

ABSTRACT

Since the creation of Bitcoin in 2008, buzzwords such as 'blockchain' have led to an impending technological transformation among multiple industries around the world. Therefore, the tourism and hospitality industry is not only confronted by these technological advancements, but also affected by the ever-changing behaviour of tourists and travellers.

Existing data suggests that blockchain technology has been successfully integrated into sectors such as banking or finance. Nonetheless, research on the applicability of blockchain technology within the tourism and hospitality industry is limited. Consequently, this master's thesis aims to fill this knowledge gap and examines the current integration status of blockchain technology in the tourism and hospitality industry in Vienna, Austria.

A mixed-methods research design laid the foundation for the data collection process. Local industry experts were interviewed in order to provide qualitative data. The interviews were then analysed and structured according to identified patterns hereby, a quantitative approach was utilised. Subsequently, commonalities between discussion themes were observed via a text mining strategy, including the use of VOSviewer software in order to generate deeper insights on the expert's opinions.

Key findings imply that blockchain-based solutions within the local tourism and hospitality industry are scarce, totalling 15 businesses. These businesses showcased an overall satisfaction and consequently demonstrated interest in further expanding the use of blockchain technology. The data suggests that the potential benefits of implementing blockchain technology clearly outweigh its shortcomings, as blockchain-based solutions act as a customer-centric instrument.

Nevertheless, the development of blockchain technology in the tourism and hospitality industry will be dependent on the willingness of service providers to further develop this technology and tailor it to the requirements of the industry.