

# **Winter Sports Tourism**

## **Working in Winter Wonderlands**

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## Preface

The ski and snowboard industry has experienced remarkable growth in the last fifty years. It is estimated that today there are some 120 million skiers and snowboarders worldwide, with around 2,000 ski resorts in 80 countries catering to this important market. While established destinations in North America, Western Europe, Japan, New Zealand and Australia are experiencing maturity, new resorts in Asia and Eastern Europe are competing for budding generations of skiers from countries such as China and Russia. Along with these demographic shifts, technology is also having a huge impact on skiing products and services, and how they are experienced. At the same time climate change is posing challenges to ski hills all over the world. Such dramatic changes require a fresh look at this exciting and dynamic industry.

This new text will be of great interest to students, researchers, and practitioners – particularly those working in the ski industry. There are 12 chapters in the book, with each section exploring the theme of ‘working in winter wonderlands’ – effectively telling the story of the industry through the eyes of those who shape it.

Chapter 1 begins by plotting the evolution of winter sport tourism, from skiing’s earliest emergence as a leisure pastime during the mid-nineteenth century in Europe, to the present day industry, characterized by commodification and diversification. Chapter 2 focuses on the winter sport tourism product - the activities, resorts, and supporting industries such as clothing and equipment sectors. Chapter 3 is dedicated to understanding the consumer, and Chapter 4 explores design and planning for winter sports resorts. Chapter 5 looks at management and operations, both on- and off-mountain, and is followed by Chapter 6 which is dedicated to marketing. Chapter 7 emphasizes the importance of public relations and media in the industry, and Chapter 8 focuses on the impact of technology on communications, operations, and clothing and equipment. Chapter 9 concentrates on events in the winter sports industry, looking at growth and different types of events, as well as their planning, marketing and leveraging. Chapter 10 is an important one, covering the economic, social and environmental impacts of winter sport tourism, and is followed by Chapter 11 which discusses customer service and how destinations can develop a service culture. Finally, Chapter 12 looks towards the future for the ski industry, outlining the key consumer trends influencing winter sport tourism.

Each chapter begins with a *Spotlight* featuring the occupation of a frontline individual in the snow sports industry. In these Spotlights, we learn why Charlie Locke has been honored with a trophy for his outstanding contribution to ski tourism for the Americas; how Paul Mathews became the world’s top ski resort designer; why marketing for the X Games is heavily weighted towards social media and online advertising; how Sun Peaks in Canada has cornered the market on après ski entertainments; and how Andrew Dunn developed a strong service

culture at Ski Scott Dunn. We also get the inside scoop on jobs such as Director of Communications for Ski Utah; Senior Vice President – Marketing, Sales & Resort Experience – for Resorts of the Canadian Rockies; and Director of Sustainability for the world’s largest heli-ski operation.

Each chapter also contains a *Profile* on a particular resort, organization or individual, illustrating a specific concept or theoretical principle presented in the chapter. Fascinating Profiles in the book include those of Patrick Bruchez, owner and manager of Verbier’s oldest hotel; Joe Nevin, creator of Bumps for Boomers in Aspen; and Darren Turner, developer of an innovative ski instruction app. The book also profiles Crystal Holidays, one of Britain’s largest ski operators, Red Bull’s sponsoring of Crashed Ice, and the growing importance of adaptive skiing.

At the end of every chapter there is an up-to-date, relevant and detailed *Case Study*, and as a collection, these Case Studies cover a variety of organizations and regions worldwide. Designed to foster critical thinking, the cases highlight actual business scenarios that stress concepts found in the chapters. Case Studies in the book feature women’s instruction camps, Vail’s development plans in Utah, ski resort infrastructure in Japan, DreamSki Adventures in South America, the EpicMix app in Colorado, the upcoming Olympics in South Korea, and the growing ski scenes in China and Slovenia. All Spotlights, Profiles and Case Studies have been developed following a personal visit or in-depth interviews conducted by the authors, and there is a pervasive international flavor throughout the book.

## About the authors

As well as being an accomplished skier, **Dr. Simon Hudson** is an Endowed Chair in Tourism at the University of South Carolina. He has held previous academic positions at universities in Canada and England, and has worked as a visiting professor in Austria, Switzerland, Spain, Fiji, New Zealand, the United States, and Australia. Prior to working in academia, Dr. Hudson spent several years working in the ski industry in Europe. Dr. Hudson has written six books. His first, written in 2000 and called *Snow Business*, was the first book to be written about the international ski industry, and *Sports and Adventure Tourism* was published by Haworth in 2003. His third book, *Marketing for Tourism and Hospitality: A Canadian Perspective*, has sold over 8,000 copies, and is in its second edition. *Tourism and Hospitality Marketing: A Global Perspective* was published by Sage in 2008, and *Golf Tourism and Customer Service for Hospitality & Tourism* were both published by Goodfellow in 2010 and 2013 respectively. He is frequently invited to international tourism conferences as a keynote speaker.

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