



Preserving the past becomes more challenging as the number of visitors increases.

Photo by Thomas Sun

down after age 44, so as the average age of the industrialized countries' populations increases, either theme parks will see reduced attendance numbers, or they will need to modify their offerings to appeal to older visitors. You can expect to see theme park growth in some expected locations such as China and Dubai as people seek to travel, but maybe not as far away from home, to experience new adventures, especially virtual reality options, in comfortable and familiar surroundings.

At the same time theme parks are appealing to an older crowd, they will need to strike a delicate balance as they need to cater to millennials who are current and future patrons with their families. "They're looking for a collection of different kinds of complementary experiences rather than just one main event. . . . 'Curating the experience' is the process of customizing an encounter and controlling how it is shared with the world. This is as simple as choosing a filter on Instagram, finding the right emoji to include in a status update, or hashtagging a tweet" (p. 41–42).¹² These 16 to 34 year olds who have grown up in a tech-savvy digital world are our future customers!

Travelers with Disabilities and Special Needs

Physical ability is an important determinant of travel. Travelers with disabilities and special needs might have minor limitations, from slight hearing impairments to major mobility obstacles such as confinement to wheelchairs. The United States took the lead to increase accessibility substantially for all by passing the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Since that time, access to most major tourism resources and services has greatly improved within the United States. However, access is still a major issue in other countries of the world and seriously restricts the ability to travel for tens of millions of people. The proportion of the world's population that has disabilities will surely grow as the average age in industrialized countries continues to rise.

The Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality estimates that about 70% of adults with disabilities travel at least once a year. With the increasing size of the mature