

**WHAT'S IN A NAME: A REVIEW OF POPULAR NEW WORDS TO DESCRIBE HOLIDAYS
– A CLEVER MARKETING PLOY OR A POINTLESS WASTE OF TIME?**

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally, tourism classifications are based around the function of the trip, such as holiday, business tourism (including conferences, conventions, and exhibitions) and Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR). In one of the first major studies of the tourism industry Ogilvie (1933, p.75) suggested that ‘a broad, unphilosophical antithesis is commonly drawn between business and pleasure tourism’. He also noted that there are two main groups of tourists and eight main categories for foreign visitors: Wealthier Groups (Business Visitors, etc.) and Less Wealthy Groups (Seaman, etc.). By 1937 the League of Nations developed a set of four tourism categories: holidays, business, health and social purposes. In the early 1960s the International Union of Official Tourism Organisations (IUOTO, 1963) still used the terms as outlined by the League of Nations in 1937, with the addition of ‘students’. In 1994, the United Nations and the World Tourism Organization officially endorsed a set of terms to classify tourism, which are in common use today (holidays, business, VFR, etc.).

Despite this agreed settlement on the official definition of tourism, this research paper discusses the recent growth in the number of new words that have started to appear in our lexicon to describe various types of holidays. These new words do not appear in any official set of definitions, but have emerged through stories in the popular press. The most common of these new words, staycation was first used in 2003 by Massey, and now even appears in a dictionary (Merriam-Webster, 2009). Other words also began to appear such as funemployment - enjoying holidays when unemployed (Allen-Mills, 2009), gaycations - holidays for gays, weighcations for those on a diet, sackpackers - the unemployed taking backpacking holidays. Other new tourism words seem to focus on saving money/time, while still offering the tourism experience, such as nanobreaks - one night weekend break, or for those too busy to enjoy a honeymoon, a minimoon - very short honeymoons, or even a babymoon for couples who want a break just before their baby is born, (Chesshyre, 2009, Schoot, 2008). There is even a break for those who want to conceive a baby, a conceptioncation, along with a conception credit if successful! (Yancey, 2009). As well as the popular press, serious research institutes like the Futures Laboratory have also created new words to describe tourism trips, such as blesisure – for trips involving business and travel. Even Destination Marketing Organisations (DMOs) are following this trend: surfaries (surfing and safari) in Mozambique and spafaris (spas and safari) in Tanzania.

Sometimes, these new words may have negative connections, such as denture ventures - elderly travellers, or saga-louts - misbehaving older travellers. Words that are more sinister have also begun to appear, such as travelcide, for those complementing suicide, and this is not just for the middle classes travelling to Switzerland. The ‘Mexico Option’ is also popular with the poor, using the drug pentobarbital to end their life. Even landmarks such as the Eiffel Tower or cities such as New York, where 10% of suicides are reported to be by those who travelled to the city to die, have been described as travelcide destinations.

A number of these new tourism words appear to be associated with the fear of travel and the fear of strangers, which along with cultural differences and the desire to protect your family, portrays travel as a frightening activity (Sharma, 2009, Fox 2009). This xenophobia has been exacerbated by the increasing reporting of attacks on tourists, and this is reflected in the protective envelope that now encircles some forms of tourism, such as cruises, group tours, all inclusive holidays and even ‘gap year’ travel agents, all of which are designed to offer a degree of protection from strangers. Travel has always been associated with mobility and freedom, but this mobility is now seen as threat – we fear the stranger and struggle to understand why the rest of the world, is not like us.

However, the question that remains unanswered, is why these words arose at all? Do they offer deep insights into new marketing segments which help in targeting marketing campaigns, or are they just words invented by the popular press for a bit of fun and supported by well meaning academics? Certainly, as shown above, official definitions take a long time to develop, but official definitions tend to be driven by statistical measurement conventions and focus on classifying and describing the function of a trip, rather than on the motivations/activities undertaken on the trip. So do these new words help in providing new insights into tourism? It is important to recall that constructing new words to describe tourism trips is not a new activity, and in the past twenty years some new words have provided real new insights into motivations, such as Diaspora Tourism and Dark Tourism. We can go back even further, for centuries Pilgrimage Tourism has been used to describe trips to places such as Jerusalem and Mecca, and even Pagan Tourism to places such as Stonehenge. The Grand Tour for British young men/women after the Napoleonic wars, with its associated debauchery is reflected in today's stag and hen parties tourism trips.

The findings of this paper suggest that while these new words may better describe the wide variety of the different types of tourism trips, they do not really offer insights into new markets that DMOs could use to increase their market share. Certainly, they generate lots of amusement and discussions in the popular press, but these new words are no more than marketing jargon, which gives their users the appearance of providing deep insights, to generate seemingly new market segments? It is argued that these new words are no more than 'old wine in new bottles' for are not staycations just domestic tourism, nanotoursim just weekend breaks and neighcations just riding holidays. In conclusion, these new tourism words offer few insights into new market segments, but at least they generate discussions about tourism in the press and television.

Key words: New Words, Segmentation, Motivation

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