**Word of Mouth in the tourism industry: an empirical investigation of Service experience**

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**Keywords**: [Service](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/search.htm?ct=jnl&st1=Customer+services+quality&fd1=kwd&mm1=all) experience, [Interpersonal communication](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/search.htm?ct=jnl&st1=Interpersonal+communications&fd1=kwd&mm1=all), Word of Mouth, tourism industry

**Submitted**

***14th Toulon-Verona/ICQSS Conference “Excellence in services”***

**at the University of Alicante, Spain, on 1, 2 and 3 September 2011**.

*Abstract*

*Purpose*

Word-of-mouth communication (WOM) is a dominant force in the marketplace for services (Glynn et al. 1999; Mangold and Miller, 1999; Harrison-Walker 2001). Empirical studies investigating the antecedents of WOM, have focused on the direct effects of consumers’ satisfaction and dissatisfaction with previous purchasing experiences. (Brown et al. 2005).

This paper seeks to investigate the relationship between previous service experiences within the tourism industry and the subsequent influence on a consumers’ word-of-mouth behavior.

*Design/methodology/approach* – The paper reports results from an online experiment, which adopts data from 250 consumers across a range of hotel service experiences.

*Findings*

The current research empirically validates the existence of a significant relationship between consumers’ service experience perception as potential antecedents and the related word-of-mouth communication. The findings support the hypothesis that positive service experience is positively related to a more likely word-of-mouth communication activity by consumers than a negative service experience.

*Originality/value* – The findings of this study contribute to the literature by showing the different impact that service experience valences have on consumers’ willingness to report WOM within the tourism industry. This implies a contribution for both academics and practitioners to better understand the impact of positive versus negative service experience on consumers’ willingness to widespread WOM.

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