

# The Implementation of Tracking Technologies for Tourism Research

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## **About the Topic:**

With growing numbers of tourists visiting destinations, problems of social and carrying capacity are increasing and are threatening the basis for tourism itself. Until recently, research into human spatial behaviour has tended to rely solely on the evidence provided by the research subjects themselves. Their evidence: an account of where they were and for how long was logged and integrated into not so accurate time-space diaries.

Recent technological developments have produced a range of sophisticated and readily available digital tracking technologies, of which the best known is the Global Positioning System [GPS] and Smartphones. Those technologies provide both high resolution and extremely accurate data, to track individual pedestrians.

Mobile phones with embedded GPS function have become an integral part of our lives and have had a significant impact on society—including on individuals' daily movement and mobility patterns. Cellular phones have also been utilized for research and have been employed to collect time-space data about the mobility of relatively large populations.

In this presentation, we provide a review of the potential of advanced tracking technologies in the investigation of the geographies of mobility. We discuss how these devices can be employed in research, tracking individuals in time and space and functioning as location-aware survey tools in real time, among other things. We also engage in a debate over the advantages, disadvantages, and limitations of smartphones in this context, and highlight new research trends that are beginning to appear following the introduction of smartphones.

## **About Prof. Shoval:**

Professor Noam Shoval is an expert in urban geography and planning, urban tourism and the development and implementation of advanced tracking technologies useful in urban studies, tourism and medicine. Internationally, he is a sought-after consultant and collaborator on research projects in the areas of tourist time-space activities, urban tourism planning, and aging and cognitive decline of patients. Professor Shoval's impact has been global, including policy and planning in Spain, Hong Kong, Israel, Germany, Denmark, Italy, and China.

Professor Shoval completed his Ph.D. at The Hebrew University and conducted post-doctoral research at the University of London (2000–2001). He was an Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellow at the University of Heidelberg (2007-2008). He spent an academic year (2014-2015) as a visiting professor at the Center for Urban and Social Research at the University of Pittsburgh. Over the years he published four books and just over one hundred other scientific publications.