

ACADEMIC WEEKLY DIGEST

YOUR WEEKLY DIGEST OF KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS



HOLIDAYING WITH YOUR HOUND: SEARCHING FOR DOG-FRIENDLY ACCOMMODATION USING SPECIALTY OTAS

Specialty online travel agencies (OTAs) are platforms focused on serving consumers in specific markets who have unique accommodation and travel information needs and service desires. One such market, which has increased substantially post-pandemic, is those wishing to travel with their dogs.

Based on existing literature, this study developed and tested a conceptual model related to dog-friendly specialty OTA usage. This research conducted by PhD candidate Lori Hoy, Dr Brigitte Stangl, and Prof Nigel Morgan used the dog-friendly specialty OTA, PetsPyjamas (<https://www.petspyjamas.com/>), as an example.



DOG-FRIENDLY ACCOMMODATION: SPECIALTY OTAS AND DECISION- MAKING

Lori Hoy, Dr Brigitte Stangl, Prof Nigel Morgan

As people's desire to spend leisure time with their canine companions continues to grow, so will the demand for dog-friendly holiday accommodation. This study utilises Cognitive-Experiential Self-Theory (CEST) to examine the underserved, but flourishing, market of travellers seeking dog-friendly accommodation. Extant hospitality research has not examined the evaluation/judgment of using specialty OTAs as an information source. CEST allows for an investigation of how experiential and analytic processing of emotion-driven and logic-driven dispositions impact affective and cognitive responses, resulting in the consumer behavioural tendency to use a specialty OTA. Results based on 697 questionnaires from people who had previously travelled with their dogs show that human well-being beliefs impact peoples' attitude (affective response) and intention to use the specialty OTA. Interestingly expertise has no impact on attitude or usage intention.

Further, institutional trust and risk attitude impact the perceived usefulness (cognitive response) and usage intention. A novel, empirically tested model to predict the specialty OTA usage of those wishing to book dog-friendly leisure accommodation is presented. Practically, this suggests that specialty OTAs and the properties featured on them need to positively influence judgments of the platforms by ensuring that consumers have favourable attitudes toward and see the usefulness of the specialty OTA. Findings indicate that the most effective ways to increase specialty OTA usage intention is to increase awareness, institutional trust, and perceived usefulness while incorporating messaging related to the human and dog well-being benefits received by travelling together.

As the demand for dog-friendly travel continues to grow, specialty OTAs focused on this market have the opportunity to provide valuable accommodation and tourism solutions for those who want to travel with their dogs.

Hoy, L.S., Stangl, B., & Morgan, N. (2023). Dog-Friendly Accommodation: Specialty OTAs and Decision-Making. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*.

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