



## **A Study on the Sauna Tourism : From UX Research on Sauna Business**

**Tsutomu Yoshioka**

Toyo University, Japan

### **Abstract**

Saunas are all the rage in Japan. Both the number of sauna users and the number of new sauna facilities built have increased dramatically in recent years in Japan, especially after the pandemic of COVID-19. The number of tourists visiting saunas has also increased, as has the number of travelers whose purpose is to visit sauna facilities. This phenomenon can be described as "Sauna Tourism." This study presents findings and implications from UX research (User Experience research) on a sauna tour with 12 participants. The tour visited several saunas in the eastern region of Hokkaido, a northern large island in Japan. Qualitative data on these sauna users were collected and analyzed by interviewing and surveying 12 participants in this sauna tour. The results revealed that both sauna facilities used on non-special, normal days and sauna facilities used on special occasions are important for heavy sauna users. In addition, during the past year, many sauna facilities in Japan have raised their fees. In commodities in general, a rise in price is said to result in a decrease in the number sold. However, in many sauna facilities that have implemented price increases, the number of users has not decreased. In fact, many facilities have seen an increase. This event seems to derive implications that may be relevant not only to sauna facilities, but also to many tourism and hospitality industries.

**Keywords:** hospitality industry, pricing, productivity, sales, sauna facilities