (Brooker and Joppe 2014). As reported by Brooker and Joppe (2013), outdoor hospitality is widespread in Australia and New Zealand where more than 86% of persons have visited a caravan or holiday park at least once in their lifetime. These tourists are mainly older tourists, called gray nomads in Australia or snowbirds in the United States and Western Europe (Sullivan and Stevens 1982). They are defined as people aged 55 years and older, who travel independently for extended periods of time by caravan or campervan (Patterson et al. 2011). In addition, there is an emerging trend of short-stay caravan travelers, referred to as "gray caravanners" (Patterson et al. 2015), who are usually 75-plus and prefer to go on shorter visits.

Mahadevan (2014) highlighted the importance of improving the number of accommodation facilities for gray nomads to increase future visits. In addition, he stressed that gray nomads also utilize noncommercial accommodation, such as bush camping, free camps, rest areas, and national parks, which are often provided free or at low cost because they have limited facilities.

A few studies also reported the preference of older tourists for cruise travel (Javalgi et al. 1992; Callan et al. 2000; Muller and Cleaver 2000), particularly among older age groups. In this regard, Lehto et al. (2008) found that the silent generation (individuals born between 1925 and 1945) are more likely to take a cruise vacation than are baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964). The cruise is also a preferred type of travel accommodation among collective solo tourists (Boksberg and Laesser 2009). In their study conducted on international cruise travelers who disembarked at a Greek port, Andriotis and Agiomirgianakis (2010) found that the 56-plus age group represented about 35% of the total passengers.

Le Serre and Chevalier (2012) argued that cruise ships are particularly attractive for older women belonging to the relaxed intellectual traveler segment, because cruises often combine cultural stimuli with tranquility and the opportunity for social interaction. A recent study has shown cruise tourism in Asia is rapidly growing among older tourist (Patuelli and Nijkamp 2016).

---

[2]This word, which is a mixture of "glamorous" and "camping," is used to define a type of camping that includes more comfortable and luxurious accommodation than does traditional camping (Oxford English Dictionary, www.oed.com).

5.3 Models of Service Quality and Satisfaction

The hospitality industry competes to provide high service quality and customer satisfaction. While many studies have addressed customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry, little research has been conducted with specific regard to older customers (e.g., Callan and Bowman 2000; Caber and Albayrak 2014). This section will present some models that can be used to measure quality and satisfaction in the accommodation industry. Although they were initially developed for other service contexts, these models have been frequently used in the hospitality literature and some have been applied with a particular focus on exploring the perceptions and attitudes of older tourists in the hotel industry, as will be presented in Sect. 5.4.

In the marketing literature, service quality is considered an important component of customer satisfaction (Zeithaml et al. 2006). Specifically, it has been claimed that accommodation services differ from most other services (Crick and Spencer 2011) because the service is provided for prolonged periods of time (Brochado et al. 2015). Some scholars argued that customer satisfaction depends on the (dis)confirmation paradigm (e.g., Oliver 2000; Wirtz and Mattila 2001)—that is, the results of the evaluative discrepancy between customers' perceptions and their expectations of service (Oliver 1980). The SERVQUAL model, which is based on the disconfirmation paradigm, is one of the most frequently used models to measure service quality (Parasuraman et al. 1988); it has also been applied to hospitality and adapted in particular to measure the service quality of hotels. For instance, Brochado et al. (2015) recall the LODGSERV (Knutson et al. 1990) and the HOLSERV (Wei et al. 1999) scales.

To investigate customers' quality perceptions, some scholars have recommended using an attribute-level approach (Marković and Raspor Janković 2013; Parasuraman et al. 1988). In this regard, Kano et al. (1984) focused on the evaluation of service attributes, specifically the relationship between the performance of an attribute and the degree of attribute satisfaction. In particular, Kano et al. (1984) emphasized the non-symmetric relation between service attributes performance and customer satisfaction (see Fig. 5.3). They classified "must-have" and performance attributes as essential attributes, and attractive attributes as differentiating attributes. Kano et al. found that the must-have attributes meet implicit (or indifferent) needs and satisfy a minimum acceptable service level. Such attributes are essential to any service and should always be guaranteed and closely monitored by companies. They do not lead to customer satisfaction; however, if neglected, they determine a negative quality judgment by customers, even if core services were provided with precision and expertise. Performance attributes lead to customer satisfaction if the performance is high. Attractive attributes exceed customer's expectations, stimulating or re-awakening latent needs that, once satisfied, generate a high satisfaction level and a greater possibility of loyalty toward companies (Torres and Kline 2006; Goswami and Sarma 2011). Further, attractive attributes can lead to customer delight (see Sect. 5.4.2).

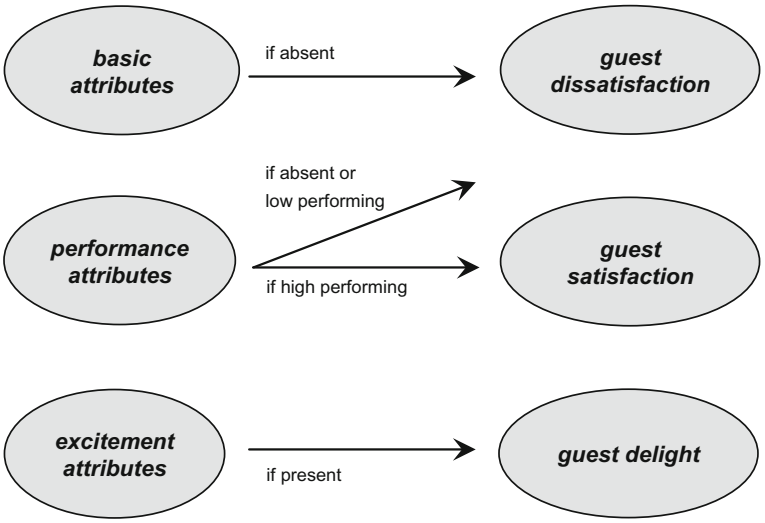

Fig. 5.3 Non-symmetric relationships between product attributes' performance and customer satisfaction. *Source* Author's elaboration on Vavra (1997) and Albayrak et al. (2016)

Kano's model inspired subsequent research. For example, Vavra (1997) further explored the non-symmetric relationship between attributes and satisfaction. He developed the importance grid, which uses the importance of a product or service attribute to classify attributes as "basic," "performance," and "excitement" (i.e., attractive) through regression analysis or partial correlation. The importance of an attribute may differ according to whether customers are asked about it directly or whether the information is offered implicitly. Hence, importance grid customers are asked to evaluate the performance and importance of attributes explicitly, whereas the implicit importance is usually derived through regression analysis. The evaluation of attributes is used as the independent variable, and customer satisfaction as the dependent variable. Finally, each attribute is positioned on a matrix where the explicit importance value is placed on the x and the implicit (derived) importance is placed on the y axis. The matrix is divided into four quadrants and attributes are classified as follows:

- basic factors, which have low implicit and high explicit importance values
- excitement factors, which have low explicit and high implicit importance
- important performance factors, which have both high implicit and high explicit importance values
- unimportant performance factors, which have low explicit and low implicit importance values.

In today's highly competitive and dynamic market, the existence of certain "attractive" qualities (Kano et al. 1984) or excitement factors (Vavra 1997) is crucial to the accommodation industry. Leaving customers simply satisfied is not enough to obtain customer preference and customer loyalty (Bonfanti and Brunetti 2015).

5.4 The Importance of Hotel Attributes for Older Tourists' Satisfaction

Despite some early studies (e.g., Ananth 1992; Gustin and Weaver 1993; Callan and Bowman 2000), the hospitality literature has only recently started to investigate the importance of hotel attributes to older tourists. As recommended by Caber and Albayrak (2014), hotel attributes are important for the selection of hotels and the evaluation of service quality. In addition, some studies have shown the existence of a gap between the services provided by operators and the services considered important by customers (Chen et al. 2013a, b; Nysveen 2003). Therefore, exploring and understanding customers' priorities with regard to hotel attributes is strategically important.

Ananth (1992) examined the attributes that older travelers consider when selecting a hotel. In a study conducted among the alumni of the Pennsylvania State University, the findings revealed that older customers (aged 59+) have certain needs and expectations that influence them to ignore certain marketing promotions that may well be successful with younger travelers, and vice versa. Specifically, some attributes are considered very important to older travelers yet are not promoted in hotels' marketing campaigns, such as grab bars, night lights, extra blankets, and medical facilities.

Wuest et al. (1996) explored the importance of services provided by hotels and motels by adopting the SERVQUAL model. The study was conducted among older Texans and the findings revealed that customer services related to assurance and reliability were considered highly important. "Assurance" included the courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence, whereas "reliability" referred to the hotels' ability to perform the service dependably and accurately. The importance of staff attitudes also emerged in a subsequent study conducted by Wei et al. (1999) in Australia. The authors compared the perceptions of attributes of three–to five-star hotels between marketing managers and older tourists (aged 60+) who would return to a hotel with which they were satisfied. The attributes examined were price, location, facilities, hotel restaurant, room furnishings, front-desk efficiency, and staff attitude. Results showed that both older tourists and marketing managers considered hotel facilities to be the most important attribute, followed by room furnishings. Marketing managers and older tourists agreed on the importance of staff attitude, front-desk efficiency, hotel facilities, and price (room rates).

However, the findings also revealed some mismatches between professionals and customers. Specifically, marketing managers underestimated the importance of room furnishings and hotel location, and overestimated the importance of food in the hotel restaurant. In fact, comfortable and pleasant room furnishings were considered highly important by older customers, only second after hotel facilities.

Callan and Bowman (2000) investigated the salient attributes of hotels for British travelers aged 55-plus when selecting a hotel or judging its quality. The findings revealed that older customers place great emphasis on value for money and are not particularly attracted by low prices and discounting. Nevertheless, they might be discouraged by perceived high prices. In addition, ease of maneuverability around the hotel was considered an important attribute, even though this type of information is not generally included in hotel advertising. In addition, about 44% of respondents looked for at least one specific access feature in hotels, such as ramps and lifts, because of mobility limitations. Finally, service, and staff attitude and behavior were a very important component of service quality.

In a different study, Major and McLeay (2013) conducted semi-structured qualitative interviews to identify which elements contributed to the package holiday experience of older British tourists in Tenerife. Six key categories emerged, namely the preholiday experience, travel and transit experience, self-made experience, provided experience, satisfaction, and loyalty. With regard to the provided experience, several elements concerning hotel service were considered important:

- being greeted by friendly management and recognized as repeat customers
- the experience of no children under 16 years being permitted in the hotel
- tea-making facilities in the accommodation
- the atmosphere of "feeling at home" and the security provided by staff.

Further, Chen et al. (2014) used a field experiment to investigate whether older-friendly facilities in a hotel affected the satisfaction levels of older package tourists in Taiwan. The research also explored the staff explanation effect with respect to tourists' satisfaction. The findings revealed that a room with facilities could significantly increase customers' satisfaction regarding cleanliness, comfort, decoration, illumination, and overall satisfaction. However, staff explanations did not have an effect on customers' satisfaction regarding friendly facilities.

Other scholars (Caber and Albayrak 2014; Albayrak et al. 2016) adopted Callan and Bowman's (2000) scale to explore the importance of hotel attributes among different markets. The survey was conducted among customers accommodated in 13 five-star hotels in Antalya, Turkey. Specifically, Caber and Albayrak (2014) selected three segments of older tourists (German, Dutch, and British). Tourists were divided into two groups based on their age: "senior tourists" (65+), and "pre-senior tourists" (between 50 and 64 years). The findings revealed that value for money and availability of organized entertainment in the hotel were important attributes for older British tourists when compared with other participants. Besides slight differences among the segments, overall the study showed that basic attributes such as cleanliness and staff attitude had the highest importance ratings

among respondents of all nationalities. Conversely, Albayrak et al. (2016) explored the importance of hotel attributes among German and British tourists (aged 65+). Using Vavra's (1997) importance grid, they classified attributes in four categories: basic factors, importance factors, performance factors, and excitement factors. The results indicated that some of the basic hotel attributes greatly differed between German and British tourists. For example, price and location were basic factors for older Germans, whereas appearance and attentiveness of staff, security, and value for money were basic attributes for British customers. Neither group gave importance to certain attributes, such as the availability of large print signs or special dietary menus. Interestingly, no excitement factors emerged.

Lee and King (2016) extended the perspective of analysis and investigated the factors that determine the attractiveness of tourist destinations for older travelers drawing upon an expert panel. In line with previous studies (e.g., Callan and Bowman 2000), barrier-free accommodation facilities were the most important sector-specific attribute for older tourists. These represent the additional tangible aspects of safety-related physical design features in hotel rooms or in public areas.

To summarize, the most important hotel attributes for satisfying older tourists are cleanliness (Chen et al. 2014), room furnishings, décor, and facilities (Wei et al. 1999; Wuest et al. 1996; Chen et al. 2014), staff attitude (Wuest et al. 1996; Wei et al. 1999; Callan and Bowman 2000; Caber and Albayrak 2014), convenience of location (Wei et al. 1989; Albayrak et al. 2016), safety and security (Chen et al. 2013a; Major and McLeay 2013), accessibility (Callan and Bowman 2000; Lee and King 2016), medical facilities (Ananth 1992), price (Wei et al. 1999; Albayrak et al. 2016), and value for money (Callan and Bowman 2000; Caber and Albayrak 2014).

5.4.1 A Focus on Hot Spring Hotels

Extant studies emphasized that health and wellness are crucial travel motivations among older tourists (e.g., Guinn 1980; Horneman et al. 2002). Such tourists travel to health resorts and spas seeking the benefits of natural resources combined with recreational facilities (Erfurt-Cooper and Cooper 2009). Wellness tourism activities are pursued by individuals who want to maintain and enhance their personal health and well-being (Smith and Puczko 2014). In this sense, wellness tourism does not focus on medical treatment, which is the core of medical tourism (Canestrino et al. 2015), but rather on promoting health though tourism activities (Mueller and Kaufmann 2001; Voigt and Pforr 2013). The concept of wellness can thus be extended to include the "harmony between the body, mind, and spirit" (Mueller and Kaufmann 2001). In addition, Mueller and Kaufmann (2001, p. 7) emphasized the role of hospitality in wellness tourism, intended as:

> … the sum of all the relationships and phenomena resulting from a journey or residence by people whose main motive is to preserve or promote their health. They stay in specialized hotels that provide appropriate professional knowledge and individual care.

There is general agreement that the older-adult segment offers great opportunities for the wellness industry (Chen et al. 2013b). In particular, for wellness tourists, hotels represent not only an accommodation, but also the place where wellness activities are provided. Regarding wellness tourism, Mueller and Kaufmann (2001) emphasized that wellness tourists choose an accommodation specializing in wellness, such as a hotel with a wellness center at or near its premises and/or with an offer of wellness services and treatments. Despite the relevance of older people to wellness tourism, and the central role of hotels in this type of tourism, very few studies have investigated the importance of hotel attributes for older tourists in this specific industry (Chen et al. 2013a, b). For example, Chen et al. (2013a) focused on customer service factors for wellness tourism in Taiwan, from both the service providers' and the customers' perspectives. The authors interviewed experts in the hot spring hotel industry and hotel guests aged 50 years and older. Respondents were divided into two groups: "old older adults" (65 years and up) and "young older adults" (50–64 years). The findings identified eight crucial customer service factors: personnel services, environments, healthy diet, relaxation, health promotion treatments, unique tourism resources, social activities, and mental learning. The findings suggest that the most important factor for both age groups is personnel services, followed by internal and external environments, which include items such as cleanliness and safety, safety of the destination, and location of accommodation. In addition, Chen et al. (2013b) specifically focused on customer service factors for older visitors (aged 50+) engaging in wellness tourism based at hot springs hotels in Taiwan. The results identified seven factors: health promotion treatments, mental learning, unique tourism resources, complementary therapies, relaxation, healthy diet, and social activities. In addition, respondents were classified the three groups: (1) "holistic group," (2) "physiotherapy group," and (3) "leisure and recreation group." The first group showed a higher regard for all the customer service factors. The second group had higher concern for complementary therapies and health promotion treatments than the third group, which, in turn, showed a higher regard for service factors (such as relaxation and social activities) than the second group.

In a different study, Vigolo and Bonfanti (2016) explored the functional attributes of hotels because of their key role in tourists' decision-making processes. Functional attributes include basic (i.e., must-have or expected) attributes, which often go unnoticed by most customers because customers expect these requirements to be met in the product or service. However, their absence can result in extreme dissatisfaction (Albayrak et al. 2016). Based on these premises, Vigolo and Bonfanti (2016) investigated the importance of basic hotel attributes for older tourists evaluating hot spring hotels. The top-five attributes, derived from the mean of responses, were staff friendliness and kindness, followed by staff efficiency, the presence of a swimming pool, staff reactivity, and the presence of a doctor at the hotel. In addition, they found that four dimensions underlying the hotel attributes emerged, as listed below:

- older-friendly facilities, including elements such as ramps, wide corridors and doors, grab bars in bathrooms, special dietary menus, availability of a doctor at the hotel, and staff promptness
- customer care, relating mainly to employees' attitudes toward the customers
- spa facilities, which represent a core facility for hot spring hotels
- servicescape, which include hotels' furnishing and staff's physical appearance.

The findings support the results of previous studies. For example, Caber and Albayrak (2014) highlighted that "politeness of staff" and "friendliness of staff" were positioned among the five most important hotel attributes in all nationality and age groups. It is interesting to note that the presence of a doctor at the hotel was considered extremely important by older tourists (Vigolo and Bonfanti 2016). This finding is in line with studies that identified health as a possible travel concern for older tourists (see Chap. 3). Moreover, in Vigolo and Bonfanti's (2016) study, older tourists are shown to be more concerned about the presence of medication consultation facilities than they are in Chen et al. (2013b).

5.4.2 *From Satisfaction to Delight: The Creation of Memorable Service Experiences*

To satisfy customers, hotels need to surprise their guests (Zeithaml et al. 2006) by creating memorable service experiences. Lynch (1993) argued that to satisfy customers hotels must provide experiences that go beyond normal standards of quality service. Further, it is necessary to provide an attractive service (Baccarani et al. 2010). For example, by including an element of surprise within the hotel service, the whole service experience becomes memorable (Ariffin and Maghzi 2012).

To delight customers, a problem-solving approach is not sufficient. The service should unexpectedly increase performance levels in such a way that customers perceive excitation (surprise or excitement) or a positive feeling (pleasure, joy, or happiness) (e.g., Oliver et al. 1997; Berman 2005; Vanhamme 2008). In this respect, Verma (2003) contended that joy (understood as a positive emotion), along with surprise, creates a feeling of delight (an arousal of positive emotion). In addition, Vanhamme (2008) argued that customer delight may also be defined as extreme satisfaction, that is, a psychological state dependent upon cognitive and affective elements in consumption processes. In this way, surprise is just one possible antecedent of delight.

In relation to the hospitality industry, Crick and Spencer (2011) argued that delighting customers enables businesses to generate excitement in their customers, which in turn produces memorable service experiences, positive word of mouth, customer retention, and higher profitability. In addition, customer delight offers the opportunity of a competitive advantage that is difficult to imitate (Torres and Kline 2006). However, this field is still under-researched with regard to older tourists, particularly their accommodation experiences. Tung and Ritchie (2011b) explored

the essence of memorable service experience to understand the cognitive processes that prevent individuals from paying attention to their experiences, as well as the conceptual processes of memory formation and retention. Based on in-depth interviews, four key dimensions of memorable experience emerged: affect, expectations, consequentiality, and recollection. The same authors (Tung and Ritchie 2011a) also investigated the characteristics of memorable experiences with specific regard to older tourists (55+) in a Canadian city. Overall, the findings revealed that memorable experiences were related to five characteristics. Specifically, they were linked to critical episodes in identity formation, or to family milestones, or to moments for relationship development with significant others. In some cases, memorable experiences encompassed traveling to relive past memories, such as returning to places where tourists had grown up or experienced a major life event. Finally, for some older tourists memorable experiences involved traveling for freedom pursuits, such as freedom from work, financial, and family obligations.

Other studies explored memorable experiences in hotels, though not addressing older customers in particular (e.g., Torres et al. 2014; Ariffin and Omar 2016; Chun Wang et al. 2016). Still, limited research has been dedicated to exploring the relationship between accommodations' attractive attributes and customer delight from an older tourist's perspective. In this regard, Vigolo and Bonfanti (2014) analyzed hotel service quality from the perspective of older tourists, with a specific focus on memorable service experiences. Through qualitative interviews with older tourists (aged 60+), the authors explored what hotel attributes generated customer delight and memorable experiences. Then, they attempted to relate these attractive attributes to customers' needs. The findings revealed that the attractive attributes described by the respondents can be related to some well-recognized needs typical of the tourist experience: the need for uniqueness, for novelty seeking, for knowledge seeking, and for an emotional atmosphere. By responding to these needs, hotels can evoke positive emotions that contribute to the creation of a memorable hotel experience (Tung and Ritchie 2011a, b).

As emphasized by Ariffin and Maghzi (2012, p. 191), in today's extremely competitive environment in the accommodation sector, only extraordinary levels of hospitality can help to retain tourists and encourage them to return.

5.5 Emerging Forms of Hospitality: Peer-to-Peer Accommodation

In recent years, the tourism market, both on the supply—and on the demand-side, has been shaped by the increasingly important role of the sharing economy. As reported by Horodnic et al. (2016, p. 51), this term was introduced in the Oxford English Dictionary in 2015 and is defined as "an economic system in which assets or services are shared between private individuals, either for free or for a fee, typically by means of the Internet." Even though sharing is an ancient practice,

collaborative consumption and the sharing economy are a product of the Internet age (Belk 2014). Through the sharing economy, markets that traditionally were not considered a source of profit have started to offer individuals new opportunities of generating income (Heo 2016).

The sharing economy is also called collaborative consumption, or the peer economy, and it refers to individual participation in the sharing of private possessions, such as renting, transport solutions, and swapping of goods and services (Kang et al. 2012; Horodnic et al. 2016). In the tourism industry, the sharing economy has changed the way people travel (Heo 2016; Guttentag 2015), boosting the phenomenon of informal accommodation. Guttentag (2015, p. 1200) described informal accommodation as:

> …the production of goods and services that are concealed from or unregulated by public authorities, and it often exhibits characteristics such as low entry requirements and small-scale operations.

For example, Airbnb is now one of the most well-known peer-to-peer platforms that offers informal accommodation. Founded in 2008, Airbnb developed scalable platforms empowering individuals to share and distribute with one another their excess capacity of accommodation, such as spare rooms (i.e., peer-to-peer accommodation) (Heo 2016). Other peer-to-peer platforms include, for example, HouseTrip and FlipKey (both subsidiaries of TripAdvisor). This type of offering can be considered a source of disruptive innovation with tremendous effects on the traditional accommodation sector (Horodnic et al. 2016; Guttentag 2015). A recent study in the Texas market concludes that the sharing economy is gaining a market share from the traditional economy (Zervas et al. 2014). To seize the opportunity of this developing market, HomeAway and its subsidiaries VRBO and Homelidays were acquired in December 2015 by Expedia to rival the power of Airbnb. With the massive and rapid growth of informal accommodation, it is not surprising that traditional registered businesses (i.e., hotels) tend to see peer-to-peer accommodation as a threat, considering them as unfair competition since regulation in this market is still uncertain and not clearly defined (Heo 2016).

Airbnb enables hosts and guests to connect through profiles and effective messaging systems and it provides the possibility to post public reviews (ranging from one to five stars) about one another. These elements contribute to establishing trust between hosts and guests, as a person might understandably be cautious of hosting a stranger or staying in a stranger's home (Guttentag 2015). In addition, these types of information help both host and guests to establish their reputation and publicize their personalities, thus facilitating the process of finding the best match (Lu and Kandampully 2016). In a recent study, Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016) used responses from travelers residing in the United States and Finland to investigate differences between users and non-users of peer-to-peer accommodation rentals (such as Airbnb). The findings revealed two drivers of use: social appeal (desire for community and sustainability) and economic appeal (cost savings). The barriers include issues of trust, efficacy, familiarity with the system, and cost. In addition, a significant correlation emerged between age and efficacy, indicating that older respondents are

associated with lack of knowledge and ability to use the platform. Moreover, older Finnish respondents who had not used peer-to-peer accommodation also stated that it was unlikely they would use it in the future. Therefore, Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016) concluded that an increase in users' familiarity with and ease of use of the online platform, especially for older users, may reduce the barrier to peer-to-peer accommodation.

Despite some resistance deriving from technology adoption, older individuals are increasingly participating in the sharing economy. On the one hand, according to Airbnb (2016a), individuals aged 60 years and older represent the fastest growing host demographic. Older people offering a private room in their house are empty nesters who host to achieve extra income. Specifically, women aged 60 and older represent 64% of all older hosts on Airbnb in the United States. Similar trends are found in Europe (Airbnb 2016b). A recent report (Airbnb 2016a) claims that older women are the "golden hosts" of the Airbnb community because they receive a higher percentage of five-star reviews than do any other age group in the Airbnb community. In fact, the percentage of five-star reviews increases steadily with host age.

On the other hand, older individuals are also an attractive market segment as potential guests of peer-to-peer accommodations. This is true to the extent that recent years have seen the creation of peer-to-peer accommodation platforms solely targeting older guests. For example, the Freebird Club (www.thefreebirdclub.com) was established in 2015 as a social travel and home-stay club exclusively for individuals over 50 years of age. Like Airbnb, this platform offers the opportunity for members to become hosts and make their spare rooms available to guests for a set nightly rate, or to become guests looking for available accommodation. As argued by Tussyadiah and Pesonen (2016), the social appeal of peer-to-peer accommodation (i.e., social connection, intimacy of relationship, and authenticity) offers a valuable alternative to traditional accommodation solutions for older tourists.

To conclude, there is still great potential for research to explore the motivations of older tourists' choice with regard to accommodation types, perceived service quality, and drivers of customer satisfaction and customer delight.

References

Airbnb (2016a) Airbnb's growing community of 60+ women hosts. https://www.airbnbaction.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Airbnb_60_Plus_Women_Report.pdf. Accessed 20 Jan 2017

Airbnb (2016b) Senior hosts in Europe. https://www.airbnbaction.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Airbnb_SeniorHostsEuropeReport_English_9-13-16.pdf. Accessed 20 Jan 2017

Albayrak T, Caber M, Bideci M (2016) Identification of hotel attributes for senior tourists by using Vavra's importance grid. J Hosp Tour Manag 29:17–23. doi:10.1016/j.jhtm.2016.05.004

Alén E, Losada N, Domínguez T (2016) The impact of ageing on the tourism industry: an approach to the senior tourist profile. Soc Indic Res 127:303–322. doi:10.1007/s11205-015-0966-x

Ananth M (1992) Marketplace lodging needs of mature travelers. Cornell Hotel Restaur Adm Q 33:12–24. doi:10.1016/0010-8804(92)90005-P
Andriotis K, Agiomirgianakis G (2010) Cruise visitors' experience in a mediterranean port of call. Int J Tour Res 12:390–404. doi:10.1002/jtr.770
Ariffin AAM, Maghzi A (2012) A preliminary study on customer expectations of hotel hospitality: influences of personal and hotel factors. Int J Hosp Manag 31:191–198. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2011.04.012
Ariffin AAM, Omar NB (2016) Surprise, hospitality, and customer delight in the context of hotel services. In: Woodside A (ed) Tourism and hospitality management, Emerald Group Publishing, Bingley p 127–142. doi:10.1108/S1871-317320160000012010
Baccarani C, Ugolini M, Bonfanti A (2010) A conceptual service quality map: the value of a wide opened perspective. In: Toulon-Verona Conference Excellence in Services, University of Coimbra (Portugal), 2–4 Sept 2010. http://www.toulonveronaconf.eu/papers/index.php/tvc/article/view/370/366. Accessed 10 Jan 2017
Backer E, King B (2016) VFR traveller demographics: the social tourism dimension. J Vacat Mark 1–14. doi:10.1177/1356766716665439
Bai B, Smith W, Cai L, O'Leary J (1999) Senior sensitive segments: looking at travel behavior. In: Chon KS (ed) The practice of graduate research in hospitality and tourism. The Haworth Hospitality Press, New York, pp 75–89
Barrows CW, Reynolds B, Powers T (2015) Introduction to management in the hospitality industry. Wiley, Hoboken
Batra A (2009) Senior pleasure tourists: examination of their demography, travel experience, and travel behavior upon visiting the Bangkok metropolis. Int J Hosp Tour Adm 10:197–212. doi:10.1080/15256480903088105
Belk R (2014) You are what you can access: sharing and collaborative consumption online. J Bus Res 67:1595–1600. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2013.10.001
Berman B (2005) How to delight your customers. Calif Manage Rev 48:129–151
Blazey MA (1992) Travel and retirement status. Ann Tour Res 19:771–783
Boksberger PE, Laesser C (2009) Segmentation of the senior travel market by the means of travel motivations. J Vacat Mark 15:311–322. doi:10.1177/1356766709335829
Bonfanti A, Brunetti F (2015) Effects of customer education in terms of customer perceived value: the role of customer evaluation skills. Sinergie Ital J Manag 98:219–238
Brochado A, Rita P, Gameiro C (2015) Exploring backpackers' perceptions of the hostel service quality. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 27:1839–1855. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-03-2014-0145
Brooker E, Joppe M (2013) Trends in camping and outdoor hospitality—an international review. J Outdoor Recreat Tour 3–4:1–6. doi:10.1016/j.jort.2013.04.005
Brooker E, Joppe M (2014) A critical review of camping research and direction for future studies. J Vacat Mark 20:335–351. doi:10.1177/1356766714532464
Brotherton B (1999) Towards a definitive view of the nature of hospitality and hospitality management. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 11:165–173. doi:10.1108/09596119910263568
Caber M, Albayrak T (2014) Does the importance of hotel attributes differ for senior tourists? Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 26:610–628. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-02-2013-0103
Callan RJ, Bowman L (2000) Selecting a hotel and determining salient quality attributes: a preliminary study of mature British travellers. Int J Tourism Res 2:97–118. doi:10.1002/(SICI)1522-1970(200003/04)2:2<97:AID-JTR190>3.0.CO;2-1/epdf
Canestrino R, Magliocca P, Nigro C (2015) Drivers and implications of medical tourism: a neo-institutional perspective. Sinergie Ital J Manag 33:271–289
Cassee ET (1983) The management of hospitality. Pergamon Press, Oxford
Chen K-H, Chang F-H, Wu C (2013a) Investigating the wellness tourism factors in hot spring hotel customer service. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 25:1092–1114. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-06-2012-0086
Chen KH, Liu HH, Chang FH (2013b) Essential customer service factors and the segmentation of older visitors within wellness tourism based on hot springs hotels. Int J Hosp Manag 35:122–132. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.05.013

Chen W-Y, Wang K-C, Luoh H-F, Shih JF, You YS (2014) Does a friendly hotel room increase senior group package tourists' satisfaction? a field experiment. Asia Pacific J Tour Res 19:950–970. doi:10.1080/10941665.2013.833123

Chun Wang J, Chun Wang J, Wang Y-C, Wang YC, Tai YF, Tai YF (2016) Systematic review of the elements and service standards of delightful service. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 28:1310–1337. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-08-2014-0400

Crick A, Spencer A (2011) Hospitality quality: new directions and new challenges. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 23:463–478. doi:10.1108/09596111111129986

Erfurt-Cooper P, Cooper M (2009) Health and wellness tourism: spas and hot springs. Channel View Publications, Bristol

Goswami S, Sarma MK (2011) Guest delight: its significance in the hotel industry. IUP J Mark Manag 10:64–84

Guinn R (1980) Elderly recreational vehicle tourists: motivations for leisure. J Travel Res 19:9–12. doi:10.1177/004728758001900102

Gustin ME, Weaver PA (1993) The mature market: underlying dimensions and group differences of a potential market for the hotel industry. Hosp Rev 11:6

Guttentag D (2015) Airbnb: disruptive innovation and the rise of an informal tourism accommodation sector. Curr Issues Tour 18:1192–1217. doi:10.1080/13683500.2013.827159

Hemmington N (2007) From service to experience: understanding and defining the hospitality business. Serv Ind J 27:1–19. doi:10.1080/02642060701453221

Heo CY (2016) Sharing economy and prospects in tourism research. Ann Tour Res 58:166–170

Hepple J, Kipps M, Thomson J (1990) The concept of hospitality and an evaluation of its applicability to the experience of hospital patients. Int J Hosp Manag 9:305–318. doi:10.1016/0278-4319(90)90038-Y

Horneman L, Carter RW, Wei S, Ruys H (2002) Profiling the senior traveler: an Australian perspective. J Travel Res 41:23–37. doi:10.1177/004728750204100104

Horodnic IA, Williams CC, Horodnic AV (2016) Are practices of competitors in the informal sector a major threat for hotels and restaurants? the Yearbook of the "GH Zane" Institute of Economic Research 25:49–60

Javalgi RG, Thomas EG, Rao SR (1992) Consumer behavior in the US pleasure travel marketplace: an analysis of senior and nonsenior travelers. J Travel Res 31:14–19. doi:10.1177/004728759203100203

Jones P (1996) Hospitality research—where have we got to? Int J Hosp Manag 15:5–10. doi:10.1016/0278-4319(96)84544-0

Kandampully J, Keating BW, Kim BC, Mattila AS, Solnet D (2014) Service research in the hospitality literature: insights from a systematic review. Cornell Hosp Q 55:287–299. doi:10.1177/1938965514536778

Kang KH, Stein L, Heo CY, Lee S (2012) Consumers' willingness to pay for green initiatives of the hotel industry. Int J Hosp Manag 31:564–572. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2011.08.001

Kano N, Seraku N, Takahashi F, Tsuji S (1984) Attractive quality and must-be quality. J Japanese Soc Qual Control 14:39–48

King CA (1995) What is hospitality? Int J Hosp Manag 14:219–234. doi:10.1016/0278-4319(95)00045-3

Knutson B, Stevens P, Wullaert C, Patton M, Yokoyama F (1990) LODGSERV: a service quality index for the lodging industry. J Hosp Tour Res 14:277–284. doi:10.1177/109634809001400230

Laesser C, Beritelli P, Bieger T (2009) Solo travel: explorative insights from a mature market (Switzerland). J Vacat Mark 15:217–227. doi:10.1177/1356766709104268

Le Serre D, Chevalier C (2012) Marketing travel services to senior consumers. J Consum Mark 29:262–270. doi:10.1108/07363761211237335

Lee C-F, King B (2016) Determinants of attractiveness for a seniors-friendly destination: a hierarchical approach. Curr Issues Tour 0:1–20. doi:10.1080/13683500.2016.1250725

Lehto XY, Jang S, Achana FT, O'Leary JT (2008) Exploring tourism experience sought: a cohort comparison of baby boomers and the silent generation. J Vacat Mark 14:237–252. doi:10.1177/1356766708090585

Lieux EM, Weaver PA, McCleary KW (1994) Lodging preferences of the senior tourism market. Ann Tour Res 21:712–728. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(94)90079-5

Liu L, Wu B, Morrison AM, Sia Juo Ling R (2015) Why dwell in a hutongtel? tourist accommodation preferences and guest segmentation for Beijing hutongtels. Int J Tour Res 17:171–184. doi:10.1002/jtr.1975

Lu C, Kandampully J (2016) RHM what drives customers to use access-based sharing options in the hospitality industry? 6:119–125. doi:10.1080/22243534.2016.1253276

Lynch JJ (1993) Managing the delight factor, 1st edn. IFS International Limited, Bedford

Mahadevan R (2014) Understanding senior self-drive tourism in Australia using a contingency behavior model. J Travel Res 53:252–259. doi:10.1177/0047287513496476

Major B, McLeay F (2013) Alive and kicking: evaluating the overseas package holiday experience of grey consumers in the United Kingdom. J Vacat Mark 19:5–18. doi:10.1177/1356766712461405

Marković S, Raspor Janković S (2013) Exploring the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in Croatian hotel industry. Tour Hosp Manag 19:149–164

Mcintosh A, Siggs A (2005) An exploration of the experiential nature of boutique accommodation 44:74–81. doi:10.1177/0047287505276593

Morrison AM, Pearce PL, Moscardo G, Nadkarni N, O'Leary JT (1996) Specialist accommodation: definition, markets served, and roles in tourism development. J Travel Res 35:18–26. doi:10.1177/004728759603500104

Mueller H, Kaufmann EL (2001) Wellness tourism: market analysis of a special health tourism segment and implications for the hotel industry. J Vacat Mark 7:5–17. doi:10.1177/135676701007001 01

Muller TE, Cleaver M (2000) Targeting the CANZUS baby boomer explorer and adventurer segments. J Vacat Mark 6:154–169. doi:10.1177/135676700006002 06

Nysveen H (2003) The importance of risk-reducing value-added services in online environment: an exploratory study on various segments of leisure tourism. Inf Technol Tour 6:113–127. doi:10.3727/109830503773048228

Oliver RL (1980) A cognitive model of the antecedents and consequences of satisfaction decisions. J Mark Res 17:460–470. doi:10.2307/3150499

Oliver RL (2000) Customer satisfaction with service. In: Schwartz TA, Iacobucci D (eds) Handbook of service marketing and management. Sage, Thousand Oaks, pp 247–254

Oliver RL, Rust RT, Varki S (1997) Customer delight: foundations, findings, and managerial insight. J Retail 73:311–336

Parasuraman A, Zeithaml VA, Berry LL (1988) Servqual: a multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. J Retail 64:12–40

Patterson I, Pegg S, Mahadevan R (2015) The benefits of short stay caravan travel based on the lived experiences of grey caravanners in Australia. Tour Anal 20:539–549. doi:10.3727/108354215X14411980111497

Patterson IAN, Pegg S, Litster J (2011) Grey nomads on tour: a revolution in travel and tourism for older adults. Tour Anal 16:283–294. doi:10.3727/108354211X13110944387086

Patuelli R, Nijkamp P (2016) Travel motivations of seniors: a review and a meta-analytical assessment. Tour Econ 22:847–862. doi:10.1177/1354816616654257

Pfeifer Y (1983) Small business management. The management of hospitality. Pergamon Press, Oxford, pp 189–202

Romsa G, Blenman M (1989) Vacation patterns of the elderly German. Ann Tour Res 16:178–188. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(89)90066-2

Schwaninger M (1989) Strategic Management in Tourism. In: Witt SF, Moutinho L (eds) Tourism marketing and management handbook. Prentice Hall, New York, pp 425–432

Seekings J (1989) Components of Tourism. In: Witt SF, Moutinho L (eds) Tourism marketing and management handbook. Prentice Hall, New York, pp 57–62

Slattery P (2002) Finding the hospitality industry part I: in search of hospitality. J Hosp Leis Sport Tour Educ 1:19–28. doi:10.3794/johlste.11.7

Smith M, Puczko L (2014) Health, tourism and hospitality: wellness. Spas and Medical Travel, Routledge, New York

Sullivan DA, Stevens SA (1982) Snowbirds: seasonal migrants to the sunbelt. Res Aging 4:159–177

Torres EN, Fu X, Lehto X (2014) Examining key drivers of customer delight in a hotel experience: a cross-cultural perspective. Int J Hosp Manag 36:255–262

Torres EN, Kline S (2006) From satisfaction to delight: a model for the hotel industry. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 18:290–301. doi:10.1108/09596110610665302

Tung VWS, Ritchie JRB (2011a) Investigating the memorable experiences of the senior travel market: an examination of the reminiscence bump. J Travel Tour Mark 28:331–343. doi:10.1080/10548408.2011.563168

Tung VWS, Ritchie JRB (2011b) Exploring the essence of memorable tourism experiences. Ann Tour Res 38:1367–1386. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2011.03.009

Tussyadiah IP, Pesonen J (2016) Drivers and barriers of peer-to-peer accommodation stay—an exploratory study with American and Finnish travellers. Curr Issues Tour 0:1–18. doi:10.1080/13683500.2016.1141180

Vanhamme J (2008) The surprise-delight relationship revisited in the management of experience. Rech Appl en Mark (English ed) 23:113–138. doi:10.1177/205157070802300307

Vavra TG (1997) Improving your measurement of customer satisfaction: a guide to creating, conducting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction measurement programs. ASQ Quality Press, Milwaukee

Verma HV (2003) Customer outrage and delight. J Serv Res 3:119–133

Vigolo V, Bonfanti A (2014) Satisfying and delighting senior guests at hotels. In: Proceedings of the Tourism and Ageing Conference, Lisbon (Portugal), 26-29 Nov 2014

Vigolo V, Bonfanti A (2016) Exploring the importance of basic hotel attributes: a focus on senior wellness tourists. In: Petruzzellis L, Winer RS (eds) Rediscovering the essentiality of marketing. Springer, Cham, pp 969–981

Voigt C, Pforr C (2013) Wellness tourism: a destination perspective. Routledge, London

Wei S, Ruys H, Muller TE (1999) A gap analysis of perceptions of hotel attributes by marketing managers and older people in Australia. J Mark Pract Appl Mark Sci 5:200–212. doi:10.1108/EUM0000000004574

Wirtz J, Mattila A (2001) Exploring the role of alternative perceived performance measures and needs-congruency in the consumer satisfaction process. J Consum Psychol 11:181–192. doi:10.1207/S15327663JCP1103_04

Wuest BES, Tas RF, Emenheiser DA (1996) What do mature travelers perceive as important hotel/motel customer services? J Hosp Tour Res 20:77–93. doi:10.1177/109634809602000206

Zeithaml VA, Bitner MJ, Gremler DD (2006) Services marketing: integrating customer focus across the firm. McGraw-Hill/Irwin, Boston

Zervas G, Proserpio D, Byers JW (2014) The rise of the sharing economy: estimating the impact of Airbnb on the hotel industry. J Mark Res. doi:10.1509/jmr.15.0204

Part III
Marketing To Older Tourists: The Supply-Side Perspective

Chapter 6
Understanding Marketing Approaches to Older Tourists: A Selection of Case Studies

Abstract This chapter illustrates a selection of case studies that show different approaches to older tourists from a supply-side perspective. After presenting the purpose of the study, details about the research method are provided. Specifically, three companies in the tourism industry with different targeting and positioning strategies in the older tourist market are examined: a Canadian-based tour operator offering exotic adventure travels, a Slovenian-based tour operator and travel agency specializing in slow garden travels, and a United Kingdom-based company providing long-term accommodation solutions in Southern Europe. For each case study, a brief company profile is provided, followed by the description of the salient strategic choices and operative practices. Finally, the chapter offers some considerations about the challenges for the tourism industry in the next decades.

6.1 Purpose of the Study and Methodology

While the first two parts of the book (Chaps. 1–5) are demand-focused and aim at investigating older tourists' behavior, the third part (this chapter and 7) shifts the perspective to the supply side. Specifically, it intends to explore how companies in the tourism industry address this market (in this chapter) in order to identify some theoretical contributions as well as practical implications for marketers (Chap. 7). Since very few studies have addressed suppliers' marketing strategies regarding older tourists, a qualitative approach based on the case studies method was considered the most appropriate to gain in-depth information and insight into the phenomenon. Accordingly, this chapter presents three case studies of older-oriented tourism companies and analyzes their marketing strategies and operative practices. Before presenting the three studies, the methodology for the research is described. Finally, the discussion section highlights similarities and differences in the companies' marketing approach to older tourists.

V. Vigolo, *Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools*,
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0_6

6.1.1 A Qualitative Approach

Several scholars (e.g., Davies 2003; Pernecky and Jamal 2010; Wilson and Hollinshead 2015) have supported the use of qualitative methodologies in tourism research. Since the purpose of this study was to increase the understanding of tourism companies targeting older tourists, and the focus was on their own perspective, a qualitative approach was chosen and a multiple case study research design was adopted. Following Yin (2003), this method is appropriate for research where questions involving "how" or "why" are posed. The use of multiple case study research is not intended to generalize about companies' marketing approach (Yin 2015), but rather to present real-life examples of marketing strategies and tools that can be used to target older tourists effectively.

6.1.2 Case Studies Selection

The case studies were selected after extensive research on Internet search engines by combining keywords describing the demographic segment (such as "older," "seniors," "over 50s," "50+," "over 60s," "retirees") and keywords identifying the industry (such as "travel/s," "tourism," "tour operator/s," "hotel/s," "accommodation"). In addition, travel blogs and websites dedicated to older persons or older tourists served as useful references to identify suppliers of travel services for this specific market.

Following Stake (2013), case studies were selected considering three main criteria:

- Is the case relevant?
- Do the cases provide diversity across contexts?
- Does the case provide the opportunity to learn about complexity and contexts?

Targeting mainly older tourists was a prerequisite for companies to be considered as potential candidates for the case study. In addition, the variety of case studies was considered important to gain different perspectives and marketing approaches to the older tourist market. An initial screening of the companies' websites served to assess these aspects. Overall, 20 companies were purposefully selected on the basis of their peculiarities and their relevance to the study. They were classified by the researcher according to specific characteristics, such as type of business (e.g., tour operator or accommodation services) and type of offering (e.g., adventure travels or garden travels). Accordingly, companies were contacted in subsequent steps to ensure a variety of respondents in terms of travel type and business type. The companies were contacted via email or live chat through their websites and invited to participate in the research after a description the aim of the project. Five responded requiring further information and three finally decided to participate:

- ElderTreks, a Canadian-based tour operator specializing in adventure travel for older tourists
- Viaggi Floreali, a Slovenian-based tour operator and travel agency specializing in garden travel
- Algarve Senior Living, a British company specializing in long-term stay accommodation in Southern Europe.

6.1.3 Data Collection

In-depth qualitative interviews were conducted with the companies' marketing managers or founders.[1] According to Malhotra and Birks (2003), the in-depth interview is the best way to approach business research with managers. A loosely-structured protocol was chosen to allow respondents to diverge from the main topics and further develop concepts and ideas. The protocol was developed around the following key topics to maintain a degree of consistency across all interviews:

- how the company started to target older tourists
- description of the target and its characteristics
- description of the company's distinctive elements
- use of the marketing mix (product, price, place, and promotion strategies)
- analysis of the market context with a focus on active aging and the challenges for the tourism industry.

The outline of the questionnaire was sent via email to the participants a few days before the interview as a general guide to help them focus on the main topics, though it was specified that the interview would have a loose structure. Participants were also informed about the length of the interview. Considering that the companies were located in distant countries, for time and cost convenience the interviews were conducted personally by the researcher over the telephone or via Skype. The interviews ranged in length from 50 to 60 min. They were recorded, with the consent of the participants, to ensure that no subtle nuances or details would be missed because of the amount of rich data. In addition, the interviews were documented by detailed note taking (Rubin and Rubin 2011; Myers 2013).

[1]The interviews were conducted with Amanda Dunnig (marketing manager for ElderTreks until November 22, 2016), Erica Vaccari (founder and director of Viaggi Floreali), and Luis Teixeira da Silva (founder and director of Algarve Senior Living).

6.1.4 Data Analysis

The interviews were fully transcribed by a professional transcription service for academics and double-checked for accuracy and reliability with the original audios and notes taken during the interviews. A theme analysis of the interviews was then undertaken to explore the companies' marketing strategies and practices taken. The text was segmented into discrete parts, "not according to syntactic rules (e.g., sentences) but with respect to change of meaning in the text" (Tajeddini et al. 2017, p. 54). The themes identified in the analysis included:

- target definition
- customers' expectations
- customer satisfaction
- positioning
- product offering
- price strategies
- place strategies
- promotion strategies
- terminological ambiguity in referring to older tourists
- active aging
- challenges for the tourism industry.

In presenting the results, particular attention was given to participants' key quotations regarding relevant aspects of the subject. In addition, even though the case studies are based mainly on the interviews, secondary information, such as company brochures, websites, and social media pages, was used to triangulate results (Decrop 1999).

In the remainder of the chapter, each case will first be analyzed separately and then the discussion section will search for cross-case patterns (Eisenhardt 1989).

6.2 ElderTreks—Small-Group Exotic Adventures for the Over 50

6.2.1 Company Profile

ElderTreks is an adventure travel company designed exclusively for individuals aged 50 and over. It is based in Toronto, Canada, and was established in 1987 by Gary Murtagh. ElderTreks offers trips in over 100 countries and includes destinations in Africa, the Americas, the Asia-Pacific Region, Europe, the Middle East, and the Polar regions. Some of the travel proposals include, for example, wildlife and tribal African safaris, active hiking trips to the Rockies, Himalayas and Andes,

expeditions by icebreakers to the Arctic and Antarctic, and cultural journeys throughout Asia and South America. ElderTreks proposes small group experiences. For example, the maximum group size for land adventures is 16, and expedition ships rather than cruise ships are used for ship-based adventures. Smaller vessels allow for more personal interaction and reduce the impact at the sites visited. Before the establishment of ElderTreks, Gary Murtagh was running trips all over the world to exotic destinations and he realized that there was not a specific adventure travel company targeting the 50-plus market. He thought this was a lost opportunity and he aspired to provide active, adventurous experiences for older people besides the traditional sightseeing tour buses that were available on the market at the time. ElderTreks aims to support the values of being able to see more and do more even in later life, so that adventurous individuals can still explore and experiment as they used to when younger, but just within a more comfortable situation. In the words of the marketing manager:

> Some of these people were backpackers. They were the ones that were exploring, they were going through Europe, they were checking out Southeast Asia with a backpack on their back and staying in hostels and as they grew up they didn't want to lose that spirit of adventure, but obviously, some things change. You don't want to be sleeping in a hostel, you want to be sleeping in a more comfortable bed and you might not be quite as adventurous going to certain places, so you wanted the help of a group to guide you along. Those are the types of considerations that led to the idea and the creation of ElderTreks.

6.2.2 The Target

ElderTreks designs its products for well-educated and well-traveled tourists aged 50 years and older. ElderTreks considers travel motivation as a key segmentation criterion for the older adult market. Even though the active adventure traveler represents the core market for the company, the target also includes tourists who are interested in getting to know a culture in a broad sense. Accordingly, when possible, ElderTreks uses local transport, and organizes home stays and dining in local restaurants. Soon, the company intends to potentiate segmentation criteria and to offer more interest-specific tours rather than just appealing to everyone. For example, hikers represent an interesting target on which ElderTreks intends to focus more.

In terms of country of origin, most customers are from the United States (60%) and Canada (27%), and a few from other English-speaking areas such as the United Kingdom (1.14%), and Australia and New Zealand (about 1%).

Regarding age, even though ElderTreks targets the 50-plus age group, most customers are aged from 65 to 75 years old. The company is now trying to increase the number of "younger" older adults to balance the age mix within travel groups.

6.2.2.1 Customers' Expectations

ElderTreks' customers are looking for good value for money because many of them are no longer working and they are dependent on their income and retirement savings. Even though they might have a limited budget, they still look for good value with interesting experiences and they expect to be well taken care of before and during their trips. That is the main reason that they choose a tour operator rather than organizing travel by themselves. This means, for example, that they expect all the information about the trip to be provided in advance by the company; they expect to be guided step-by-step in what they need to do, to be provided with practical help with requirements such as visas, and not to have to worry about any aspects of travel organization. With this regard, the marketing manager explained:

> We have to provide that value by helping them along the way, answering all their questions, making it easy for them and basically helping them to just kind of show up.

Customers also expect to be taken care of at the destination, and in this sense the tour leader is a key figure for ElderTreks. The tour groups include up to 16 people who might have not only varying interests, but also varying health requirements. Therefore, tour leaders need to take care of customers, helping them move from place to place and providing assistance if there are any health-related issues. Even though ElderTreks does not provide luxury travel, prices are still higher than do-it-yourself travel; therefore, travel participants expect great customer service and assistance from start to finish to feel that they receive value for money.

In addition, since ElderTreks' customers have high levels of education and have already traveled extensively during their life, they expect new experiences that are unlike anything they have done in the past. The words of the marketing manager well describe this expectation:

> They want to be well taken care of. They want to sleep on a comfortable mattress, they want those comforts. They're also expecting that the tours are unique and something a little bit different and something that they can share with their friends […] and a good mix of highlights and culture.

Customers also have expectations about the other group participants. Since ElderTreks provides active travel, participants expect to find people of about their age and they expect everybody will be able to keep up with the group and the proposed activities. In general, a 50-year-old as well as an 80-year-old prefers to travel with people of a similar age, who have a similar pace or rhythm.

Solo travelers also expect to meet people with similar interests and to develop friendships, or least be able to meet some people to get along with during the travels. Some customers may have lost their partners, but they want to continue traveling. Hence, organized tours enable them to continue pursuing their interest and passions.

6.2.2.2 Customer Satisfaction

ElderTreks has a 35% return rate of customers purchasing more than one tour. To improve customer loyalty, the company believes it is important to constantly monitor customer satisfaction. Customers receive a post-trip questionnaire aimed at understanding customer satisfaction about several aspects of the service experience, including, for example, the booking process, the information received, the actual trip, and the tour leader. According to the marketing manager, customers' feedback sometimes provides really great ideas that the company tries to integrate into its products. In addition, the company has recently introduced an annual customer survey to explore the introduction of possible new types of products and destinations, especially for loyal customers who are always interested in finding new stimuli. Further, there is a loyalty program (i.e., ClubTrek), which includes discounts for continuing travel.

6.2.3 Positioning

ElderTreks promotes sustainable and responsible travel by offering "active, off-the-beaten path, small group adventures all over the world." The company aims to offer the best possible service quality at good value for money. The following sentence, reported in the company's brochure, describes the company's desired positioning:

> Our goal is not necessarily "5 star" accommodation, but rather a "5 star" experience. We do not support conveyor-belt tourism, where groups are pushed through a rigid itinerary at the expense of spontaneity. Instead, we bring you a genuine, one-of-a-kind travel experience.

6.2.4 Product or Services Offered

ElderTreks provides all-inclusive small group tours, which comprise from five to maximum 16 participants. Most of the tours take place either in spring or in the fall, which is the busiest time of the year, while summer is the lowest season. In summer, the company has the time to focus on product development activities.

The company has arranged their tours on activity levels ranging from 1 (easy) to 5 (challenging) to respond to different desires and to inform customers about the type of activities and experience they can expect. The activity levels are reported in Table 6.1.

The tours have set departures and fixed itineraries. On certain conditions, and within the limits of the destinations already offered, tailor made itineraries are possible upon the request of a travel agent or a group of people. Even though the company is not currently focusing on tailor-made tours, this might be an opportunity for the future. Besides land tours, the company offers hiking trips and sea

Table 6.1 Tour classifications based on activity level

Activity level	Tour description
(1) Easy tours	Participants must be able to hike up to one or two hours in different contexts and conditions (i.e., often walking through archeological sites, towns/cities and/or rainforests with varying levels of rugged terrain). They are also required to be able to walk at least 1 mile (1.6 km)
(2) Moderately easy	Participants must be able to hike up to three hours in different contexts and conditions. They must be able to walk at least 2 miles (approximately 3 km)
(3) Moderate	Participants must be able to hike up to four hours in different contexts and conditions. They must be able to walk at least 3 miles (approximately 5 km)
(4) Moderately challenging	Participants must be able to hike up to five hours in different contexts and conditions. They must be able to walk at least 4 miles (approximately 6 km)
(5) Challenging	Participants must be able to hike five or more hours in different contexts and conditions. They must be able to walk at least 5 miles (approximately 8 km)

Source Author's elaboration of www.ElderTreks.com

journeys. These are ship-based programs organized in partnership with specialized operators and on small expedition-style ships rather than on large cruise ships. The choice of working with small expedition-ships encourages more personal interaction, reduces the environmental impact at the visited sites, and fits with the company's values and product style.

One of the non-negotiable accommodation services customers require and the company strives to provide is a private bathroom. Even though this seems an obvious and trivial facility, it may not be so easy to obtain during adventure travels in wild destinations, such as in the middle of the desert. In addition, when selecting accommodation services, the company considers proximity to the destination and the activities a core choice criterion, so that the itinerary can flow smoothly.

6.2.5 Price Strategy

The company's price strategies are mainly cost-based and reflect seasonality and demand flows, as the marketing manager points out:

> Sometimes certain seasons are definitely lower, so we will reflect that in the price. Even though it's one tour and you have two departures of that tour, one in the spring and one in the fall, if the fall is lower season we will price it a little bit lower if we can. Some particular trips have specific festivals and events included in them, so that means that availability will be more difficult and as a result the price has to be higher. We just try and be fair with our pricing.

In addition, the company offers a kind of guarantee for solo travelers, in the sense that they do not have to pay a single supplement if they are willing to share a room. However, if there is not another person of the same gender in the group with whom to share the room, the customer will receive his or her own room without any supplements. A double room at a single-room price is not sustainable in economic terms given the small nature of the groups; however, the marketing manager explains that the company is willing to continue to increase offerings for solo travelers because they represent a huge market opportunity. The company also organizes an annual sale for all customers in late fall in which certain trips go on sale and customers can obtain early booking discounts for the following year.

6.2.6 Distribution Strategy

Currently, direct sale to customers represents the main distribution strategy. Customers contact the company mostly online and book over the phone. A small percentage of bookings (about 5%) come from travel agents, but this is a minor option at present. The company is working to build another distribution channel through travel agencies and tour operators. This process implies developing in-depth travel agent programs, commission structure and advertising strategies. Online direct booking (e-commerce) is not possible yet either, because the company believes that it is extremely important to interact directly with customers in order to qualify them and understand their needs and expectations concerning the travel.

> Booking online isn't yet a possibility just because it's difficult for us to really make sure that that person is capable of walking or make sure that person knows that they have to have a particular visa. […] We talk until we can figure that out.

For these reasons, even though many customers contact ElderTreks through the company website, reservations are mostly made on the phone.

6.2.7 Promotion Strategy

Promotion strategies include the use of print advertising, brochures, web marketing and, more recently, social media. Since both ElderTrek's tag line and logo report the words "exotic adventures for travelers 50 and plus," the company appeals directly to the target market in all communication activities.

Most promotion strategies have been implemented through traditional print advertisement. Specifically, ElderTreks has been collaborating with a publication called ITN—International Travel News—which is based in California, and with some other specific 50-plus magazines. In addition to advertising, brochures represent a strategic communication tool for the company. Even though an online

brochure is available on the company website, most customers prefer a paper brochure. As emphasized by the marketing manager:

> Fifty-one percent of people still like a print brochure, and I think this age group still likes that tangible aspect of travel because travel is so intangible and it's hard to put $5 to 10,000 per person down on a trip, and you have nothing in your hand.

Moreover, the website represents an important vehicle to communicate with customers. It includes several sections with detailed information about the company, the tour guides, the types of tours and destinations, and the loyalty programs. It also includes a newsletter section and a photo-contest section. Through search engine optimization and search engine marketing activities, the company tries to drive people to the website to increase brand awareness. The website also represents a means for customers to get in touch with the company though a contact form. Recently, the company has also started to use social networks. Facebook, particularly, seems to fit well with the 50–75 age group, as explained by the marketing manager:

> They [older tourists] are actively using Facebook and a lot of them use it on our tours to stay in touch with their grandkids or their kids, or even their friends.

For these reasons, ElderTreks is willing to experiment to potentiate its presence on Facebook and attract older tourists' attention.

One of the challenges in the promotion strategy is the company's brand name because the term "elder" might arouse negative connotation among the target market, and the company is aware of that. The brand name might represent a barrier to the extent that some customers prefer not to tell their friends and acquaintances they are traveling with ElderTreks because of the brand name.

> We live in a world where everyone wants to be young. People aren't always as comfortable with growing older or they don't want to necessarily be determined or just put in a box because of their age.

However, the brand name was created about 30 years ago, and it has developed an important brand equity so far. In addition, the brand name ElderTreks is also "an instant qualifier" of the type of target and people can recognize themselves in a certain age group.

6.2.8 Active Aging and the Challenges for the Next Decades

In ElderTreks' vision, active aging means pushing the boundaries of age-related stereotypes and labels, staying active, and keeping healthy without the fear of growing older:

> It's about forgetting about the stereotypes of aging and just not letting age define you. It's about continuing to do what you've always done, maybe in a modified way…. It's about continuing to be active and healthy and just like not letting this vision of being old and not

> able to do anything get you down, and just continuing to grow older and wise and continue to be healthy and take care of yourself.

The main challenges for travel companies in the next decades derive from the increasing interest the 50-plus market has gained among the tourism industry and, consequently, the increasing competition among travel professionals. One of the key points for gaining competitive advantage will be the company's ability to develop effective segmentation strategies in order to target the right customer with the right product and develop long-term relationships:

> Everyone [older tourists] is going to be targeted by all the travel companies, it's about really finding those customers that are our fit and finding them, and nurturing them and creating very brand loyal customers.

The main challenge regarding destinations willing to attract older tourists will be accessibility. In other words, destinations should increase their accessibility—for example, by limiting the steps clients need to take to enjoy attractions and by providing free Wi-Fi connection. In the words of ElderTreks' marketing manager, destinations need to be "easy to book, easy to get to, and offer a comfortable experience from start to finish" if they want to target older adults.

6.3 Viaggi Floreali—Slowly Walking Among Flowers and Gardens

6.3.1 Company Profile

Viaggi Floreali is a Slovenian-based tour operator and travel agency that defines itself as a "small artisanal workshop specialized in the creation of slow travels, for very small groups, to discover gardens and natural areas of great beauty." Travel destinations are mainly located in the United Kingdom, but each year the company proposes new European destinations.

Erica Vaccari founded Viaggi Floreali in 2012, moved by her passion for traveling and gardening and supported by her long experience in the industry of nature-based niche tourism, and specifically with older tourists. Before creating Viaggi Floreali, she had been organizing cultural and naturalistic walking tours for a United Kingdom–based tour operator and then designing trips to the Italian countryside for British tourists. In 2012, she organized the first itinerary in the Cotswolds, United Kingdom, for a small group of Italian friends, who afterwards started to spread enthusiastic word of mouth about their experience. This news reached a gardening magazine, which began to publish articles about Viaggi Floreali trips on a regular basis. Subsequently, Erica Vaccari was invited to conferences at high-end gardening exhibitions, gardening clubs and associations in northern Italy. From that experience, she conceived the opportunity to organize "slow" travel tours for Italian tourists willing to discover the beauty of British

gardens outside the mass-tourism market and she started to plan new itineraries in new destinations.

Viaggi Floreali is a self-run company, and the founder follows each phase from destination selection to the creation of the itinerary and accompanying travelers on tours. To fully understand the core values that inspire how Viaggi Floreali designs its tours and what customers' expectations are, it might be useful to recall the concept of slow tourism and its pillars:

> Slow Tourism must follow two essential principles: taking time and attachment to a particular place. Taking time means modification of the daily time relationship, specifically a different perception of nature and living in harmony with a place, its inhabitants, and their culture. The environment is not merely perceived by sight, but by using all five senses. Tourists must be able to change pace, to look rather than to see, to experience the area rather than to endure it. (Yurtseven and Kaya 2011, p. 91)

Hence, the slowness encompasses different elements of the tourist experience:

> … the importance of the travel experience to, and within, a destination, engagement with the mode(s) of transport, associations with slow food and beverages, exploration of localities in relation to patrimony and culture at a slower pace and, what might best be described as, support for the environment. (Dickinson et al. 2010; cited in Dickinson and Lumsdon 2010, p. 2)

Viaggi Floreali shares this concept of travel and arranges its itineraries accordingly, as will be discussed in Sect. 6.3.4.

6.3.2 The Target

Even though Viaggi Floreali does not explicitly target older tourists, most customers have an age ranging from 50 to 65 years. This can be explained by several reasons. First, gardening is more frequently practiced by adults and older adults than by younger people; hence, naturalistic tours aimed at the discovery of gardens is a much stronger travel motivation for older adults than for younger generations. Second, the concept of "slow travel" particularly fits older individuals' needs. Third, the proposed itineraries cost about 2000 euros per week and are hardly affordable by the Generation Y. However, more so than age, what characterizes the company's target is that they are very well-educated individuals, often teachers, academics, or economists, who are passionate about gardens, gardening, and the related cultural dimension. Most have their own garden, even if they might have different levels of abilities and experience.

Customers are mainly from Italy, but there are also Swiss, German, Slovenian, and British customers. Most are women who travel with their partner or with a friend. In other cases, there are groups of female friends who choose to travel together on a private tailor-made tour. For short breaks, there are several single solo travelers. It is interesting to note that the tours represent an opportunity for solo travelers to meet people who share their interests and who often become their travel

companions for future tours. Tourists with mobility difficulties can participate as well. Almost all British gardens are accessible to people who use wheelchairs. In addition, a private coach is always available during the journey if anyone needs to rest.

6.3.2.1 Customers' Expectations

Most customers joining Viaggi Floreali's tours expect to spend a relaxing time discovering beautiful natural scenery and gardens with people who share their passions, but without feeling the pressure of competing over their gardening abilities. They want to enroll in off-the-beaten-track itineraries, and take part in pleasant and quiet activities. In addition, they expect to engage with the local culture and try the local food. In the words of the founder:

> Participants expect great relaxation, beautiful places, slowness, good food. This is what you would expect, especially to relax, not to go there with the idea "There is someone who knows more than me, I know nothing."

These types of traveler represent the company's core target. In addition, there are a few customers who are moved more by curiosity or "the fashion of the moment" than they are by a profound interest in gardening. They typically get to know Viaggi Floreali from magazines and do not have precise expectations about the travel.

6.3.2.2 Customer Satisfaction

So far, Erica Vaccari has had a direct relationship with each single traveler, from the pre-trip phase, when customers may contact her online, by phone, or personally during an event, to the post-trip phase, when she invites them to write a travel review on the company website. The close relationship with customers during the travel facilitates a precise understanding of their needs and expectations, and thus she can monitor their satisfaction constantly. The slowness of the itineraries also permits her to adapt the pace of the travel according to specific needs that might arise on site, as explained in the interview:

> Many customers need to use rest rooms quite often. Therefore, we keep a slow pace and we make frequent breaks. We also have short transfers between destinations and points of interest. We eat always at the same time, quick lunches, but no sandwiches on the go.

Customer satisfaction is extremely high; there is a 90% return rate and new customers very often decide to travel with Viaggi Floreali because of positive word of mouth. This further enhances customers' expectations and stimulates the company to continuously improve service standards and the quality of the experience.

6.3.3 Positioning

The core values that most inspire Viaggi Floreali are health, well-being, quality, beauty, and nature. The attention to these aspects of life distinguishes the company's products from competing offerings. In the words of the founder, there are a few tour operators and agencies that propose garden travels, but they usually arrange itineraries for larger groups of people, whereas Viaggi Floreali focuses on very small groups and highly selected gardens. The aim of a tour is not to see as many things as possible, but rather to go deep into detail, to listen and observe, and to taste and appreciate the richness each single garden has to offer. For example, a one day itinerary includes a visit to a maximum of two gardens, sometimes only one, and travelers can spend up to four hours in the same garden.

In addition, while competitors organize study trips with an expert, such as a well-known gardener or a landscape architect, Viaggi Floreali proposes cultural trips in a broader sense in which every participant can share his or her experience and knowledge with others. There are no formal teaching classes, even if there happen to be tourists with 40 years of gardening experience. In fact, visiting gardens offers an unconventional means for getting in touch with different people and different cultures, and learning from them in a relaxed and non-competitive atmosphere. The following is an extended passage in which the founder describes how the travel experience can influence a tourist's cultural experience:

> I never choose famous gardens. I rather look for something unique about the owner's gardening method, or ethical choices or the garden's story. Through the garden, we understand that there are different cultures. I try to bring tourists closer to the greatest thing of British culture: respect for nature, respect for public parks and gardens, the foresight. People return home culturally enriched. They begin to love more their environment and their own green. They become more critical and aware in their purchases, they learn to go to greenhouses and ask for untreated seasonal products. So, this is definitely a cultural journey.

6.3.4 Product or Services Offered

The process for organizing a tour starts by investigating the gardens available in a certain area. After an extensive research on websites, blogs, and books, Erica Vaccari selects a few gardens or historic houses with gardens on the basis of their peculiarities and unique features. For example, she looks for the oldest garden in a certain area, or the most recent garden, or the garden that presents only one plant species. Then, she visits the site for reconnaissance, in order to select stunning locations and points of interest—such as parks, coastlines, natural landscapes, and historic villages—in the surrounding areas. In terms of time scheduling, the tours respect older individuals' biological rhythm and need for pauses. They usually start a little later in the morning and they cover only small areas. Transfers between

Table 6.2 Types of Viaggi Floreali travel

Types of travel	Target	Age	Length	Season
Master travels	Gardening lovers, mainly retirees	50–85	1 week	Off-season
Light travels	Garden neophytes	40+	1 week	Summer
Short trips	Garden lovers, still working	40–55	3–4 days	Off-season
Carefree travels	Families with children	30–45	3–4 days	Summer
Tailor-made tours	Groups of minimum four people or associations interested in gardening	Customized		

Source Author's elaboration

points of interest usually take 20–30 min; only in the circumstances of an essential attraction to visit would the transfer take up to an hour. The company's decision to cover small areas is motivated by the desire to give tourists the opportunity to stay outdoors for as long as possible and to experience destinations rather than just visiting them. This feature further distinguishes Viaggi Floreali's travels from competing offerings, as emphasized by the founder:

> Other competitors already offer tours with hours-long transfers and a huge amount of things to see, but in my opinion it is important to know in depth small areas.

In line with the concept of slow travel and the desire to bring tourists closer to the local culture, the accommodation is organized mainly in small family-run bed-and-breakfasts.

Since 2015, Viaggi Floreali has classified its offering in three main types of travel, which are differentiated according to the level of knowledge and passion for gardens of the participants, as summarized in Table 6.2.

The first category, master travels, is aimed at true gardening lovers and includes a visit to two gardens per day escorted by the gardens' owners or the chief gardener. Participants usually prefer to travel off-season. Their age ranges between 50 and 85 years, but the majority of travelers in this category are 50–65 years old. The second category, light travels, is designed for individuals who could be defined as "garden-neophytes," that is, tourists who are curious about gardens but who give more importance to the naturalistic and relaxing dimensions of the trip. They usually do not have a garden and prefer to travel in summer, motivated by the desire to experience something different from their usual routine. Light travels include more free time than master travels, more visits to manors and villages, and fewer visits to gardens. The third category, short trips, is aimed at individuals with a strong interest in gardens who cannot take a week off work in low season and therefore prefer short breaks. Participants are usually 40–55 years old. Finally, since 2017, the company has proposed a new type of trip called "carefree travels," aimed at families with children. These itineraries for eight people combine the slowness of countryside lifestyle with the beauty of landscape, and visits to small private gardens with big parks. In addition, Viaggi Floreali organizes tailor-made tours for groups of British tourists to a maximum of 20 participants to visit the Italian region of Friuli Venezia Giulia.

6.3.5 Price Strategy

Viaggi Floreali positions its products at a high-end market price. The prices for the proposed itineraries are fixed and are available on the website, whereas for tailor made tours prices are personalized according to the requests of a certain group of customers.

6.3.6 Distribution Strategy

Viaggi Floreali has no intermediaries and sells directly to customers. This decision is motivated by the founder both as an ethical choice and as a personal attitude to travel:

> I decided to eliminate all intermediaries to contrast the global trend [of big intermediaries] and to support small companies, such as local B&Bs rather than big international hotel chains. In addition, I like the personal contact, I know I can only trust the people with whom I have a personal relationship. And that's why people keep coming on tours with me, because I take personal responsibility for what I do. I also like to go back to the same destinations to support the local economy.

Customers can contact Viaggi Floreali online through the company website, or by phone, or personally during one of the several exhibitions and events the founder attends. Tourists usually book the travel well in advance, from six to 11 months before departure.

6.3.7 Promotion Strategy

Below-the-line activities[2] represent the main promotion strategy of Viaggi Floreali. The founder often participates in gardening exhibitions and events at which she narrates stories of her travels, shows pictures and circulates a form for participants to sign to subscribe to the company's newsletters. When new travel itineraries are available, customers on the mailing list receive a newsletter and usually, within 24 hours, the group of participants is complete.

Travel proposals are also presented on the website. The concise description of the itineraries, enriched by numerous photographs, provides a narration of the travel atmosphere, a plunge into the beauty of the places rather than a list of technical details. Given the importance that the company attributes to personal contact and relationships, the website includes personal information about the founder and how

[2]Below-the-line activities include direct, often personal communication with the target, such as direct mail and public relations. Above-the-line activities usually refer to adverstising (Smith and Taylor 2004).

she established Viaggi Floreali. In addition, a section is dedicated to tourists' reviews of their travel experiences. Finally, the website presents a project called "Women of flowers", which consists of flower-composition workshops targeted at women and located mainly in Italy. This initiative was inspired by the sustainable flower movement, which promotes the use of organic, local, and in-season flowers.

Viaggi Floreali also has a Facebook page, but in the words of the founder it is mostly a window to show pictures of the travels and post upcoming events. Customers rarely use it to communicate with the company.

Regarding above-the-line activities, only once, back in 2013, did Viaggi Floreali pay for a print advertisement in Gardenia, a well-known monthly gardening magazine distributed in Italy. Afterwards, Gardenia started to publish articles about Viaggi Floreali travels and initiatives on a regular basis, for free, thus representing a useful promotion tool.

6.3.8 Active Aging and the Challenges for the Next Decades

According to Viaggi Floreali's experience, education plays an important role in supporting active aging. In general, older individuals who like gardening are active both physically, because they practice outdoor activities in their gardens, and mentally. In this sense, active aging can be described as being open to new experiences and new stimuli, and being curious.

In the next decades, one of the main challenges for the older-tourist market will be related to time and money. Erica Vaccari believes that the next generations of older individuals will have less available time because they will be increasingly involved in providing childcare to their grandchildren. In addition, they will probably have also less discretionary income because of the rapid changes in the welfare and pension system of European countries, in particular Italy.

To face these changes in demand without compromising on service quality, Viaggi Floreali proposes the need to "resize", especially for small companies. This "resizing" implies accurately segmenting and selecting customers, reducing intermediaries to keep the costs down, and reducing the length of the trip to provide high quality experiences at a reasonable price.

In addition, health represents an important challenge for companies willing to target older tourists. Travel organizations need to provide thorough assistance to older tourists to reassure them and encourage a desire to travel, even when they might not have a travel partner. Viaggi Floreali believes that small-group tours represent a particularly supportive environment for older tourists with health issues, as described by the founder:

> The older you get, the more likely you are to have health needs, the more you need to know that you will not be ignored during the trip. In small groups, it is easier to monitor if everything is going fine, because often people do not have the courage to say "we are going too fast, I cannot keep up," or "I do not find anything I can eat on this menu." […] In

> addition, one thing that scares older persons is to be alone, not having a partner to travel with, to be set aside, not only in travels, but also by society.

Finally, the founder emphasizes the importance of increasing "familiarity" in the travel offering. Familiarity can be communicated, for example, through handmade products, homemade cakes, and personalization of the hospitality services.

> Nowadays the world of tourism is very impersonal […] Let us remember that people aged 70 today are those whose mothers and grandmothers did everything in the house. Therefore, through homemade products they remember their own childhood, or what they do now for their grandchildren, or what they used to do for their children. Therefore, familiarity and a personal touch are essential.

Often, older tourists prefer to rely on professionals, not because they no longer feel able to arrange their travels or they have health-related needs, but rather because they no longer have the energy to do that; they need to relax, unwind, and feel they are looked after and cared for. To conclude, organizations in the tourism industry willing to attract older tourists should provide high quality customer services and a personal touch.

6.4 Algarve Senior Living—Accommodation Solutions for Long-Term Stays

6.4.1 Company Profile

Algarve Senior Living offers rental-based independent living propositions for 50-plus, typically retirees or near retirees from more than 20 countries around the world, in Southern Europe. It currently has a focus primarily on the Portuguese market, on the Algarve and the Lisbon coast, and has a presence via preferred partners on the Silver Coast[3] and Madeira.[4]

The business has two core activities. First, it assists anyone who is 50-plus, typically retirees or near retirees, to find accommodation solutions to spend extended periods of time, usually in the winter, in southern Europe. Second, it aims to help the same group of people retire or move permanently to southern Europe.[5]

---

[3]The Silver Coast (Costa de Prata) begins north of Lisbon and stretches about 150 km to beyond the coastal town of Nazaré.

[4]Madeira is a Portuguese archipelago situated in the north Atlantic Ocean, south-west of Portugal.

[5]According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (2010, pp. 101–102), a visitor is "any person travelling to a place other than that of his/her usual environment for less than 12 months and whose main purpose of trip is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited." More specifically, a tourist is a visitor traveling for leisure purposes. In this sense, older people who retire or move permanently to another country cannot be considered tourists, even though they represent an extremely interesting market phenomenon. Therefore, in line with the purpose of this book and its focus on older tourists, this case study will focus only on the long-stay rental activity provided by Algarve Senior Living.

For this reason, Algarve Senior Living includes both long-term rental-based accommodation and the sale of real estate.

Algarve Senior Living was born because Luis Teixeira da Silva, founder and director, had been working with northern European investors who were looking to create living villages for older persons in the south of Europe, specifically in the Algarve region. Before launching the business in 2014, the Algarve Senior Living team conducted extensive market research about "senior living," including both primary research among national retirees, international expatriate retirees, and foreigners looking to emigrate to Portugal, and secondary data analysis of industry reports and interviews. What emerged was the existence of a significant demand for accommodation solutions for older persons in southern Europe and an opportunity to fill a gap in the market. Therefore, a big institutional investor acquired land in the Algarve region to build a "senior village" along the lines of United States, Australian, and South African models. However, that project became embroiled in a protracted planning process and the company decided not to wait but to enter the market with other types of partnerships and solutions. Even though the company's official name is Senior Living Villages, the brand used in most communications activities for the Portuguese market is Algarve Senior Living. [6]In fact, the pilot market was Portugal and the regions within Portugal, the Algarve in particular. The Algarve is the southern coastline of Portugal, renowned for its beaches, the picturesque historic towns, and the mild weather all year round. The Algarve also provides good value for money, especially when compared with other north European or North American countries. Hence, this area was chosen because it demonstrated high attraction and demand.

6.4.2 The Target

Customers come from about 20 countries, mainly northern Europe and North America, and the majority (about 95%) are active and independent. They are usually individuals who have already traveled extensively, or who used to have an international job or international posting, and who are looking for new experiences. Therefore, they are predisposed to long-term stays in a country or to permanently move there, as explained by the founder:

> We're looking at people who have characteristics of having traveled and looking for an adventurous streak […] the ability and the willingness to think of new opportunities and new challenges, even at a more advanced stage of life.

In addition, the target includes individuals who are conscientious about financial and retirement planning, and who are willing to drive down their retirement costs.

[6]Since the interview was conducted, a new brand name has been introduced in the Portuguese market (i.e., Portugal Senior Living) and a similar brand strategy will soon be adopted for Spain.

According to the company, southern Europe can offer this possibility, especially for individuals from the northern European or Northern American markets.

About 70% of customers are couples and 30% are singles. However, there has been an increase in the number of single people showing interest in long-term stays in Portugal. The founder emphasizes the fact that Portugal is a particularly safe, hospitable country and a friendly destination, also for single travelers:

> There are existing single people that have been widowed or they're divorced or they have never married. I think people understand that there is actually no stigma attached to being single, either for men or women.

There are no age-related limitations, even though people interested in accommodation within a "senior village" usually share interests and have similar age profiles. However, customers might be biased with regard to this type of solution:

> We get age-related questions, such as, "Do you have an age limit?" or "Do you need to be a minimum age?" The 50 or the 55-plus question often arises. The answer is, we do not, but the customers often in their heads have some age-related preconceptions.

6.4.2.1 Customers' Expectations

According to the founder, customers' expectations concern two key elements, which the company strives to satisfy, namely, personalization and choice. Regarding personalization, customers expect the company to provide a tailor-made service:

> They want to feel that you are considering their particular requirements, which means that you have to have a fairly intense engagement process with the customer. They're expecting you to engage with their individual situation.

In addition, customers want the company to guide them through the decision-making process by helping them choose the solution that best fits their needs:

> Customers know more or less what they want, but they don't know exactly what's available. It's often a unique experience to guide them through the process of showing them the options.

Besides these two main points, customers expect reliability and good value for money. Specifically, they want an appropriate type of accommodation. In this regard, the company devotes great attention to selecting only certain types of accommodation that respect accessibility requirements, as explained by the founder:

> It's almost all accessible, it's either single floor or it's all served by elevators. We try to reduce the number of stairs. Usually people are independent. They come to the point where they might not wish to climb stairs, so we don't have many duplexes, for example, or townhouses, those are two floors. This is not the type of accommodation that will be appealing for most seniors.

In addition, all accommodation services are in close proximity to amenities and services. In the company's experience, older people tend to move away from isolated, lovely countryside or mountainside areas, and toward destinations that are close to facilities and where there is no need to drive to find basic services. In relation to this, the founder clarifies:

> [If you stay in isolated areas,] then you need to drive half an hour to get a loaf of bread or some milk, or if you have an emergency your neighbor is too far away. Or there is no hospital or medical clinic close by. Customers want those services and amenities such as restaurants, some sort of proximity to a health professional […] and they want many of these things to be walking distance. The fact that they don't want to use a car is something that we are hearing more and more.

Moreover, for destinations such as the Algarve, there is an implicit expectation of proximity of accommodation to the coast, especially for customers coming from inland towns or industrial areas.

6.4.2.2 Customer Satisfaction

Even though customer satisfaction is not systematically monitored, the company receives plenty of informal feedback from customers. As explained by the founder, this is a very small, very personalized business, which focuses much of the effort on delivering the customers' services rather than on perhaps collecting structured feedback. Nevertheless, the long interaction with customers and the personalization of the services make it possible to observe their behaviors and monitor their levels of satisfaction. From informal feedback, it is evident that customers are highly satisfied. In the near future, the company is willing to further increase customer satisfaction analyses.

6.4.3 Positioning

There are a few points that distinguish Algarve Senior Living from its competitors:

- a focus on the older market
- a vast choice of possibilities
- rental and sales opportunities
- the geographic region.

First, the company is focused exclusively and explicitly on the older market. In the words of the founder, there are several businesses around the world, such as hotels or tour operators, that have turnovers of older tourists in the range of millions or billions. However, very few of these businesses actually identify themselves in their branding and positioning strategies as exclusively for the older market. Conversely, Algarve Senior Living targets only older people, and even in the brand name there is an explicit reference to the target market.

Second, the company offers a great variety of choice. Specifically, a concierge style service allows customers and potential customers to engage with the company

at any point in the process, whether they have already selected a destination and are looking for a place to stay, or whether they just want some information about a destination. As explained by the founder:

> I think the lifecycle of our relationship with our clients is much, much longer than the typical business.

Third, the company works in rentals and sales, even though it is not a real estate agency in the traditional sense of the word. Algarve Senior Living intends to provide accommodation solutions taking into account customers' needs in a destination as a whole:

> If customers come and ask for advice or information about the cultural lifestyles and activities that are happening, for example, in the greater Lisbon area in the winter, we can talk to them and they can talk to us without any pressure, thinking that they now have to go and rent an apartment or buy a house.

Finally, the company has purposefully not identified itself in terms of a specific geographical market of origin, such as "the British specialist" or "the German expert." Even though most of traditional older tourism to the Algarve derives from the English or German markets, the company has invested in expanding the target across more than 20 countries and it has specialists that speak eight languages. In addition, although at the moment Senior Algarve Living is working directly only in the Portuguese market, the plan is to expand the offering into Spain and other European markets. As summarized by the founder, the aim of the company is first to develop the business model toward a multi-stream and multi-destination market, and afterwards to grow in volume.

6.4.4 Product or Services Offered

The two main types of offering include accommodation rentals and real estate options. Most customers look for independent living; however, the company also provides semi-independent or assisted living, and shared or dependent living. Assisted living or care solutions are for now directed mainly to persons willing to retire or move to Portugal, although the company is willing to develop these types of accommodation for tourists with assistance needs that want extended stays (e.g., over winters) in Portugal or southern Europe:

> Our next projects include to finding operators in other countries, in particular colder countries that have guests or residents who have an element of care and that would like to spend their winters or some months of the winter abroad.

Around this core business, the company has developed a range of other services, which aim at helping people make their decision: either to permanently retire to or move to the destination, or to spend time in the destination on a periodic, recurring annual basis, for example in winter. The company also has a department that deals with immigration and visas to support customers with practical requirements. To

help customers choose the right destination according to their needs, Algarve Senior Living organizes discovery trips and discovery tours, which allow people in a short time to obtain an overview of the type of environment, lifestyle, and culture of a certain region. On these trips, tourists usually stay one month or longer to experience the destination before making a decision about whether to buy or rent accommodation for a longer period, as explained by the founder:

> We have other people that come in the winters for one, two, three, four, five months […] If your objective is to move permanently or to retire abroad or to spend winters abroad, going on a holiday for a week does not give you the same impression and idea of the market as would a longer stay.

However, for people coming from far away, the company organizes very intensive experiences over a short period, typically about two or three weeks. This is mainly because some pre-retirees may still be working and they cannot take much leave from work. The preferred locations for these discovery visits to form an idea of the region include most of the characteristics and facilities of a four-star hotel, and they also ensure independency.

6.4.5 Price Strategy

The price strategy depends on rental or buying solutions and on the degree of independent living required by customers. Pricing is not per person but per destination property. For rentals, the price ranges from about $500 to $2000 a month per apartment or per suite. The pricing model also depends on a number of factors, such as the number of bedrooms, the location, and the number of on-site services and amenities. For example, some accommodation solutions include a reception, an indoor heated pool for the winter, and sporting facilities like a gymnasium. In such cases, that price will be higher than that for accommodation in a single floor apartment with a nice view in a good location but without any of the on-site amenities.

6.4.6 Distribution Strategy

Senior Algarve Living has around 18 different distribution channels, including both direct and indirect. Partners comprise a variety of service providers. Some specifically work in the travel industry, such as travel agencies or tour operators; others belong to related business, such as real estate agencies, financial advisory firms, and health providers, to name a few. This is a particularly important strategic marketing tool for the company and it also offers a competitive difference. In the words of the founder, Algarve Senior Living is very strongly partner-oriented:

> We like working with partners because we feel that this is one of the ways in which we create distribution. We are much less present in terms of social media and online presence because

> we have specifically focused our first years of the business on creating the start of an international distribution network through our partners.

6.4.7 Promotion Strategy

The company employs mainly below-the-line promotion activities. As mentioned above, direct relationships with distribution partners are considered extremely important to attract customers. In addition, Algarve Senior Living participates in a number of industry-related events, especially in several northern and southern European countries and in the United States.

The website provides information, both for tourists intending to spend long-term stays and for older persons willing to retire to southern Europe. In addition, the website includes information about the locations in the Algarve, the types of accommodation options, and auxiliary services available.

Currently, advertising is not a priority. However, the company would prefer to work with selected industry publications available across different countries using a results-based approach because, according to the founder, it is very difficult to measure the benefit of promotion strategies such as advertising.

A key point in promotion strategy is the use of the brand name Algarve Senior Living. The founder explained that there was huge debate for many months before making a decision. Several terms were taken into consideration, including, for example, retirement; however, this last word was discarded because of the different meaning it can assume in the United States and in the United Kingdom, which represent two important markets for the company:

> In the US, a retiree is seen as an active, participative, very independent person. Whereas in the UK for example, a retiree is seen as somebody that is maybe not so active anymore, and therefore the word "senior" is a little bit more proper to them, less care dependent. Even among the English-speaking markets, we have a divergence of this understanding or the interpretation and the connotation of the word. At the end of the day, it was important to us to make clear to the market what demographic we were targeting and addressing.

6.4.8 Active Aging and the Challenges for the Next Decades

In the company's vision, active aging is synonymous with choice. Older people who want to age actively need to feel that they can do this just as they envisage or wish. Hence, active aging is not only linked to being physically engaged, but also to actively leading one's own life, notwithstanding age. In the following quotation, the founder emphasizes that the word active may be ambiguous at times and he provides an interesting interpretation of aging actively as being able to choose:

> The word active is sometimes a little bit misleading because some people see it as everyone running around doing radical sports, climbing mountains or skiing. It is about engaging

> with the process of aging, whether it be physical, mental, intellectual, or social. That often is linked to the personality of people and to choice […] For example, if you're somebody who worked very hard physically all your life and you just want to relax now, to read books and maybe just spend some time in certain locations, visiting museums […] this is mentally stimulating, this is active aging, as well […] The term "active aging" for me is all about the ability to define and conduct your aging process, and that has fundamentally to do with being able to choose, to pick the options that you most want.

According to Algarve Senior Living, one of the main challenges for the tourism industry will be to provide a sufficient level and quality of services and solutions for an aging market. Specifically, there are three main areas that the tourism industry, as well as tourist destinations, need to focus on providing:

- accessible accommodation
- comfortable accommodation
- the right location and services.

First, a key requirement is accessible accommodation. For example, it is of the utmost importance in hotel rooms to have ramps instead of stairs, because this kind of infrastructure significantly increases the quality associated with the accommodation, even if customers do not have mobility problems. Accordingly, the founder suggests that there is a need for accommodation operators to be much more conscious about accessibility requirements. This could also represent a distinctive positioning feature. Secondly, as emphasized by the founder, older persons like comfort. For example, they expect to find accommodation that is easy to use, with heating and cooling, and the bathrooms should have showers with easy access. Overall, accommodation should focus on these elements as a key design component. Third, older persons tend to prefer proximity to services and facilities. Therefore, the location of accommodation, be it a hotel or an apartment, is crucial for satisfying older persons' preferences, especially tourists looking for long-term vacations such as winter stays.

Finally, from a wider, policy-maker perspective, the founder highlights the importance of promoting the research participation of different institutions, governments, and public bodies in the solutions that enable people to travel easily across international borders, especially within the European Union.

6.5 Discussion

The three case studies refer to different types of business, target, and product offering. Accordingly, the challenges the organizations must face and the marketing practices they adopt present a number of peculiarities, but they also share some common characteristics (Table 6.3). For example, in terms of customers'

Table 6.3 A summary of case studies profiles

	ElderTreks	Viaggi Floreali	Algarve Senior Living
Type of business	Tour operator	Tour operator and travel agency	Accommodation solutions (rental and sale)
Location	Canada	Slovenia	UK
Destinations	Africa Americas Asia and Pacific Europe Middle East Polar	Mainly UK The Netherlands	Portugal (mainly Algarve) Spain Southern Europe
Target	Adventurous tourists	Gardening lovers/cultural tourists	Independent tourists
Age	50+	Mainly 55–65	50+
Customers' expectations	To be taken care of	Relaxation	Personalization Choice Accessibility Proximity
Degree of personalization	Low (fixed packages)	High (for tailor-made tours) Medium (for inclusive packages)	High
Customer satisfaction	Post-travel survey	Informal feedback Travel review on website	Informal feedback
Positioning	Responsible and sustainable adventure travel	Slow travel among gardens	Vast choice possibilities Rental and sales Geographic region
Product	All-inclusive tours Different levels of activity	All-inclusive tours with garden visits	Long-term stays accommodation
Price	Good value for money	High-end	Ranges according to type of property and services
Place	Mainly direct sale	Direct sale	Direct and indirect channels
Promotion	Print advertising Brochures Web marketing	Gardening exhibitions and events Website Publicity	Industry events Website
Terminological ambiguity	Elder	Not relevant	Senior versus retired

Source Author's elaboration

expectations, a common element that emerged is that customers want a personalized service; they want to be taken care of and simply relax during their travel, without having to worry. For this reason, all three companies devote much time to listening

to customers, from before the trip to after the trip. In the pre-trip phase, listening to customers is particularly important because it helps companies to understand customers' needs and expectations. In this regard, ElderTreks conducts long phone calls with its customers before booking a tour, Viaggi Floreali participates in several events dedicated to its target and the founder talks to tourists in person. Algarve Senior Living has a "concierge-like service" that provides a wide spectrum of information. In the post-trip phase, customers' feedback is considered very important by all companies, but whereas ElderTreks and Viaggi Floreali systematically conduct customer satisfaction surveys or monitoring after the trip, Algarve Senior Living relies on informal feedback from customers and is more business-to-business oriented.

Regarding the target, ElderTreks and Viaggi Floreali identify their potential customers mainly on the basis of travel motivations, while Algarve Senior Living focuses on destination preference and length of the trip as major segmentation criteria. In addition, while ElderTreks and Algarve Senior Living explicitly refer to demographic age in their brand name and communication activities ("elder" and "senior," respectively), for Viaggi Floreali, age is the result of a type of motivation that is more widespread among older tourists than among younger generations.

According to the different targets, different expectations and requirements emerged. However, comfort seems to be a common ground for older tourists, be it in a tent in the desert, while visiting gardens in the United Kingdom, or when spending winters on the Algarve coast. Comfort can therefore assume different meanings: the presence of facilities (ElderTreks), respect for biological rhythms (Viaggi Floreali), and accessibility (Algarve Senior Living).

All companies have a clear, distinctive positioning and classify their products according to different levels of activity (ElderTreks), intensity of travel motivation (Viaggi Floreali), and independency (Algarve Senior Living). Prices can range from medium to high but, as pointed out by the interviewees, older tourists are attentive to how they spend. They expect good value for money and high quality services. They are not prepared to negotiate on high service standards.

With regards to distribution strategies, ElderTreks and Viaggi Floreali prefer direct sale, while Algarve Senior Living invested the first two years of its activities to developing partnerships with other companies in the tourism industry and other contexts. Consistently, Algarve Senior Living focuses its communication on business partners, while ElderTreks and Viaggi Floreali prefer to communicate with their final customers. Because of the different dimension of the company, ElderTreks uses traditional print advertising, whereas Viaggi Floreali participates in numerous exhibitions and events for gardening lovers. All companies use their websites to inform customers about their products, upcoming news, and events. However, direct contact over the phone or in person is considered a preferred communication strategy.

An interesting point that emerged during the interviews with ElderTreks and Algarve Senior Living is the difficulty of finding the most appropriate terminology to refer to older tourists because of the ambiguity of age-related terms even among

Table 6.4 Context overview

	ElderTreks	Viaggi Floreali	Algarve Senior Living
Active aging	Going beyond stereotypes Not having fear	Being curious Being open to new experiences	Having choices
Challenges	Segmentation Accessibility	Time and money constraints Health Familiarity and personalization	Accessibility Comfort Location and facilities (e.g., for health)

Source Author's elaboration

English-speaking countries (see Chap. 7). For Viaggi Floreali, this is not a priority since the company does not refer explicitly to age in its brand name or in its communication activities.

Finally, some interesting context considerations emerged regarding active aging and the challenges for the tourism industry in the next decades, as reported in Table 6.4. All companies agree that active aging is not defined mainly by being physically active. Further, they attribute specific connotations to aging actively. For ElderTreks, it means pushing beyond age-related stereotypes toward aging without fear. For Viaggi Floreali, it implies being curious and open to new experiences, while for Algarve Senior Living, it means most of all having choice, having the possibility to decide how to age. Concerning the challenges for the future, the companies emphasize the importance of offering services specifically designed for older tourists, both in terms of intangible characteristics and physical requirements. For example, Viaggi Floreali highlights the need to provide a personal touch and familiarity, while ElderTreks and Algarve Senior Living both underline the importance of accessibility. In addition, time and money constraints (Viaggi Floreali), as well as health-related issues (Viaggi Floreali and Algarve Senior Living), will be major challenges in the decades to come. Accurate segmentation strategies can help to develop the most suitable offerings for specific targets and develop long-term relationships with loyal customers.

To conclude, the analyses of the case studies make three major contributions to the research:

- They provide an original perspective of older tourists' characteristics from a supply-side point of view.
- They offer useful insight into companies' marketing strategies and practices regarding older tourists.
- They widen the field of analysis from single case studies to the broader market context by enriching the meaning of active aging and helping to define the main challenges for the next decades.

These aspects will be addressed in more detail in Chap. 7.

References

Davies B (2003) The role of quantitative and qualitative research in industrial studies of tourism. Int J Tour Res 5:97. doi:10.1080/14775080802327144
Decrop A (1999) Triangulation in qualitative tourism research. Tour Manag 20:157–161
Dickinson JE, Lumsdon L (2010) Slow travel and tourism. Earthscan, London
Dickinson JE, Robbins D, Lumsdon L (2010) Slow travel. Working paper, Bournemouth University
Eisenhardt KM (1989) Building theories from case study research. Acad Manag Rev 14:532–550
Malhotra NK, Birks DF (2003) Marketing Research. An Applied Approach, Prentice-Hall, Harlow
Myers MD (2013) Qualitative research in business and management. Sage, London
Pernecky T, Jamal T (2010) (Hermeneutic) phenomenology in tourism studies. Ann Tour Res 37:1055–1075. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2010.04.002
Rubin HJ, Rubin IS (2011) Qualitative interviewing: the art of hearing data. Sage, London
Smith PR, Taylor J (2004) Marketing communications: an integrated approach. Kogan Page, London
Stake RE (2013) Multiple case study analysis. Guilford Press, New York
Tajeddini K, Ratten V, Denisa M (2017) Female tourism entrepreneurs in Bali, Indonesia. J Hosp Tour Manag 31:52–58. doi:10.1016/j.jhtm.2016.10.004
United Nations World Tourism Organization (2010) International recommendations for tourism statistics 2008. United Nations, New York
Wilson E, Hollinshead K (2015) Qualitative tourism research: opportunities in the emergent soft sciences. Ann Tour Res 54:30–47. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2015.06.001
Yin RK (2003) Case study research design and methods. Sage, Thousand Oaks
Yin RK (2015) Qualitative research from start to finish. Guilford Publications, New York
Yurtseven HR, Kaya O (2011) Slow tourists: a comparative research based on Cittaslow principles. Am Int J Contemp Res 1:91–98

Chapter 7
Strategic and Operational Marketing Tools for Older Tourists

Abstract Building on the literature review and the case studies previously discussed, this chapter identifies some key strategic elements suppliers should consider before addressing the older tourist market, such as terminology issues, segmentation approaches, positioning, service design and customer care. In addition, it proposes some operational directions for implementation of the marketing mix. For example, companies need to clearly define their product offerings according to the level of specialization and accessibility, and to go beyond mere discount policies for older tourists and pursue a differential pricing strategy. Further, companies should boost the potentialities of the Internet, both as a distribution channel and as a communication or interaction platform for older tourists. This chapter provides a practical toolbox, as well as hints for future research, which can benefit both researchers and professionals or practitioners.

7.1 Strategic Marketing for Older Tourists

The tourism industry has been described as "the constellation of businesses, public agencies, and non-profit organizations that create products to facilitate travel and activity for people away from their home environment" (Smith 1994, pp. 592–593). Older tourists represent an attractive market for all the operators within the tourism industry, from hospitality and accommodation businesses, to museums, shopping centers and service providers in general. Older tourists, especially retirees, could also represent an important tool to contrast the negative effects of seasonality because they are more flexible and tend to travel in off-peak season (Tiago et al. 2016). Drawing on the literature review about older tourist behavior and on the case studies[1] discussed in Chap. 6, Sects. 7.1 and 7.2 intend to offer some practical directions for professionals in the tourism industry willing to target older individ-

[1]The three case studies presented in Chap. 6 include a Canadian-based tour operator offering exotic adventure travels (ElderTreks), a Slovenian-based tour operator and travel agency specializing in slow garden travels (Viaggi Floreali), and a United Kingdom-based company providing long-term accommodation solutions in Southern Europe (Algarve Senior Living).

V. Vigolo, *Older Tourist Behavior and Marketing Tools*,
Tourism, Hospitality & Event Management, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-47735-0_7

uals. In particular, Sects. 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.1.3 and 7.1.4 focus on strategic marketing tools (i.e., terminology issues, segmentation approaches, positioning strategies, service design and customer care), while Sect. 7.2 addresses the marketing mix (i.e., product, prince, place and promotion strategies). Next, Sect. 7.3 discusses the limitations of this study and provides directions for future research in this field.

7.1.1 Terminology Issues: Older, Senior, or …

Both the literature review and empirical analyses have revealed a variety of approaches to defining older people. Two main concerns arise when labeling older individuals with age-related terms: the first regards self-perceptions of age and the second to the connotation of words, as explained hereafter.

(1) **Self-perceptions of age**. Defining older individuals in terms of chronological age is risky because people do not like to be categorized in rigid schemes. In addition, subjective age (Tuckman and Lorge 1953), that is, how individuals perceive themselves, more than chronological age influences individuals' interests, lifestyles, and consumer and travel behavior (Muller and O'Cass 2001; González et al. 2009; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012; Guido et al. 2014). For example, within the same Senior Travel Forum of TripAdvisor, it is possible to find people with different chronological and self-perceived ages. Tom, about 50 years old, asks:

> Too old for backpacking and staying in hostels? What are the pitfalls of a person in their 50's going traveling and using hostels?

In the same forum, Lisa, 92 years old, asks for recommendations since she is about to plan her next independent holiday:

> I'm 92 and still upright. I've traveled the world but now I can't walk far. … Now I am looking for a warm alternative for Sept/Oct—a hotel or apartment preferably near a bus station where I can board the buses to travel around, a level road outside with shops and supermarket. Not bothered about restaurants—I usually book half-board or self-catering … a good view from a balcony would be a bonus. Any suggestions would be appreciated.

Both academic researchers and practitioners hold different ideas about "how old is old," about the bottom-age threshold to start considering a person as "old" or "older." Some scholars use the age of 50 to refer to older adults (e.g., Littrell et al. 2004; Sellick 2004; Sudbury and Simcock 2009; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012; Chen et al. 2013b), others consider the groups 50–64 as pre-seniors (Caber and Albayrak 2014) or prospective seniors (Chen et al. 2013a), while yet others consider 60 or 65 as the minimum age to refer to older adults (Chen et al. 2013a, b; Caber and Albayrak 2014; Friemel 2014). In the case studies examined, both ElderTreks and Senior Algarve Living explicitly target the 50-plus age group. However, several companies in the tourism industry provide price discounts for individuals aged 65-plus, which in many countries corresponds to retirement age.

(2) **The connotation of words**. Words are not neutral. Naming objects implies giving them a meaning. Several studies show that ageism occurs through the use of words (Nielson and Curry 1997; Thompson and Thompson 2009; Milner et al. 2012). Research has demonstrated that persons exposed to negative images tend to perform worse than persons exposed to positive stimuli (Levy and Langer 1994; Guiot 2001; Coudin and Alexopoulos 2010). In other words, negative stereotypes about age affect older people's self-esteem and self-efficacy. Therefore, addressing tourists with words that define them in terms of age is not an easy task for scholars and industry professionals. During the in-depth interviews conducted for the case studies, ElderTreks and Senior Algarve Living discuss their concerns with the terms "elder" and "senior," respectively, even though they consider them extremely important as a positioning strategy referring explicitly to their target market. It is of capital importance for firms to consider their use of words when referring to the older tourist market, and to be aware of the possible shortcomings of using one term or the other.

In this book, the term "older" has been used to refer to a group that is purposefully not strictly age-defined (see Chap. 1). This term was chosen in line with the definitions adopted by international organizations (e.g., the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank), as well as by research centers (e.g. the Australian Workplace Innovation and Social Research Centre at the University of Adelaide). However, several recently published academic articles refer to "senior" tourists, even though they do not explain this specific choice. Other studies use the word "elder" or "elderly," even though these terms have been questioned by academics (Fiske et al. 2002; Mautner 2007) as well as by mass media (Wordrop 2009) as being negatively connoted. Sometimes, "mature age" or "the matures" have been used to refer to older tourists (e.g., Hudson 2010), but these expressions seem to be implicitly derogatory toward younger ("immature") generations. The terms "silver" or "gray" might evoke negative connotations, as well. An interesting post (Graham 2012) published on the New Old Age Blog of The New York Times reports the opinions of industry experts and academics about the terms that should be used to refer to people aged 65 and older. Even if no common view emerge, what is clear is that hardly anyone wants to be defined as "old." Therefore, from a strategic point of view, it is important to refer to people not exclusively by age, but also by their interests and passions. In this sense, Viaggi Floreali (literally, "Floral Travels"), overcomes the issue of referring to customers in terms of age, instead selecting customers on the basis of their interests (i.e., gardening is especially practiced by individuals aged 50+) and travel type (i.e., Viaggi Floreali proposes a slow travel approach that well suits the needs of older people with special needs in terms of mobility or pace of travel). In recent years, new terms have been introduced to refer to older tourists without mentioning their age, such as "keenagers," a word that combines the terms "keen" and "teenagers", thus referring to people's interests and passions. However, these terms run the risk of sounding pretentious and carry connotations that older age is negative, something to be ignored or denied —or worse, something to be embarrassed about.

7.1.2 Segmentation Approaches

A core decision for a travel company should be about the segmentation strategy it intends to pursue (Tkaczynski et al. 2009). The literature identifies several types of segmentation strategies, ranging from mass marketing (i.e., an undifferentiated approach to a large segment with a standardized product offering), to niche marketing (i.e., a customized or tailor-made product offering for a narrow subgroup of a segment) (Kotler 1989). In between, segmented marketing or diversified marketing strategies can be adopted, the first approach looking for minor but still important differences between segments, the second considering segments with very diversified needs and desires. In other words, companies must decide whether older tourists represent a core target or just a secondary target along with other segments, and whether they want to address such targets with a standardized generalist offer or a specialized offer. Figure 7.1 graphically represents the four main marketing segmentation approaches in relation to older tourists:

(1) mass marketing approach: generalist offer for all types of tourists, e.g., standardized seaside holiday
(2) segmented marketing approach: low specialization for older tourists, e.g., seaside holidays for older adults, typical of traditional forms of social tourism
(3) inclusive marketing approach: specialized offer that combines the needs of several types of segments, e.g., accessible safaris suitable for young couples, families, older tourists, and people with mobility special needs
(4) niche marketing approach: highly specialized or tailor made offer for older tourists, e.g., gardening travels for older adults.

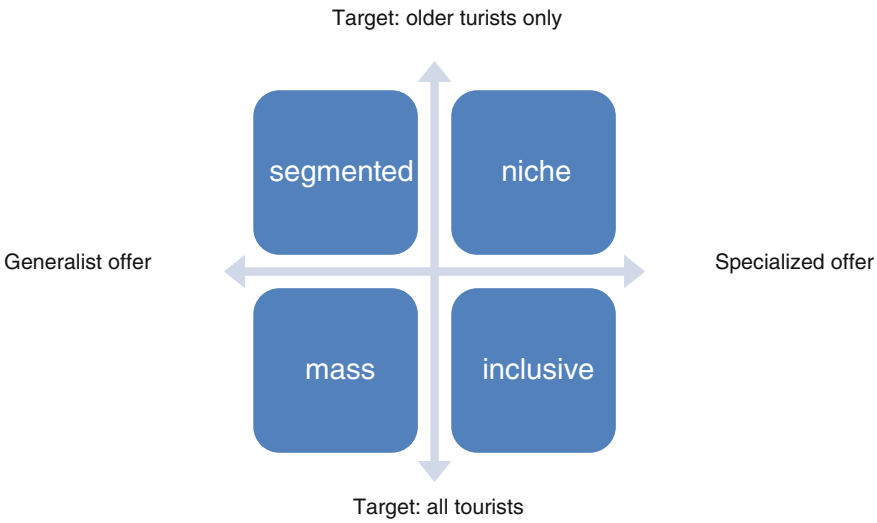

Fig. 7.1 Segmentation approaches to the older tourist market. *Source* Author's elaboration

Once the company has decided the segmentation approach, it can explore more specific segmentation variables.

In relation to this, it is clear from the literature review that older tourists are not a homogeneous market segment (see Chap. 2). Many typologies have emerged, for example with regard to self-perceived age (e.g., González et al. 2009; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012), travel motivations (e.g. Sangpikul 2008; Ward 2014; Eusébio et al. 2015), travel barriers (e.g., Li et al. 2011), values and lifestyle (e.g., Cleaver et al. 1999) and preferences for type of travel (e.g., Tiago et al. 2016). A multiple segmentation approach is recommended to identify tourists' needs and expectations beyond mere chronological age and age-related stereotypes. In fact, chronological age is just one of several variables that can be used to profile older tourists, almost certainly not the most important. A combination of segmentation variables would provide a better base to cluster tourists more precisely. A multi-segmentation approach seems to be necessary to manage the variety of the older tourist market.

Regarding socio-demographic segmentation variables, it can be argued that cohort effects will be particularly important in the next years in relation to technology "savviness." Technology is progressing at a fast pace, offering tourists new types of product offerings (e.g., peer-to-peer accommodation, see Chap. 5) and opportunities to search for information and interact with other tourists as well as with organizations (see Chap. 4). People who are today in their 50s will most probably be much more technology savvy in 10 years than are people today in their 60s. As emphasized by several scholars (Patterson and Pegg 2009; Le Serre and Chevalier 2012; Kazeminia et al. 2015), today's older individuals are different from yesterday's older individuals, and also from tomorrow's. In addition, technology devices might help overcome travel barriers and help persons with physical or mental disabilities to travel (Winstead et al. 2013). For example, as discussed in Chap. 4, augmented reality is being used in several service contexts, such as health, education, and entertainment, because it can support older people by facilitating their interaction with the physical and social environment (Cobelli et al. 2014; Liang 2015; Malik et al. 2015).

In addition, gender as a segmentation variable could be further explored. Recent studies have emphasized gender differences in needs and expectations at hotels (Chen et al. 2013a; Suki 2014). For example, there already exist women-only hotels or hotels with a separate floor for women. Hotels provide specific types of amenities or facilities, and some older women traveling solo might feel safer in these contexts. This trend is now quite common in the Middle East since the 2008 opening of the Luthan Hotel and Spa in Saudi Arabia, even though a range of hotels in Western countries already offer women-only floors, responding to the need for security and privacy, such as the Hamilton Crowne Plaza in Washington DC and Hotel Bella Sky in Copenhagen (Stephenson 2014).

Moreover, in the coming years, there will be an increasing number of people living on their own. The number of solo travelers is projected to increase because of social changes in family composition and lifestyles. In addition, older individuals who live with a partner might want to travel on their own to pursue their interests. In the experience of Viaggi Floreali, whose customers are mainly women aged 55–65, there are a number of married women who decide to travel on their own because their husbands are not interested in gardening, or simply because they want to live the travel experience with people who have a similar passion. Some tour operators are already organizing travels for older solo tourists, such as One Traveler, a United Kingdom singles holiday specialist "for the mature single traveller". As explained on One Traveller's website (www.onetraveller.co.uk):

> Our fully escorted holidays are tailored for people who choose, for whatever reason, to travel by themselves in the company of like-minded individuals.

In addition, the occupational situation, which has often been used to segment older tourists (Le Serre and Chevalier 2012), needs to be reconsidered in the light of recent socio-economic changes. In fact, retirement age is moving toward a later threshold, and the age can vary considerably across countries. While some studies pointed out that barriers to travel decrease with older age (e.g., the children have left home and there are no more mortgages to pay), others argue that after retirement people may have more available time but less discretionary income (Patterson 2006; Losada et al. 2016). However, some studies (e.g., Dunifon 2013; Thomese and Liefbroer 2013; Geurts et al. 2015) comment about the increasing importance of the role of grandparents in society: the grandparents take care of their grandchildren while their children work, often for long periods of time during the school-holiday season, thus having less free time.

Other under-researched demographic variables could be considered to segment older tourists. Traditionally, pilgrimage has represented (and still represents) a common type of travel motivation for older people. In addition, recent research has emphasized the role of religion in affecting destination attractiveness and tourist satisfaction. Specifically, Battour et al. (2017), in a study about Islamic tourism, found that the variable "religion," referring to the availability of Islamic norms and practices relevant to tourism at the destination, significantly moderates the relationship between pull motivation and tourist satisfaction. In relation to this, HalalBooking.com was established in 2009 with the aim of providing "Holidays with an Islamic ethos." The company offers halal leisure holidays and Islamic heritage tours, as explained on their website:

> All accommodation facilities are operated in accordance with Islamic norms. Our resorts and hotels do not serve alcohol and have separate swimming pools and beach, leisure areas and spa facilities for men, women and families […] there are also family-oriented facilities, which enable the family to enjoy their holiday together in a suitable atmosphere, while catering for children by special clubs and games rooms.

With regard to psychographic segmentation variables, besides the importance of understanding more in depth the specific types of travel motivation for older

tourists, the importance of tourism for quality of life could represent an interesting variable for segmenting older tourists (Dolnicar et al. 2013; Kim et al. 2015). Not all people love to travel; therefore, it would be useful to differentiate people for whom travel represents an important part of life from those who have no interest in traveling. It would also be helpful to understand whether certain older individuals who do not travel feel genuinely indifferent toward travel, or whether they do not travel because of specific barriers or concerns (e.g., financial or time constraints, or lack of a travel companion). For instance, some older people may not have been presented with the possibility of traveling when they were younger. Even though they might like to travel now, they could face psychological barriers such as the fear of being judged (McGuire 1984; Lee and Tideswell 2005), not perceiving themselves as healthy enough (McGuire 1984; Fleischer and Pizam 2002; Nyaupane et al. 2008), or being alone (e.g., Huang and Tsai 2003; Lee and Tideswell 2005; Nyaupane et al. 2008; Kazeminia et al. 2015; Gao and Kerstetter 2016). Others might not have specific concerns about traveling, but they simply do not find it attractive. Traveling is, in its most restrictive view, a leisure activity; therefore, it competes with other kinds of activity that can be pursued by individuals, such as going to a spa, going to the cinema, going to the golf club, taking a walk, or meeting friends. Therefore, companies need to segment their potential customers by understanding the importance of travel for quality of life and defining attractive products for each specific market segment.

7.1.3 Positioning

Positioning strategies can be defined only after carefully segmenting and understanding customers' needs and defining a company's unique selling proposition (Baccarani and Golinelli 1992; Horner and Swarbrooke 2016). First and foremost, in their brand name decisions and positioning strategies, companies willing to target older tourists need to decide whether to refer explicitly to a certain age group or not. From the case studies analyzed, two main types of strategy emerged: (1) age-related brand name and positioning strategies, and (2) non-age-related brand name and positioning strategies.

(1) Referring explicitly both in the brand name and in positioning strategies to the age group (e.g., "50+" "senior") enables self-recognition by a specific age category or by persons who feel "older" or "senior." Conversely, this approach might prevent potential customers who are interested in the type of offering from choosing the company because they are not willing to be associated with a certain age group.
(2) Referring to non-age-related elements, such as passions or types of travel, could encourage persons of any age group to participate in the travel. Conversely, this could carry the risk of not focusing on the product offering or of not being clearly positioned. For example, an adventure package tour with people

belonging to a wide range of age (e.g., 30–70) might be difficult to manage because of the varying needs and expectations of participants.

Interestingly, a well-known travel company targeting older tourists that had been in the market for 35 years decided to change its brand name and reposition itself. Elderhostel was founded in 1975 as a non-profit educational travel organization that combined classroom time with tours and experiential learning in inexpensive accommodation for older adults (mainly retirees), from a lifelong learning perspective. In 2010, Elderhostel changed its brand name to Road Scholar, after a short experiment with the brand name Exploritas (i.e., a combination of the words "explore" and "veritas"). Changing a brand name implies a change in positioning, in product offerings, and communication (Dibb and Simkin 1993). On the corporate website, Road Scholar describes itself:

> We are explorers, adventurers and students of the world.
>
> We are a diverse community of knowledge seekers and explorers, united in the belief that lifelong learning is a vital part of overall well-being. We believe in living life to the fullest at every age—by experiencing the world, and not just looking at it. By meeting new people, touching history where it happened and delving deep into the cultures and landscapes we explore.

The president and chief executive officer James Moses (DiGiacomo 2015) explained the reasons behind the push for toward the rebranding of Road Scholar, emphasizing the negative associations of the words "senior" or "elder" for the baby boom generation:

> If you talked to any baby boomer and you called them a senior or an elder, they would say you're nuts. Someone who's 70 thinks they're middle-aged. It's an interesting phenomenon —the World War II generation wore the name "elder" with real pride, like an elder statesman or an elder in a tribe. But baby boomers don't see it that way.

Moses explained that not only was the word "elder" dropped from the brand name, but also the word "hostel" because it was no longer representative of the product offering:

> I think it was a misperception of what we really were. We launched in 1975—I would say by 1985, we were almost always using hotels. After years of research and focus groups, we found there was a real aversion to participating in a group called Elderhostel. It denoted they would be staying in hostels and would be backpacking and that it would be hard to do.

7.1.4 Service Design and Customer Care

The customer journey describes the services process from a customer perspective by adopting a bottom-up approach (Stickdorn and Zehrer 2009). Service moments include service touchpoints, which may be combined in terms of space, time and

topic, for example, touchpoints within a certain hotel in a destination. A customer journey includes both direct touchpoints between customers and a service provider (e.g., the check-in at a hotel) and indirect touchpoints, such as traditional word of mouth, a travel review website (e.g., TripAdvisor.com), or an advertisement. By attracting the tourist's attention, indirect touchpoints often represent the starting point of a customer journey (Stickdorn and Zehrer 2009; Zomerdijk and Voss 2010). The same touchpoints that are used by tourists as a source of information (e.g., a travel forum) in the pre-service phase can also be used in the post-service phase to share information and experiences. Chapters 3–5 have described several critical direct and indirect touchpoints for older tourists, such as traditional information sources, service encounters, and social media. What emerged from the case studies is the need to carefully design the customer journey to make the whole process flow smoothly, with no problems or stress for older tourists. This implies, for example, providing detailed and rich information on the website, including both text and visual content (i.e., photos and videos) and having an updated Facebook page (even if older tourists may not actively participate in discussions). The phases of the booking process, for instance, should be intuitive and easy to handle independently by tourists (e.g., booking a hotel online). Alternatively, a step-by-step assisted procedure should guide the older tourist through the journey process. In service design, it is important to consider that not all tourists have the same level of travel experience and that nothing should be taken for granted.

Based on the literature review discussed in Chap. 5, to satisfy customers it is important to go beyond their expectations (Testa and Ferri 2009), respecting the basic needs while offering at the same time satisfactory performance attributes and unexpected attractive (or exciting) service attributes (Torres and Kline 2006; Tung and Ritchie 2011). Extreme satisfaction and delight will result in memorable tourist experiences, which, in turn, will stimulate positive word of mouth and customer loyalty (Loureiro et al. 2014). With specific regard to older tourists, what emerged from the case studies is the need to provide personalized, high quality customer care at every moment of the customer journey, from first contact on the phone and throughout the travel experience. For example, Senior Algarve Living recognizes the importance of long phone calls with customers, not only to understand their needs, but also to guide them through a rich product offering. ElderTreks emphasized that customers want to be taken care of during the whole travel experience—they want to feel they can rely on the travel company or organization for any needs that might arise before and during the travel. The customer care approach is important not only for package tourists but also for independent tourists. For example, some studies have shown that the presence of a doctor at the hotel or in the proximity of a hotel is an important driver of customer satisfaction (Chen et al. 2013b; Vigolo and Bonfanti 2016); this was confirmed also by the experience of Algarve Senior Living. Independent tourists prefer to stay in proximity of centers with health-care facilities. However, the front office personnel (such as hotel receptionists or tour guides) should be trained to recognize customers' special needs without them having to ask. This is because sometimes older tourists might simply feel too embarrassed or uncomfortable to ask direct questions. For example, Viaggi

Fig. 7.2 Strategic marketing tools for targeting older tourists. *Source* Author's elaboration

Floreali makes frequent stops at rest rooms to respond to, or better, anticipate an unexpressed need.

Finally, studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between older tourists' participation in travel activities and their overall satisfaction with their travel experiences, as well as between participation and psychological well-being (Wei 2002; Morgan et al. 2015). Therefore, based on the characteristics and needs of the specific target segment, different levels of participation could be proposed by travel companies, ranging from high intensity to low intensity activities. As emphasized by Viaggi Floreali and Senior Algarve Living, being active and participating does not necessarily imply physical effort. Activities could respond to learning needs (as in the experience of Road Scholar) or social needs (using travel as a means to connect with people who share similar interests and passions).

Figure 7.2 summarizes the main strategic marketing tools companies should consider toward the older tourist market.

7.2 Managing the Marketing Mix

This section proposes some practical directions for companies concerning the marketing mix tools for older tourists (i.e., product, price, place, and promotion) as summarized in Fig. 7.3.

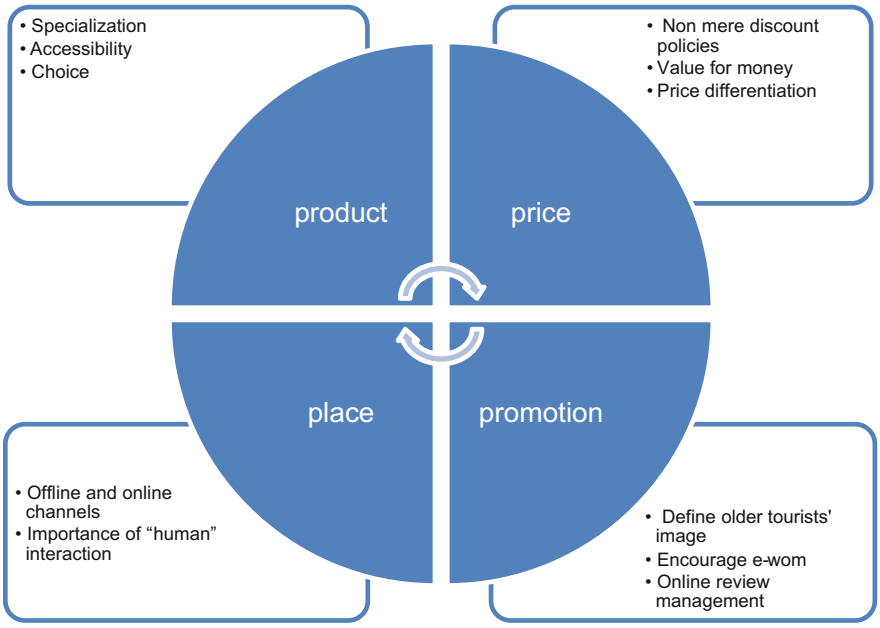

Fig. 7.3 Operational marketing tools—the marketing mix for older tourists. *Source* Author'selaboration

7.2.1 Product

A product can be described as anything that can be offered to satisfy a want or need. It includes a variety of elements such as physical objects, services, persons, places, organization, and ideas (Kotler et al. 2014). In the tourism industry, a tourism product can thus be intended as a bundle of services, activities, tourist attractions, and benefits that constitute the whole tourism experience (Smith 1994). Three main themes regarding product strategies emerged from the interview with the companies: specialization, accessibility, and choice.

First, with regard to specialization of product offering, companies can choose different types of strategies. As shown in Fig. 7.1, the tourism product can refer to several types of offering. Companies may decide to specialize their offerings, focusing on specific target segments' needs and expectations, or to standardize their offerings. Considering the heterogeneity of the older tourist segment and the need to profile older tourists, travel companies should offer specialized products (Cleaver et al. 1999) to meet the expectation of the intended target and to gain a competitive advantage. As emphasized by ElderTreks, in the next years an increasing number of companies will attempt to target older tourists. To be competitive, companies must find the best match between market segments and their product offering. For

example, recent statistics have shown (Preferred Hotel Group 2014) that multi-generational travel represents 27% of all overnight United States leisure travel and that 77% of multi-generational travelers plan to take a multi-generational trip every year. About 35% of leisure travelers who are grandparents travel with their grandchildren. This proportion rises to 41% for grandparents with over $250,000 in annual income. In addition, regarding intergenerational travels, grandparents are more likely than parents to pay for the trip and on average they spend significantly more than other leisure travelers (Preferred Hotel Group 2014). A new word has been coined to informally define this type of travel: "Gramping," that is, "holidaying with grandparents," especially with reference to camping holidays (Simeoni and Dal Maso 2016). This word has apparently (Wollop 2011) been introduced by Eurocamp, a European up-market chalet and camping company. Eurocamp reported an emerging trend of grandparents, children and grandchildren taking camping holidays together. Bookings from extended family groups have increased by as much as 325% in recent years (Wollop 2011). Moreover, Road Scholar proposes a wide array of intergenerational trips, as described on their website:

> Make lasting memories with your grandchild on learning adventures packed with exciting field trips designed to keep explorers of all ages engaged. Learn about marine life in Hawaii, discover Paris, or search for dinosaur fossils in Utah—most importantly, do it together!

Second, accessibility emerged as a key requirement with regard both to the hospitality industry and more generally to the destination (Cleaver et al. 1999; Darcy 2010). Accessibility implies a change in service design, in communication, and in infrastructures such as hotels' physical surroundings and destinations. Many destinations still lack accessibility, hotel doors are not automatic, not all restaurants and shops have ramps to facilitate accessibility, and menus are written in small fonts. An inclusive offer for people with reduced mobility or other types of disability, both mental and physical, still represents a challenge for the tourism industry. In fact, besides having huge social importance, in line with the inclusion and participations principle advocated by the World Health Organization (see Chap. 1), inclusive tourism could represent an interesting travel niche. Some studies emphasized the travel barriers caregivers must face because of the lack of institutional support from governments as well as the lack of a valid market offering for caregivers and their families (e.g., Gladwell and Bedini 2004). Travel companies could address this market by combining adequate support and services to allow people with special needs to travel with their families or independently. In this regard, FirstLight Home Care has developed a travel companion program, which provides care and companionship for people with disabilities or special needs to enable them to travel alone or with their family, as described on the company website:

> Whether you're on a cruise, staying at a resort, attending a business meeting, or simply visiting family or friends, we strive to make your vacation or visit as comfortable as possible, with qualified travel companions to accommodate your needs. They can help you get there, get home, and even help throughout your entire stay.

Finally, tourists want to choose between different types of travel, from extreme adventure travel to slow travel, from pilgrimage to sun and beach holidays, from volunteer tourism to shopping tourism. Flexibility and customized products are

highly appreciated by older tourists, they want to choose among different services and possibilities. Choice should concern several facets of the product, such as length of stay (from short breaks to long term stays), travel companion (from solo travels to intergenerational travels), travel organization (from independent to organized tours), flexibility (from standardized to personalized offers), travel comfort (from high-end services to basic offers), and travel type (as many as there are travel motivations). New types of motivations and new forms of travel needs to be explored. For example, volunteer tourism represents and alternative type of tourism in which tourists volunteer for part or all of their travels (Wearing 2001). According to Wearing (2001, p. 1), volunteer tourists "undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments, or research into aspects of society or environment". From the industry perspective, volunteer tourism can be described as a "type of tourism experience where a tour operator offers travellers an opportunity to participate in an optional excursion that has a volunteer component, as well as a cultural exchange with local people" (Brown 2005, p. 480). This type of tourism could be an interesting niche also with regard to older tourists. In fact, some studies (e.g., Kim et al. 2016) have emphasized that older tourists can be motivated in their choices by altruistic behavior and social motives that could be satisfied by this type of travels.

7.2.2 Price

Companies should consider three major points with regard to pricing strategies: the use of discount and special rates for older tourists, value for money, and the relationship between segmentation strategies and possible price levels.

First, when searching on Google for companies to interview, by using keywords such as "senior/older tourist + hotel/tour operator," the first pages of results reported mainly discounts or special rates for "seniors" or over 65s from generalist travel companies that were not specifically targeting older tourists. Systematic discount policies for older adults seem to be a limited price policy if not integrated within a wider strategic perspective.

Second, even though previous studies and the empirical analysis conducted in Chap. 6 highlighted the importance of price in older tourists' decision-making, it is worth underlining that price is also a positioning tool and a representation of the value of a product. More than just low prices in themselves, older tourists look for good value for money and might even compromise on travel length to reduce travel costs, as explained by Viaggi Floreali, but would not compromise on service quality.

Third, prices could be differentiated according to the type of segmentation approaches adopted by the company. Based on the four segmentation strategies proposed in Fig. 7.3, and on customers' preferences, it is possible to identify four price strategies:

(1) In a mass marketing approach, with standardized products for an undifferentiated market, prices are usually lower. No-frills standardized services can help companies to reduce costs and propose budget prices.
(2) In a segmented marketing approach, with a generalist offer for older tourists, prices are lower than specialized offerings but are usually higher than mass market offerings.
(3) In an inclusive marketing approach with heterogeneous segments and specialized offers, prices are still high (above the market or luxury), but usually the market is wider and economies of scale and scope allow companies to keep prices below niche-market or tailor-made offerings.
(4) In a niche marketing approach with highly specialized offers or tailor-made travels, prices are usually high (above the market or luxury prices).

A separate consideration should be made regarding social tourism, which derives from "the participation of disadvantaged groups in tourism activity, facilitated by financial and social measures" (McCabe and Johnson 2013, p. 43). In this case, tourists pay very low prices because their travel activity is facilitated and economically supported, usually by governments or publishing institutions.

7.2.3 Place

As concern distribution strategies, companies should consider the opportunities of online and offline channels and the importance of "human interaction" in the purchasing process of older tourists.

Older tourists are reported to prefer traditional distribution channels such as travel agencies (Huang and Tsai 2003; Batra 2009; Chen et al. 2014). Each of the three companies interviewed emphasized the importance of direct contact with customers, either in person (e.g., at exhibitions and events) or over the phone. Older tourists seem to value human interaction in the pre-purchase and purchase phases, although they do look for information online, on the company website and on social media (see Chap. 5).

However, meta-search websites and social media, in particular travel review websites, have increased possibilities for older tourists willing to arrange and book their travel independently (Graeupl 2006; Yoo and Gretzel 2009; Pesonen et al. 2015). Video tutorials as well as step-by-step guides help older tourists to increase confidence with the travel experience and with technology. "My digital travel for seniors" (Rich 2016) is a recently published book providing practical information about how to arrange a trip in the Web 2.0 era. It contains detailed recommendations for older tourists on many travel aspects, such as where to look for information, how to book online, and how to find the best airfares.

Experienced and budget tourists seem to prefer making independent travel arrangements by purchasing travel directly from the service provider. Less experienced tourists, or tourists who like to dedicate their time and energy to other activities, prefer to purchase from intermediaries.

In addition, sometimes older tourists may rely on hobby clubs or associations (e.g., the golf club or the local cultural association), for travel arrangements. For example, Viaggi Floreali reported having been contacted by gardening clubs to arrange tailor made tours for gardening lovers. These associations can act as intermediaries between older tourists and travel companies and provide assistance in the booking process, as well as during the travel.

7.2.4 Promotion

In line with brand name decision and positioning strategy, promotion strategies should first of all define whether to explicitly address older tourists or not. Instead of referring to older or senior adults, communication activities could be supported by the use of photos or images depicting older people. A major challenge is to communicate a positive non-stereotyped image of older people, as explained in Chap. 1. With this regard, the International Longevity Center—USA[2] and Aging Services of California (2009) published a communication style guide intended to help journalists, companies and entertainers to avoid the risk of ageist language and stereotyped representation of older individuals.

The case studies revealed that, from the travel companies' perspectives, older tourists tend to prefer traditional forms of communication, mainly personal contact (face-to-face or on the phone), or print advertising. However, companies should not underestimate the role of online communication (electronic word-of-mouth, in particular) in defining tourists' expectations (Yoo and Gretzel 2009; Kazeminia et al. 2015). Given the importance that older tourists assign to word of mouth by friends or online, companies should encourage older tourists to become brand advocates and provide testimonials, for example by writing a review about their travel experience on the company website or on the travel review website or on social media. In these cases, it is also of utmost importance for the company to closely monitor customer reviews and decide its review management approach (e.g., not responding to reviews, responding to only negative reviews, or responding to both positive and negative reviews (Bonfanti et al. 2016). An accurate and effective management of online and social media presence can help companies to improve their reputation and increase older customers' trust of the company.

[2]The International Longevity Center—USA, now The International Longevity Centre Global Alliance, is a non-profit research, education and policy organization whose aim is "to help societies to address longevity and population ageing in positive and productive ways, typically using a life course approach, highlighting older people's productivity and contributions to family and society as a whole" (www.ilc-alliance.org). Aging Services of California (now LeadingAge California) is public-interest association that represents more than 400 nonprofit providers of senior living and care—including affordable housing, continuing care retirement communities, assisted living, skilled-nursing, and home and community-based care; as well as our business partners and residents (www.aging.org).

7.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study intended to combine a demand-side and a supply-side perspective to the older tourist market. The first part of the book (Chaps. 1 and 2) offered a wide perspective on the population ageing phenomenon and its implications for the tourism industry, with a focus on segmentation strategies towards this specific market. The second part (Chaps. 3–5) addressed older tourist behavior by examining the travel planning process, the impact and opportunities of ICT on the tourist experience, and tourists' accommodation choices. This last third part (Chap. 6 and this chapter) was business-oriented and aimed to offer and in-depth analysis of the marketing strategies adopted by three companies targeting the older tourist market (Chap. 6). As a result, this chapter offers some key practical guidelines for professionals concerning both strategic and operational marketing tools. However, some caution must be taken in interpreting the results due to some limitations.

First, this exploratory study adopted a qualitative approach based on the case study method and the findings cannot be generalized. However, as argued by Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 228) "the force of example" is an underestimated source of social scientific knowledge. In fact, just because knowledge deriving from case study research cannot be formally generalized, "does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation" (Flyvbjerg 2006, p. 227). It is with this spirit in mind that the case studies were analyzed and the practical implications derived. Second, three case studies were selected for their relevance in this study and because they primarily target older tourists. However, their selection was arbitrary and they cannot be representative of the variety of operators in the tourism industry. Still, the in depth-analysis of the case studies can hopefully provide interesting insights into the marketing strategies toward this market. In fact, Patton (2002, p. 244) argues that "there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry" and scholars suggest that "the value of samples should be based on their ability to provide important and insightful information, not because they are indicative of the perspectives of a large group" (Priporas et al. 2012, p. 388). Therefore, even though the implications suggested in this chapter are subject to personal interpretation by the researcher and may not be universal to all other cases, they can provide some insights that can stimulate thinking also among other subjects. Third, this book focused on single companies, however, a wider level of analysis is necessary to further understand the potentialities and the challenges of aging in the tourism industry. In fact, the destination represents a crucial component of travel experience and it is especially at a destination level that older tourists require an accessible environment.

These limits provide opportunities for future research directions. As concerns travel behavior, future studies should explore self-perception of age (and aging) among older tourists, as well as new travel needs and motivations to identify emerging patterns among today's older individuals. In addition, scholars should propose multi-segmentation models that take into account the transformation of society and travel behavior. For example, cohort differences in the use of ICT, gender differences, and family composition are still under-researched with regard to older

tourists. Further, the role of tourism for quality of life among older people represents a promising stream of research with important social and marketing implications. As concerns marketing strategies, future research could address more in depth the effect of brand name decisions and branding strategies on the company image. In addition, it would be interesting to explore the customer journey from a service management perspective. Additional studies could investigate older tourists' price sensitivity in relation to service quality perceptions and importance of tourism for quality of life. As concerns promotion and distribution strategies, the role of ICT needs to be further investigated, for example within the framework of co-creation theory.

To conclude, older tourists represent both a stimulating field of research for scholars and a great market opportunity for companies able to go beyond the stereotyped image of older age. Growing older entails physiological, physical and psychological changes that need to be reflected in the service design, not shouted at older tourists. In fact, for many of them, traveling is the ultimate expression of self-determination and freedom.

References

Baccarani C, Golinelli GM (1992) L'impresa inesistente: relazioni fra immagine e strategia. Sinergie 29:137–149

Batra A (2009) Senior pleasure tourists: examination of their demography, travel experience, and travel behavior upon visiting the Bangkok metropolis. Int J Hosp Tour Adm 10:197–212. doi:10.1080/15256480903088105

Battour M, Ismail MN, Battor M, Awais M (2017) Islamic tourism: an empirical examination of travel motivation and satisfaction in Malaysia. Curr Issues Tour 20:50–67. doi:10.1080/13683500.2014.965665

Bonfanti A, Vigolo V, Negri F (2016) Hotel responses to guests' online reviews: an exploratory study on communication styles. In: Inversini A, Schegg R (eds) Information and communication technologies in tourism 2016. Springer, Cham, pp 397–409

Brown S (2005) Travelling with a purpose: understanding the motives and benefits of volunteer vacationers. Curr Issues Tour 8:479–496. doi:10.1080/13683500508668232

Caber M, Albayrak T (2014) Does the importance of hotel attributes differ for senior tourists? Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 26:610–628. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-02-2013-0103

Chen K-H, Chang F-H, Wu C (2013a) Investigating the wellness tourism factors in hot spring hotel customer service. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 25:1092–1114. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-06-2012-0086

Chen KH, Liu HH, Chang FH (2013b) Essential customer service factors and the segmentation of older visitors within wellness tourism based on hot springs hotels. Int J Hosp Manag 35:122–132. doi:10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.05.013

Chen W-Y, Wang K-C, Luoh H-F et al (2014) Does a friendly hotel room increase senior group package tourists' satisfaction? A field experiment. Asia Pac J Tour Res 19:950–970. doi:10.1080/10941665.2013.833123

Cleaver M, Muller TE, Ruys HFM, Wei S (1999) Tourism product development for the senior market, based on travel motive research. Tour Recreat Res 24:5–11. doi:10.1080/02508281.1999.11014852

Cobelli N, Gill L, Cassia F, Ugolini M (2014) Factors that influence intent to adopt a hearing aid among older people in Italy. Health Soc Care Community 22:612–622

Coudin G, Alexopoulos T (2010) 'Help me! I'm old!' How negative aging stereotypes create dependency among older adults. Aging Ment Health 14:516–523

Darcy S (2010) Inherent complexity: disability, accessible tourism and accommodation information preferences. Tour Manag 31:816–826. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2009.08.010
Dibb S, Simkin L (1993) The strength of branding and positioning in services. Int J Serv Ind Manag 4:25–35
DiGiacomo R (2015) Road Scholar, once Elderhostel, targets boomers. 10 May 2015. http://www.forbes.com/sites/nextavenue/2015/10/05/road-scholar-once-elderhostel-targets-boomers/print/. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Dolnicar S, Lazarevski K, Yanamandram V (2013) Quality of life and tourism: a conceptual framework and novel segmentation base. J Bus Res 66:724–729. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2011.09.010
Dunifon R (2013) The influence of grandparents on the lives of children and adolescents. Child Dev Perspect 7:55–60
Eusébio C, João Carneiro M, Kastenholz E, Alvelos H (2015) Social tourism programmes for the senior market: a benefit segmentation analysis. J. Tour. Cult. Chang. Online:1–21
Fiske ST, Cuddy AJC, Glick P, Xu J (2002) A model of (often mixed) stereotype content: competence and warmth respectively follow from perceived status and competition. J Pers Soc Psychol 82:878
Fleischer A, Pizam A (2002) Tourism constraints among Israeli seniors. Ann Tour Res 29:106–123. doi:10.1016/S0160-7383(01)00026-3
Flyvbjerg B (2006) Five misunderstandings about case-study research. Qual Inq 12:219–245. doi:10.1177/1077800405284363
Friemel TN (2014) The digital divide has grown old: determinants of a digital divide among seniors. New Media Soc 1–19. doi:10.1177/1461444814538648
Gao J, Kerstetter DL (2016) Using an intersectionality perspective to uncover older Chinese female's perceived travel constraints and negotiation strategies. Tour Manag 57:128–138. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2016.06.001
González AM, Rodríguez C, Miranda MR, Cervantes M (2009) Cognitive age as a criterion explaining senior tourists' motivations. Int J Cult Tour Hosp Res 3:148–164. doi:10.1108/17506180910962159
Geurts T, Van Tilburg T, Poortman A-R, Dykstra PA (2015) Child care by grandparents: changes between 1992 and 2006. Ageing Soc 35:1318–1334
Gladwell N, Bedini LA (2004) In search of lost leisure: The impact of caregiving on leisure travel. Tour Manag 25:685–693. doi: 10.1016/j.tourman.2003.09.003
Graeupl A (2006) 'Silver Surfers' and their online information search behaviour. Inf Commun Technol Tour 2006:236–247
Graham J (2012) 'Elderly' no more. https://newoldage.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/04/19/elderly-no-more/. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Guido G, Amatulli C, Peluso AM (2014) Context effects on older consumers' cognitive age: the role of hedonic versus utilitarian goals. Psychol Mark 31:103–114
Guiot D (2001) Antecedents of subjective age biases among senior women. Psychol Mark 18:1049–1071
Horner S, Swarbrooke J (2016) Consumer behaviour in tourism. Routledge, London
Huang L, Tsai HT (2003) The study of senior traveler behavior in Taiwan. Tour Manag 24:561–574. doi:10.1016/S0261-5177(03)00008-6
Hudson S (2010) Wooing zoomers: marketing to the mature traveler. Mark Intell Plan 28:444–461. doi:10.1108/02634501011053568
Kazeminia A, Del Chiappa G, Jafari J (2015) Seniors' travel constraints and their coping strategies. J Travel Res 54:80–93. doi:10.1177/0047287513506290
Kim MJ, Lee CK, Bonn M (2016) The effect of social capital and altruism on seniors' revisit intention to social network sites for tourism-related purposes. Tour Manag 53:96–107. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.09.007
Kim H, Woo E, Uysal M (2015) Tourism experience and quality of life among elderly tourists. Tour Manag 46:465–476. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2014.08.002
Kotler P (1989) From mass marketing to mass customization. Plan Rev 17:10–47

Kotler P, Keller KL, Ancarani F, Costabile M (2014) Marketing management 14/e. Pearson
Le Serre D, Chevalier C (2012) Marketing travel services to senior consumers. J Consum Mark 29:262–270. doi:10.1108/07363761211237335
Lee SH, Tideswell C (2005) Understanding attitudes towards leisure travel and the constraints faced by senior Koreans. J Vacation Mark 11:249–263. doi:10.1177/1356766705055716
Levy B, Langer E (1994) Aging free from negative stereotypes: successful memory in China among the American deaf. J Pers Soc Psychol 6:989–997
Li M, Zhang H, Mao I, Deng C (2011) Segmenting Chinese outbound tourists by perceived constraints. J Travel Tour Mark 28:629–643. doi:10.1080/10548408.2011.598747
Liang S (2015) Research proposal on reviewing augmented reality applications for supporting ageing population. Procedia Manuf 3:219–226. doi:10.1016/j.promfg.2015.07.132
Littrell MA, Paige RC, Song K (2004) Senior travellers: tourism activities and shopping behaviours. J Vacation Mark 10:348–362. doi:10.1177/135676670401000406
Losada N, Alén E, Domínguez T, Nicolau JL (2016) Travel frequency of seniors tourists. Tour Manag 53:88–95. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.09.013
Loureiro SMC, Miranda FJ, Breazeale M (2014) Who needs delight? The greater impact of value, trust and satisfaction in utilitarian, frequent-use retail. J Serv Manag 25:101–124. doi:10.1108/JOSM-06-2012-0106
Malik SA, Azuddin M, Abdullah LM, Mahmud M (2015) Exploring older people's experience with augmented reality (AR) applications. J Eng Appl Sci 10:18004–18011
Mautner G (2007) Mining large corpora for social information: the case of elderly. Lang Soc 36:51–72
McCabe S, Johnson S (2013) The happiness factor in tourism: subjective well-being and social tourism. Ann Tour Res 41:42–65
McGuire FA (1984) A factor analytic study of leisure constraints in advanced adulthood. Leis Sci 6:313–326. doi:10.1080/01490408409513038
Milner C, Van Norman K, Milner J (2012) The media's portrayal of ageing. In: World economic forum global population ageing: peril or promise? pp 25–28. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GAC_GlobalPopulationAgeing_Report_2012.pdf. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Morgan N, Pritchard A, Sedgley D (2015) Social tourism and well-being in later life. Ann Tour Res 52:1–15. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2015.02.015
Muller TE, O'Cass A (2001) Targeting the young at heart: seeing senior vacationers the way they see themselves. J Vacation Mark 7:285–301. doi:10.1177/135676670100700401
Nielson J, Curry K (1997) Creative strategies for connecting with mature individuals. J Consum Mark 14:310–322
Nyaupane GP, McCabe JT, Andereck KL (2008) Seniors' travel constraints: stepwise logistic regression analysis. Tour Anal 13:341–354
Patterson I (2006) Growing older: Tourism and leisure behaviour of older adults
Patterson I, Pegg S (2009) Marketing the leisure experience to baby boomers and older tourists. J Hosp Mark Manag 18:254–272. doi:10.1080/19368620802594136
Patton MQ (2002) Qualitative research and evaluation methods. Sage, Thousand Oaks
Pesonen J, Komppula R, Riihinen A (2015) Typology of senior travellers as users of tourism information technology. Inf Technol Tour. doi:10.1007/s40558-015-0032-1
Preferred Hotel Group (2014) Multigenerational travel. http://phgcdn.com/pdfs/uploads/B2B/PHG_Multigen_Whitepaper_Final.pdf. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Priporas C-V, Vassiliadis CA, Stylos ND (2012) Qualitative findings on marketing management practices from Greek ski centers. Qual Mark Res Int J 15:385–403. doi:10.1108/13522751211257079
Rich J (2016) My digital travel for seniors. Que Publishing, Indianapolis
Sangpikul A (2008) Travel motivations of Japanese senior travellers to Thailand. Int J Tour Res 10:81–94. doi:10.1002/jtr.643
Sellick MC (2004) Discovery, connection, nostalgia. J Travel Tour Mark 17:55–71. doi:10.1300/J073v17n01_04

Simeoni F, Dal Maso S (2016) The perceived image of en plein air tourism: evidence from Italy. In: Toulon-Verona conference excellence in services, Huelva, 5–6 Sept 2016
Smith SLJ (1994) The tourism product. Ann Tour Res 21:582–595. doi:10.1016/0160-7383(94)90121-X
Stephenson ML (2014) Deciphering "Islamic hospitality": developments, challenges and opportunities. Tour Manag 40:155–164
Stickdorn M, Zehrer A (2009) Service design in tourism: customer experience driven destination management. In: First Nordic conference on service design and service innovation, Oslo 2009
Sudbury L, Simcock P (2009) A multivariate segmentation model of senior consumers. J Consum Mark 26:251–262. doi:10.1108/07363760910965855
Suki NM (2014) Moderating role of gender in the relationship between hotel service quality dimensions and tourist satisfaction. J Qual Assur Hosp Tour 15:44–62
Tiago MTPMB, de Almeida Couto JP, Tiago FGB, Faria SMCD (2016) Baby boomers turning grey: European profiles. Tour Manag 54:13–22. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2015.10.017
Testa F, Ferri A (2009) Lack of competitiveness in Italian international hotel chains and proposals to improve quality in the tourism sector. In: Proceedings of the international conference on quality and service sciences (12th QQMOD and Toulon-Verona conference), Verona, 27–29 Aug 2009
Thomese F, Liefbroer AC (2013) Child care and child births: The role of grandparents in the Netherlands. J Marriage Fam 75:403–421
Thompson NJ, Thompson KE (2009) Can marketing practice keep up with Europe's ageing pop-ulation? Eur J Mark 43(11/12):1281–1288
Tkaczynski A, Rundle-Thiele SR, Beaumont N (2009) Segmentation: a tourism stakeholder view. Tour Manag 30:169–175. doi:10.1016/j.tourman.2008.05.010
Torres EN, Kline S (2006) From satisfaction to delight: a model for the hotel industry. Int J Contemp Hosp Manag 18:290–301
Tuckman J, Lorge I (1953) "When aging begins" and stereotypes about aging. J Gerontol 8:489–492
Tung VWS, Ritchie JRB (2011) Investigating the memorable experiences of the senior travel market: an examination of the reminiscence bump. J Travel Tour Mark 28:331–343. doi:10.1080/10548408.2011.563168
Vigolo V, Bonfanti A (2016) Exploring the importance of basic hotel attributes: a focus on senior wellness tourists. In: Rediscovering the essentiality of marketing. Springer, pp 969–981
Ward A (2014) Segmenting the senior tourism market in Ireland based on travel motivations. J Vacation Mark 20:1356766714525775. doi:10.1177/1356766714525775
Wearing S (2001) Volunteer tourism: experiences that make a difference. Cabi, Wallingford
Wei S (2002) The impact of participation in activities while on vacation on seniors' psychological well-being: a path model application. J Hosp Tour Res 26:175–185. doi:10.1177/1096348002026002006
Winstead V, Anderson WA, Yost EA et al (2013) You can teach an old dog new tricks: a qualitative analysis of how residents of senior living communities may use the web to overcome spatial and social barriers. J Appl Gerontol 32:540–560. doi:10.1177/0733464811431824
Wollop H (2011) Gramping: the rise of holidaying with grandparents. The Telegraph. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/travelnews/8429877/Gramping-the-rise-of-holidaying-with-grandparents.html. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Wordrop M (2009) 'Elderly' no longer acceptable word for older people. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/4596139/Elderly-no-longer-acceptable-word-for-older-people.html. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Yoo K, Gretzel U (2009) Generational differences in CGM perceptions and use for travel planning. In: Tourism travel and research association: advancing tourism research globally 2009. http://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1501&context=ttra. Accessed 20 Jan 2017
Zomerdijk LG, Voss CA (2010) Service design for experience-centric services. J Serv Res 13:67–82. doi:10.1177/1094670509351960