Acknowledgments

I wrote my doctoral thesis nine years ago under the supervision of Dan Fesenmaier at Temple University. In it I used search results from Google and user queries from several search engines to examine the structure and characteristics of the so-called online tourism domain. Looking back, my thesis was purely “descriptive” using “secondary” data, which would most likely be viewed as “unorthodox” back then. Today, many of the analytical approaches to understanding the new reality, which is constantly being shaped by information technology, have grown to dominate our everyday conversations about the meaning of knowledge creation. Since my graduation, I have been working with a number of colleagues worldwide on different types of research problems related to IT in travel and tourism, many of which can now be characterized as “data analytics.” While I have benefited a lot from my collaborators in the works we published together, Dan’s influence and support has been tremendous throughout my intellectual development. Notwithstanding his relentless pursuit of rigor and excellence, Dan has huge impact on my way of looking at the world, particularly with his open-mindedness to research and willingness to learn new things no matter how outlandish they appear at the beginning. This book embodies, primarily, Dan’s idea of “moving forward” within the realms of technology, data, design of tourism experience, and the emerging topic of smart tourism.

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The origins of this book lie with my early years at Texas A&M University where in 1985 we designed something called the Texas Travel Research Information System (TTRIP), over twenty years of the research conducted by students and staff of the
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