A review on critical success factors in tourism

Milandrie Marais a, Engelina du Plessis b,*, Melville Saayman b

a North-West University, South Africa
b Tourism Management at the North-West University, TREES (Tourism, Research in Economic Environments and Society), South Africa

A R T I C L E I N F O

Article history:
Received 29 February 2016
Received in revised form 8 August 2016

Keywords:
Critical success factors
Tourism
Key success

A B S T R A C T

Critical success factors have supposedly been studied since the 1960s as part of the Information System (IS) field, and have been applied to the tourism industry since the 1990s. Critical success factors are those aspects that must be well managed in order to achieve success. The key findings of this review reveal that: 1. Identifying critical success factors is indeed a popular field of study within the tourism industry; 2. Different methodologies lead to different results; 3. The majority of researchers approached their research from a supply-side; 4. The labelling of critical success factors in previous studies is complex and broad; and 5. Most research has focused on Asia from a geographical point of view. Further findings reveal that quality, finances, and human resources are the factors that appeared among the most frequent found. The findings of this study are based on a total of 52 useable articles which were analysed to provide an overview on where and when these previous studies were published. These key aspects include analyses according to supply and demand, tourism sector, continent, research design, and methodology. By understanding the previous studies on critical success factors, future studies can be more effective and of greater benefit.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this research is to undertake a review of research conducted on critical success factors within the tourism industry, thereby contributing to a better understanding of the areas where it was applied, the approach, and the reason for undertaking this research. Tourism has grown to be a global activity (Cook, Yale, & Marqua, 2010, p. 5) and includes a cross-section of different industries that work together to meet the needs of tourists (Coltman, 1989, p. 88; Cook et al., 2010, p. 4 and 14; Saayman, 2009, p. 2). Along with the growth of tourism, this industry has become more competitive with more businesses and destinations competing with one another (Balakrishnan, 2009, p. 611). In order for businesses to survive in a highly competitive market, good management is of great importance. Management is the process of utilising resources in a manner that would achieve the desired outcomes (Daft, 1991, p. 5; Chihlyer, 2009, p. 5; Page, 2003, p. 249). Management can also be used to achieve a competitive advantage, amongst other benefits, that would contribute to the success of the business (Cook et al., 2010, p. 19). Throughout the years, many different management approaches have been developed and implemented, including the behavioural, contingency, systems, and classical approaches (Boddy & Paton, 1998; Cassidy & Kreitner, 2011; Certo & Certo, 2009; Donnelly, Gibson, & Ivancevich, 1995; Robbins & DeCenzo, 2005). One particular management approach that contributed to achieving success and a competitive advantage is the strategic management approach. One of the key drivers of strategic management is the identification of critical success factors.

Research has found that the identification of critical success factors can lead to many benefits. These benefits include the efficient allocation of resources (Freeman & Thomlinson, 2014, p. 14), positioning (Choon-Chiang, 1998; Jones, Singh, & Hsiung, 2015), increased success (Ferreira & Fernandes, 2015, p. 165; Finney & Corbett, 2007; Li, Wong, & Luk, 2006, p. 85), quality management (Burger & Saayman, 2009, p. 15; Engelbrecht, 2011, p. 5; Ferreira & Fernandes, 2015, p. 165; Finney & Corbett, 2007), satisfied customers (Ferreira & Fernandes, 2015, p. 165), enhanced visitor experience (Caralli, Stevens, Willke, & Wilson, 2004, p. 2; Erasmus, Kruger, & Saayman, 2012; Freeman & Thomlinson, 2014; Manners, 2011; Marais & Saayman, 2011), increased revenue (Freeman & Thomlinson, 2014, p. 14), increased opportunities (Freeman & Thomlinson, 2014, p. 14), higher return on equity (Hua, Chan, & Mao, 2009, p. 62), sustainability (Freeman & Thomlinson, 2014;
Critical success factors were originally used within the Information System (IS) field, but its use has extended to a more generic approach to management over the last two decades. Through literature studies, it appears that Daniel (1961) was the first person to use the Critical Success Factor strategy as a means to classify critical information needs of managers (see Brotherton & Shaw, 1996, p. 114; Griffin, 1995, p. 326). The Critical Success Factor strategy is a top-down methodology employed for corporate strategic planning, which highlights the key information requirements by top management (Byers & Blume, 1994; Rockart, 1979). The essence of this strategy is Focused Specialisation (concentration of resources and effort on those factors that can provide the greatest competitive leverage) (Boynton & Z mud, 1984; e Sa & Hambrick, 1989; Ferguson & Dickinson, 1982; Freund, 1988; Grунert & Ellegaard, 1993, pp. 245–274; Jenster, 1987; Leidecker & Bruno, 1984; Munro & Wheeler, 1980; Ohmae, 1982; Rockart, 1979).

Daniel (1961) was the first person to indicate that there are usually three to six factors that determine success within each industry, and that these key factors should be applied exceedingly well in order for a company to be successful. Engelbrecht, Kruger, and Saayman (2014, p. 239), in their research, said that the latter should be between three and ten factors.

Over the years, determining critical success factors has become an important principle in strategic management (Black, 1990; e Sa, 1988; Devlin, 1989; Grunert & Ellegaard, 1993, pp. 245–274; Hardaker & Ward, 1987; Leidecker & Bruno, 1984; Nieh & Pong, 2012, p. 424). Critical success factors are also known as CSFs, key success factors (KSF), key result areas (KRA), limited factors, strategic factors, or strategic variables (Engelbrecht et al., 2014, p. 239; Nieh & Pong, 2012, p. 424). The simplest definition of critical success factors is that they constitute a few things that must go well or right in order to ensure success, for the business to flourish, and attain the goals of management (Avicikurt et al., 2011, p. 153; Boynton & Z mud, 1984; Brotherton, 2004, p. 20; Butler & Fitzgerald, 1999; Dubelaar, Sohal, & Savic, 2005; Geller, 1985, p. 77; Guynes & Vaneczek, 1996; Khandelwal, 2001; O’Brien, 2002; Slabbert & Saayman, 2003, p. 8; Van der Westhuizen, 2003, p. 14). Critical success factors are thus the limited areas, characteristics, circumstances, conditions, events, activities, strategic elements, or variables that require particular attention due to their importance, and when properly sustained, maintained, and managed, can exert a significant impact on the success of an event, individuals, department, organisation, or firm and could differentiate between profit and loss (Bullen & Rockart, 1986, p. 385; Burger & Saayman, 2009, p. 16; Dickinson, Ferguson, & Sircar, 1984; Leidecker & Bruno, 1987, p. 333; Williams & Saayman, 2013, p. 186).

Another approach is to state that critical success factors are the aspects that if removed or not carried out, would inhibit the success of the organisation’s achievement of the vision (Howe, 2002, p. 30). Identification of critical success factors has been used to identify information needs, to list and describe elements critical to system success, and to help define and focus management’s responsibilities and efforts (Meadors & Mezger, 1984; Munro & Wheeler, 1980; Park, 1990; Raymond, 1985; Rockart & Scott-Morton, 1984; Shank, Boynton, & Z mud, 1985). Even though literature states that critical success factors should be attained in order for goals to be met, there should be a distinction between the goals and the critical success factors: critical success factors are combinations of activities and processes which are designed to support the achievement of the goals (Brotherton & Shaw, 1996, p. 114). Furthermore, CSFs are actionable, controllable by management to a variable extent, and potentially measurable (Brotherton & Shaw, 1996, p. 114).

Considering that the purpose and goals differ from industry to industry, each market and industry will have its own relevant critical success factors (Choong-Chiang, 1998, p. 56; Lin & Fu, 2012, p. 566 and 568; Marais & Saayman, 2011, p. 149; Nieh & Pong, 2012, p. 424; Wang, Hung, & Li, 2011).
classification used by various authors in literature is classifying CSFs according to the internal and external environment, which relates to whether the organisation has control over the critical success factors or not (Zahedi, 1987). Internal critical success factors can be derived from the features of a company’s internal environment (products, processes, people, structure, and services) and will reflect the company’s specific core capabilities and competencies critical for its competitive advantage (Berry, Seiders, & Greshan, 1997; Brotherton & Shaw, 1996, p. 114; Duchessi, Schaninger, & Hobbs, 1989; Van der Meer & Calori, 1989). External critical success factors are less controllable than internal critical success factors (Brotherton & Shaw, 1996, p. 115).

The many sectors within the tourism industry along with the differing viewpoints and techniques available allows opportunity for many studies to be conducted on critical success factors within the tourism industry. By means of an extensive literature study, it has been found that this is indeed the case. Studies on CSFs within the tourism industry date as far back as the early 1990s and in management sciences in the 1960s, if not earlier, and have been conducted on several of the above-mentioned sectors and many different destinations as case studies. However, only one review has been found, authored by Baker and Cameron (2008), who focused on CSFs in destination marketing. The latter did not address the different methodologies employed, where this paper will include critical success factors in different sectors of the tourism industry, and the different methodological approaches.

3. Empirical literature analysis

Since this is a review paper, a literature search was conducted to find publications on critical success factors within the tourism industry. To find these publications, Google Scholar was used as well as the following databases of EbscoHost: Academic Search Premier, Africa-Wide Information, Business Source Premier, CABI Abstracts, EconLit, E-Journals, and Hospitality and Tourism Complete.

The key words included in the search were ‘critical success factors’, ‘key success factors’, ‘key factors’ or ‘success factors’, which had to appear in the title or abstract, and the key word ‘tourism’ had to appear somewhere within the text of the publication. Articles to which access could not be gained, which were only available in foreign languages, which appear to be research notes, or which did not explain the methodology applied, were excluded. Only publications in main stream journals were used. The searches identified a total of 52 relevant publications published between the years 1985 and 2015 that were used for the purpose of the analysis.

4. Results

The results were portrayed in terms of the details regarding distribution of articles among journals, distribution of articles over time, and distribution of articles according to demand or supply approach, according to sector, according to continent, according to research method, according to analyses, and according to the critical success factors identified.

4.1. Distribution of articles among journals and over time

Firstly, the analyses looked at the details regarding the publishing of each article, including the distribution of articles according to journals and the distribution of articles over time.

4.1.1. Distribution of articles among journals

When looking at the distribution of articles among journals (see Fig. 2), it is clear that the journal that published the most articles found on critical success factors is the Pakistan Journal of Statistics (five articles). Tourism Review International, South African Journal for Research in Sport, Physical Education and Recreation, Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, International Journal Hospitality Management, and Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing each included three of the articles on critical success factors. Two articles were published in Acta Commercii and Tourism & Management Studies. The remainder of journals each published only one of the articles. In other words, articles were published in a wide variety of journals which include those in the fields of management, statistics, and tourism.

4.1.2. Distribution of articles over time

The first article in the sample was published in 1985 with the rest spanning the years to date and the most current one published in 2015 (see Fig. 3). Through the years 1986–1994 and 1999–2002 no articles were published, and since 2002 the number of published articles increased significantly, reaching a high point in 2012 when eight critical success factor articles were published. It is evident that there has been a growth in this type of research since 2010/2011. Possible reasons for this increase include, firstly, that academics are under pressure to publish more work, and secondly, that the demand for this type of research has increased.

4.2. A review of the key aspects of the articles

The next section of analyses looks at the key aspects of the publications. This includes analyses according to supply and demand, tourism sector, continent, research design, and methodology.

4.2.1. Distribution of articles according to demand or supply approach

Within the tourism industry, demand refers to the measure of tourists’ use of a good or service (Frechting, 2001, p. 4). Other measures of tourism demand include the main purpose of visits, duration of trip, origin and destination of trip, area of residence or destination within countries, means of transportation, and tourism accommodation (Theobald, 2004, pp. 19–21). Thus the demand-viewpoint looks at what tourists want and need. This has to be met by tourism suppliers, who ‘manufacture’ and ‘distribute’ the products and different aspects of tourism offered (Fridgen, 1996, p. 260). Supply can include transportation, lodging, attractions, food and beverages, tourism intermediaries, services, tourism marketing organisations, promotion, and information (Fridgen, 1996, p. 260; Gunn, 1993, pp. 57–74). The supply-viewpoint looks at what the industry, that is, the people supplying the services, say. When looking at the distribution of articles according to the viewpoint, it could be either just demand or supply, or it could encompass both approaches. The distribution of articles according to approach is illustrated in Fig. 4.

The articles focused either on the approaches from a supply-side (see Fig. 4), demand-side, or a combination of both. The majority of articles looked at the supply-side (67%), 21% of articles looked at the demand-side, and 12% of the articles looked at the approach of both supply and demand.

4.2.2. Distribution of articles according to sector

When looking at the distribution of articles according to different sectors (see Fig. 5), it is clear that the majority of research focused on the accommodation sector (35%). Of the 35%, the majority focused on hotels, while the remaining articles focus on chalets, guest houses, lodging, and yield management. Furthermore, Events (10%), Ecotourism (8%), Marketing (8%), Catering (6%), Travel agencies (6%), Wine tourism (6%), Business tourism (4%), and Urban (4%) are all sectors where more than one study was conducted.
4.2.3. Distribution of articles according to continent

Destinations were generalised to the related country, and then classified according to the continent (see Fig. 6). The majority of case studies focused on Asia (35%). Within Asia, four articles focused on China and four on Malaysia, while five articles focused on Taiwan. Africa and Europe were each the case study for 19% of case studies. North America (11%) followed, and South America (4%) and Australia (2%) not selected as case studies as...
frequently. However, 10% of the articles did not specify a specific destination.

4.2.4. Distribution of articles according to research method

The research design is a master plan that researchers have to follow to ensure the attainment of research objectives (Berndt & Petzer, 2011, p. 31). Part of the research design is either a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed research method. Quantitative research involves the administration of a set of structured questions with predetermined response options to a large number of respondents, whilst qualitative research includes collecting, analysing, and interpreting data by observing what is said and done by people and is considered a softer approach (Berndt & Petzer, 2011, p. 146). The distribution of articles according to the research method used is illustrated in Fig. 7.

Fig. 7 shows that the majority (60%) of studies followed a quantitative research method and 25% followed a qualitative research method. Some studies followed a mixed research method (15%), making use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods.

4.2.5. Distribution of articles according to analyses

After the data of a study has been collected, analyses have to be
4.3. A review of critical success factors

The last section of analyses aimed at identifying the most common critical success factors according to the results of the articles used for this study. The identified critical success factors were categorised into groups according to the concepts mentioned in each factor; thus one identified factor could be categorised into more than one group. The counts for each category (referred to as factors) were counted, and the graphs were drawn accordingly. Some critical success factors were identified by means of statistical methods while others were identified by means of descriptive data. Therefore, a distinction was drawn between statistical vs descriptive methods when referring to the critical success factors. Furthermore, a distinction was drawn between the factors identified by using a supply vs demand vs mixed approach.

4.3.1. Critical success factors identified through statistical analyses

The analysis of critical success factors was performed by counting the number of times each factor or theme of that factor appeared in previous studies. Some related factors were grouped together to gain a more comprehensive understanding. Fig. 9 shows the factors that were most frequently identified through statistical analyses.

When looking at the factors identified through statistical analyses (see Fig. 9), it is evident that a wide variety of factors have been identified, and the frequency of these factors is varied. Based on Fig. 9, the following factors appear to be important throughout the tourism industry, as it was identified multiple times in various studies:

Factors relating to customers, guests, tourists, and visitors were identified 30 times and include factors such as attention to detail & customer requirements, customer care, efficiency of guest service, guest bedroom comfort level, guests welcomed in a personal manner upon arrival, passenger services, and tourist-oriented. The second most frequently identified factor is facilities which were identified 27 times; this includes factors relating to accommodation facilities, amenities, attractiveness of the facilities, leisure and hospitality facilities, providing a sufficient variety of rooms, and parking and restaurants. Human resources and related factors (this includes all factors relating to staff, personnel, and employees, and their skills; morale; recruitment; and training) were identified 25 times and factors relating to finances (accurate financial reporting, appropriate budgetary control procedures, financial performance, payment model, accounting & control, and any other factor relating to finances) were identified 24 times. The fifth most often identified factor relates to quality; these were identified 23 times and consists of factors in which quality was mentioned such as service quality, quality venues, providing consistent quality, quality of food and drink presentation, and total quality culture.

4.3.2. Critical success factors identified through descriptive analysis

Fig. 10 depicts the factors found most frequently in the descriptive analysis.

Fig. 10 indicates that factors relating to human resources were frequently (23 times) found in these articles; this includes personnel management, effective staff sales skills, manage employee turnover, and other factors relating to staff, personnel, and employees and their skills, morale, recruitment, and training. This is followed by factors relating to finances (including revenue, costs, budget, bills, and yield management) identified 17 times. Effectivity and factors referring to being effective (such as effective staff sales skills, maintaining efficient purchasing practices and effective liaison, and provision of effective advertising) were found 14 times. Marketing (including advertising, promotion, market segmentation, and factors related to marketing) was identified 13 times. Factors relating to quality were identified 12 times and includes all the factors identified as referring to quality of any kind.

4.3.3. Ten critical success factors most frequently found

When comparing the findings from the statistical and descriptive analyses, human resources finances, and quality, are the five factors that were identified. Regarding the factors obtained by means of statistical analyses, the remaining factors of the five are customer-related and facilities. In the factors obtained by means descriptive analyses, the remaining factors of the five are effectiveness and marketing. This is also reflected in Fig. 11, indicating the ten critical success factors identified through this study:

The 10 critical success factors most frequently found (Fig. 11) was compiled by looking at the top items identified through both statistical and descriptive analyses. The five factors can be classified in the management areas of Human resources, Finances, Customer-related, Quality, and Facilities.

4.3.4. Critical success factors identified from different approaches

A further analysis was performed to compare the factors most frequently found in studies in terms of supply, demand, and mixed approaches. A review of the approach used indicates that most of the studies used a supply approach, followed by a demand approach, and the fewest studies used a mixed approach. Figs. 12, 13, and 14 respectively show the ten factors identified in the studies in terms of the supply, demand, and mixed approaches.
Fig. 12 presents the ten factors identified in studies from a supply-side approach. Human resources was identified 46 times and includes factors such as personnel management, effective staff sales skills, manage employee turnover, and other factors relating to staff, personnel, and employees and their skills, morale, recruitment, and training. Finances were identified 38 times and include factors relating to revenue, costs, budget, bills, yield management, and other factors relating to finances. Following is effectiveness, identified 30 times and includes all factors identified that refer to being effective (such as effective inter-departmental liaison, effective revenue control procedures, operation of effective recruitment and selection procedures, and provision of effective security systems). Quality (refers to all factors relating to quality of any kind, such as providing consistent quality, service quality, and providing quality of ambience and environment) and Customer/customer-related (refers to factors relating to customers, visitors, tourists, and guests such as guest security, enhancing customer care, and prompt issue of customer bills) were both identified 28 times, while Facilities were identified 22 times and includes factors such as operating an appropriate range of facilities, room facilities,
and maintenance of an effective laundry system.

As evident in Fig. 13, a demand side approach revealed that Facilities was identified 9 times and includes factors such as accommodation facilities, amenities, parking and restaurants. Product and related factors were counted 8 times and include factors such as new product development, product content, and product variety. Quality (including high quality human resources, quality venues, and quality shows and stalls) was identified 5 times. Following this,
factors related to Marketing, Management, and Activities were each counted 4 times respectively. Marketing includes factors related to marketing such as promotion plan and marketing and sales. Management includes any factor where the word management or managing was used, for example, quality and good management, general management, and green management. Lastly, Activities include entertainment activities, food and activities, variety activities, and activities and community. Although Product does not appear in the 5 identified factors, neither by statistical nor descriptive analyses, facilities and quality fall into the most frequently identified 5 factors by means of statistical analyses, while quality and marketing are among the 5 identified factors by means of descriptive analyses.

Customer-related factors had the most counts (7 times) when using a mixed approach, as evident in Fig. 14. This includes any factor where reference was made to guests, for example, guest bedroom comfort level, speed of guest service, and guest safety and security. Partnership (including dynamic partnerships and partnership with NGOs, Sabah Forestry, and tour operators respectively) was counted 5 times. Comfort was identified 4 times and includes comfort in fan zones and guest bedroom comfort level. Location, product, security, service, facilities, and value all had 3 counts respectively. Location includes convenient locations and geographic coverage of hotel network. Product includes attractive and competitive products and physical products. Security includes guest safety and security and feeling safe. Service includes speed of guest service and service quality. Factors relating to facilities from a mixed approach refer to guest bedroom comfort level. Lastly, value refers to moving up the value chain or mainstream and value for money accommodation.

When comparing the most frequent found 5 factors identified through the three approaches, it is evident that Facilities is the only factor present throughout all three. Other correlations include: Quality in both supply and demand approaches; Customer/customer-related in both supply and mixed approaches; and Product in both demand and mixed approaches.

5. Findings & implications

The first finding reveals that identifying critical success factors is a popular field of study within the tourism industry. To contribute to this implication, literature states that different sectors have different critical success factors (Manners, 2011, p. 7), thereby stressing the importance of research in other sectors. This review also shows that the abundance of the research was aimed towards the accommodation sector. The implication of this finding is that there is still room for research on this topic, especially in the other sectors of the tourism industry.

The second finding showed that different methods lead to different results. Customers and Facilities were included in the five more frequently factors identified through statistical analyses, while Effectivity and Marketing were included in the most frequent five factors identified through descriptive analyses. Human resources, Finances, and Quality were among the five factors
identified by means of both analyses. The implication of this finding suggests that the methodology used could lead to different outcomes and researchers must be careful not to compare results without looking at the context; thus a mixed approach (using both statistical and descriptive analyses) might lead to more consistent results.

The third finding indicates that the majority of researchers approached their research from a supply-side and the approach used had different critical success factors. Facilities is the only factor to appear in all three approaches (demand, supply, and mixed), and Quality, Customer/customer-related, and Product are the factors present in two of the three approaches. This implies that the results should be used with caution if one wants to compare findings, since the approach has different outcomes/results.

The fourth finding indicates that the labelling of CSFs in previous studies is complex and broad. In the 52 articles used for this study, 491 factors were identified and categorised into 143 factors. Of the 143 factors, 66 had only one count. The factors with only one count are those where the factor is too specific and cannot be categorised along with another factor. The most frequently identified factors are Human Resources, Finances, Customers/Customer-related, Quality, and Facilities. Thus, the implication is that more standard factors should be identified within each specific sector, making them unique yet accurate.

The fifth finding revealed that from a geographical point of view, most research focused on countries or products in Asia. The studies within Africa focus mainly on South Africa, and one on Egypt. It is clear that case studies directed towards unique destinations, especially in Africa, are scarce. Fewer studies were found with a focus on North America, South America, and Australia. However, it was not the objective of this study to determine the difference between the factors geographically. This is an area that could gain more attention in future research endeavours.

6. Conclusions

Literature showed that critical success factors are important and that the critical success factors can differ from sector to sector (Manners, 2011, p. 7). Following this study, it is evident that there are different criteria and ways of determining critical success factors. When studying previous findings, caution must be given to the sector, methodology (statistical vs descriptive), approach (supply vs demand), case studies (geographical location), and research methods used to obtain those findings, since each of these variables could exert an impact on the results and findings. In addition, there are so many factors identified, that attention must be paid to what each factor includes and how it can be further standardised. In terms of the critical success factors most frequently identified through this review, Quality, Finances, and Human resources were three of the factors that appeared among the top five of both statistical and descriptive analyses. Quality and Facilities were two factors that appeared among the top five in both the supply and demand approaches. One factor, namely Quality appeared as an important critical success factor across supply and demand approaches as well as through statistical and descriptive analyses.

It could be considered that one of the overall implications was that access could not be gained to all the articles, influencing the distributions across journals, years, sectors, and case study destinations. Yet, contributions have been made by this review paper through studying previous studies conducted on critical success factors in the tourism industry. These contributions include an overview, or where and when these previous studies were published, and analyses of the key aspects of the previous studies. Furthermore, critical success factors identified in previous studies were analysed in order to find the critical success factors most frequently identified. By possessing knowledge of the critical success factors, a better understanding can be gained regarding the findings to date and the methodology used, as well as the gaps within this topic. This could render future studies more effective and of greater benefit.

References

Milandrie has a keen interest in the growth and sustainability of the business tourism industry in South Africa. Milandrie started her academic studies in 2011 with BCom Tourism and Recreation, after which she completed her BCom Honors in 2014. She is currently busy with an M.Com. degree in Tourism Management. Her interest in the business tourism industry was kindled when she represented her university and Africa at the International University Challenge in Germany during the Imex Frankfurt 2014 event, during which she accumulated valuable knowledge about the industry and eventually achieved a second place in the challenge.

Dr. Engelina du Plessis is a senior lecturer in Tourism Management at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus. She specialises in tourism competitiveness and management issues, focusing on service quality, value for money and price. She is actively involved in the industry by assisting in tourism projects, writing business and implementation plans and conducting feasibility studies. She co-written a book for the game farm industry called: Hunting and game farm tourism (2013). She has written 14 accredited articles and presented at national and international conferences. She is also a member of the AIEST and The Southern African Institute for Management Scientists (SAIMS).

Prof. Melville Saayman is the director of TREES (Tourism Research in Economic Environments and Society at the North-West University (Potchefstroom Campus) in South Africa. He is married to Andrea a tourism economist at the same university and they have two daughters – Dominique and Anaïs. His field of research is tourism economics and management and he has published more than 130 scientific articles, 20 tourism books and more than 300 technical reports.