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#Social Silk Road Seminar 2015: The rise of experiential travel and the booking revolution

Wednesday 4 November 2015, 10.30-12.00

WTM London, South Gallery 13-14

Organized by UNWTO, Travel Perspective and WTM

Acclaimed as the 'greatest route in the history of mankind' the ancient Silk Road formed the first bridge between the East and the West and was an important vehicle for trade between ancient empires of China, Central and Western Asia, the Indian sub-continent, and Rome.

After the success of last year's Social Silk Road session which looked at 'Is the guidebook dead?', this year we move on to look at how changing traveller trends are shaping the booking process. The Silk Road offers an enormous wealth of experiences from horse-riding along the Eurasian steppe, to staying with nomads in yurts and trekking in the Gobi desert, but are they always available where travellers are searching? This session will look at how emerging destinations are transitioning to a digital world.

This Seminar will bring together National Tourism Administrations, destination management organizations, tour operators, and marketing experts from the Silk Road.

To register for this seminar [click here](#). For more information, contact silkroad@unwto.org

*Please note that admission to World Travel Market is for registered industry representatives only with valid accreditation to enter the WTM. For information on how to register for WTM London, please visit: <http://www.wtmlondon.com/registration/>

10:15-10:30 **Registration Open**

10:30-11:10 **Special presentations**

Progress on the Silk Road and Key Opportunities for the Future

Ms. Alla Peressolova, Manager, UNWTO Silk Road Programme

This presentation will show how UNWTO is working with 33 countries to foster sustainable development of tourism along the Silk Road, and review what has been achieved over the last 20 years. As the Silk Road continues to attract increasing global attention, the presentation will look at what is in store for the future with regards to brand positioning, transnational route development and local tourism growth.

Silk Road: A view from the world

Ms. Katy Xu, Vice President Greater China and North Asia, BBC Advertising

In this session, BBC will share findings from recent research which looks at the perception of the Silk Road from potential international travelers - What attracts visitors and what hinders them from making a visit? What do they expect to see? And who are they?

Traveller Tribes: Amadeus looking into the traveler of 2030

Ms. Mónica Clemente, Senior Manager Corporate Strategy, Amadeus

As new technologies emerge, travellers are faced with greater choice and complexity. As purchasing habits evolve, travel providers need to respond and build a more rewarding and connected traveller journey. This presentation will look at the six key Traveller Tribes to look at in 2030, as well as how Amadeus see their needs and expectations evolving.

11:10 -11:40

Panel Debate

Moderator: *Mark Frary, Co-Founder, Travel Perspective*

The panel will look at the modern path to purchase and discuss how Silk Road destinations can leverage from the increasing number of consumers seeking personalised, local and transformative travel experiences.

Panellists:

- Ms Katy Xu, Vice President Greater China and North Asia. BBC Advertising
- Ms. Mónica Clemente, Senior Manager Corporate Strategy, Amadeus
- Mr. Gil Harel, Vice President of Business Development, Gogobot
- Mr. Manolis Psarros, Managing Director, Toposophy
- Mr. Andreas Janz, Deputy Managing Director, China Tours

11.40-11.55

Questions and Answers

11:55-12:00

Conclusions & Closing remarks

Next page: Speakers and Panellists' information

Speakers and Panellists:



Ms. Alla Peressolova
Head of UNWTO Silk Road Programme

Ms. Peressolova has been working for UNWTO for over twenty years and is currently in charge of two Programmes at UNWTO – Fairs Programme and Silk Road Programme.

Ms Peressolova is responsible for the UNWTO relations with the major international fairs, including WTM London, ITB Berlin, FITUR Madrid, Intourmarket Moscow and ATM Dubai. She is in charge of such successful events as the Ministers' Summit, which gathers over 100 ministers of tourism every year at WTM, London. Since 2010, she has also been responsible for the UNWTO Silk Road Programme.



Mr. Mark Frary
Co-Founder, Travel Perspective

Mr. Frary writes the weekly On Your Side travel advice column in the Sunday Times and is a regular contributor to national newspapers, magazines and specialist publications on travel,

technology and business. He is also a regular speaker on travel and future trends on the conference circuit.

Mr. Frary also gives expert advice to travel and tourism businesses on their social media and communications strategies and has won numerous awards for his work.



Ms. Katy Xu
Vice President Greater China and North Asia, BBC Advertising

As Vice President, Greater China & North Asia, Ms. Xu is responsible for BBC's Advertising business in Japan, Korea, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan and the Philippines among others. She is

currently based in Hong Kong.

Ms. Xu's key achievements over her 15-year career in international media include helping emerging Asian brands understand the international media landscape and consumers, bridging the culture gap between the East and the West, and facilitate the conversation between Asian brands and global media. Ms. Xu holds a Master of Economics from the National University of Singapore.



Ms. Mónica Clemente
Senior Manager Corporate Strategy, Amadeus

Ms. Clemente leads Global Research for Amadeus within the Innovation and Ventures team in Corporate Strategy.

She is a market research professional with more than 20 years of experience in the

sector having worked in leading companies both in the agency and the client side in areas such as advertising, customer satisfaction, panels or consumer trends.

Currently Ms. Clemente is driving the Amadeus Traveller Trend Observatory, that was launched in 2012. This key corporate initiative ensures Amadeus understands the traveler (ultimate customer), reinforcing the culture of customer understanding in

the innovation and development process and supporting Amadeus positioning in 'Shaping the Future of Travel'.



Mr. Andreas Janz
Deputy Managing Director, China Tours

Mr. Janz is Deputy Managing Director of China Tours, Germany's leading specialist for China travel. Apart from offering a wide variety of package tours and unique FIT offerings, China Tours is the only tour operator that offers a variety of contiguous travel routes along the ancient Silk Road

from Europe to China and from China to Europe. Founded in 1998 China Tours today is particularly famous for its vintage car Rallies from Germany to China, over 50 days, along 13000km and through 8 countries. New Silk Road projects also include a luxury bus trip along the Silk Road from Germany to China as well as for the past few years the burgeoning Chinese market of self-drive guests. Born in 1973, Mr. Janz has lived in China for over 10 years, knows the country extensively and harbors a passion for Silk Road travel, especially China's western regions.



Mr. Gil Harel
Vice President of Business Development, Gogobot

Mr. Harel has traveled internationally as far back as he can remember. He was born in Los Angeles, but has called Israel, Paris, London, Las Vegas, Seattle and, most recently, New York home. Before Gogobot, Mr. Harel led

business development at Como (an app building platform). He has co-founded two companies: BiteHunter (a real-time location-based mobile app that enables people to purchase dining deals) and DiningFever.com (which let restaurants publish and promote their own exclusive dining discounts to generate business and attract customers). He also spent several years in the travel and consulting sectors holding positions at Expedia, Ernst & Young's hospitality group and Isrotel (a leading hotel chain in Israel). Mr. Harel earned his MBA from Cornell and Essec University.



Mr. Manolis Psarros,
Managing Director, TOPOSOPHY

Mr. Psarros is a tourism destination management and marketing consultant whose experience mainly focuses on tourism boards and DMOs strategic planning and operations support, place

marketing strategies and campaign management, product development, digital tourism strategies and EU-funded tourism-related programs. He has been directly involved in shaping the first DMO (City of Athens CVB) in Greece, which he served as a Tourism Development Director. Mr. Psarros is the Managing Director of TOPOSOPHY, an integrated destination marketing agency which is a business unit of ATCOM Internet & Multimedia. His international experience includes programs and consultancies in Greece, Italy, Portugal, France, Finland, Denmark, Slovenia, Russia, Mexico, Armenia and Kenya, among others.