

Review Article

A Comprehensive Review Analysis of the Effects of Social Media on the Tourism Industry

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How to cite this article:

Dixit A. A Comprehensive Review Analysis of the Effects of Social Media on the Tourism Industry. *J Adv Res Jrrnl Mass Comm* 2022; 9(1&2): 26-31.

Date of Submission: 2022-01-03

Date of Acceptance: 2022-01-30

A B S T R A C T

Information and Communication Technology (ICTs) have undergone rapid development over the past ten years, which has had significant effects on the global tourism industry. It is now widely acknowledged by researchers and sector professionals that social media significantly affects both suppliers and consumers in the tourism industry. This study's purpose is to analyze the literature and conduct a critical analysis of papers that cover the impact of social media on the search and tourism industry. In purpose to perform this study, data were gathered from the three main databases: Google Scholar, Science Direct and EBSCO Host. The study was conducted in three stages: first, a database was chosen with the purpose of gathering data; second, the data was screened; and third, the study itself was carried out after the successful screening of the data. For the purpose of performing this study, a total of 28 papers that were pertinent to the study were discovered. Based on a review of the relevant literature from the viewpoints of both tourism consumers and suppliers, this article discovered that while consumers use social media before, during and after travel to look for different types of information, suppliers typically use it for promotion, communication, management and research.

Keywords: Social Media, Tourism Industry, Social Networking Sites, Information and Communication Technology (ICTs)

Introduction

The introduction of the internet and the crucial role it now plays in society has sparked the creation of a broad variety of cutting-edge digital tools. The rise of social networking sites, which are now extensively utilized, has also been significantly aided by the internet. In the twenty-first century, social networking sites began using chat names to relay chat conversations in forums (Kayumovich & Kamalovna, 2019). Various terminology and virtual discoveries came into being as a result of the introduction of the Internet. As one of the most powerful tools for online networking in the contemporary world, social media platforms have made their way into everyday aspects of

social and economic life. The mechanisms through which individuals may interact with one another and work together to create, disseminate and share information inside of digital contexts are referred to as "social media" (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The phrase "social media" refers to a group of Internet-based services that are founded on "Web 2.0"'s theoretical and technical foundations and enable users to produce and distribute their own unique content (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Utilizing social media platforms has developed into a significant social phenomenon and a well-established global trend in the business world (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013). The World Tourism Organization recognizes social networking platforms' substantial

importance to the tourism business. Smartphones and tablets are being used by tourists and businesspeople alike to write evaluations of the places they visit or the locations where they are currently located. According to the World Travel Monitor, forty percent of tourists from other countries travel with smartphones. These tourists use their smartphones to access the internet and look up information about their destinations (forty percent), other travelers (about twenty-six percent) and travel services (thirty-four percent) (Kayumovich & Kamalovna, 2019). Three-quarters of people who travel internationally make use of social networks such as Facebook, Twitter or Flickr. Reasons for this include smartphones, travel and the sharing of ideas and opinions online. As a result of the significant pace at which social media is expanding, it is a tool for marketing that can be used by various industries. Due to the fact that the tourism business has always placed a primary emphasis on the legitimacy of destinations, the opinions of customers, the industry is in a strong position to make use of social media platforms as a result of the dissemination of information and the favorable word of mouth advertisements (Gohil, 2015). The objective of this study is to conduct a literature search and provide an in depth analysis of the published publications that discuss the influence that social media platforms have on the travel and tourism industry.

Methodology

The initial step in this study was to choose a database to gather data from and that procedure took place between November 2020 and December 2020. Since then, the data collection process has been carried out. Google Scholar, Science Direct and EBSCO Host are the names of the three databases that have been used for the purpose of data collection. These three databases are the most widely used and biggest. According to the recommendations made by Leung et al. (2013), keywords were identified for the purpose of data screening. The words "social media," "technology," "internet," "tourism," "consumer behavior," "tourist behavior," "holiday planning," "promotion," "marketing tools," "distribution channel," "communication," "hotel," "restaurant" and "hospitality" have been used as keywords for the purpose of researching related articles that have been published in different journals online using the internet. Due to the limited availability of relevant previously published articles, we gathered articles from a variety of journals that fall under the umbrella topic of tourism and hospitality. In the third step, after the data collection and doing many rounds of screening, it was determined that there are a total of 28 articles that are pertinent to that study and were published between the years 2008 and 2020. The abstract and keywords of the article were analyzed in order to determine whether or not the article was relevant to the study. Once the article passed

the selection phase, it was sent for reviewing, during which the objectives, methodology and findings of the study that were used for conducting the study were evaluated. After everything was said and done, the number of writers and the articles were tallied and it was discovered that 2011 was the year with the most representation among the chosen articles (Figure: 1).

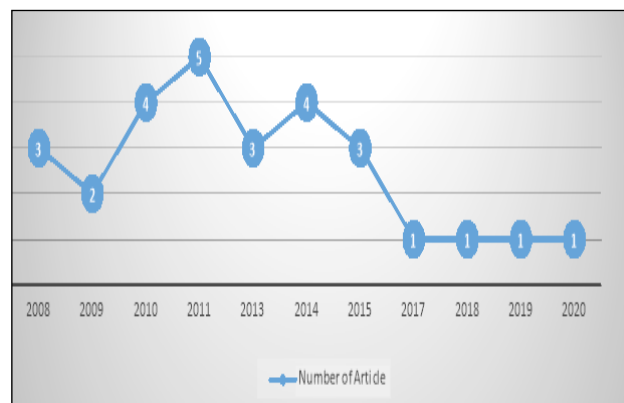


Figure 1. Number of Related Publications Reviewed for Study

Types of Social Media

According to Javed et al study, Cohen offered a definition of social media by reviewing 30 different definitions of social media and outlining basic social media features. These traits include the following: (a) social media uses online tools, platforms and software, so its technical operationalization only depends on information technology; (b) social media refers to channels for communication that enable participants and the public to create and share content and interact, pointing to widespread changes; and (c) social media connects users inside a virtual environment, so it has an impact on people's behaviors in the real world (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Consumer behavior, particularly web 2.0, which has fundamentally changed how people arrange and consume goods connected to travel (Fotis, Buhalis, & Rossides, 2012). According to Gretzel et al. (2008), social media will have a significant influence on travel. Before making decisions on purchases related to travel, 82 percent of online consumers in the United States reportedly investigated online information such as reviews, blogs and other forms of online material. The technology of social media in the contemporary era as a result of technological advancements, most notably the launch of Web Version 2 in the modern era, has made it very necessary for advertising a tourist destination.

A list of all the various social media forms is provided below:

- Articles, journals or newsletters that are formally published on a website are referred to as "blog" The ability for bloggers or other users to post text entries, photos, hyperlinks, videos or other forms of digital

media in an online format makes blogs another early example of web version two. Because it enables users to interact with one another by leaving a comment or subscribing to one another's content, which is the core idea underlying social networking, this kind of Web Version 2 may very well be referred to be social media. In addition to two-way communication between users, users may submit their own content (Kennedy et al., 2007). (Hidayat & Are, 2018)

- Users of social networking sites, which are private websites connected to a broader network, are pushed to communicate with one another in an attempt to build a community via the site's use (Kennedy, et al., 2007). Goeldner and Ritchie (2011) claim that social networking's distinguishing features include the usage of accounts, personal users, images and messages to strengthen user relationships (Hidayat & Are, 2018)
- Content communities that aim to develop social networking by enabling users to share and exchange media content with one another

Impact of Social Media in Tourism

It is becoming more common knowledge that social media has a significant influence on the travel and tourism industry, which is leading to further research into this relatively new field of study. Social media is playing an increasingly significant role in many facets of the tourism industry, particularly in terms of the discovery of information, the making of decisions and tourism marketing, with a particular emphasis on best practices for interacting with customers on social media platforms (Sahoo & B.G, 2017). It has become clear that using social media platforms as part of a marketing plan in the tourism industry is producing positive results. One of the most important tools that many nations' governments and governments in general have at their disposal for bolstering their own local tourism businesses is social media. A company's social media marketing strategy outlines how the company intends to make use of the resources made available by social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube in order to accomplish its marketing goals. Examples of such platforms include YouTube. Additionally, the social media strategy provides the corporation with data about markets and customers, which is then utilized to construct and adjust the business plan for the company, in addition to executing and promoting higher-level concepts. Based on the revised strategy they are adopting for utilizing social media marketing to sell their company, the company has to make further judgments on how to best use the marketing tools at their disposal to acquire new clients. This is due to the fact that the firm's case study on the usage of social media marketing shows that the present strategy utilized by the company suggests that the business plan is not fully executed (Gohil, 2015). User Generated Content (UGC),

according to Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2009), has grown in importance in influencing how destinations are presented on social media and, therefore, how people decide which destinations to visit. User-generated content (UGC) on social media platforms, in fact, may provide consumers of travel agencies information in a range of never-before-seen methods (Leung et al., 2013).

Impact of Social Media in Tourism from the Consumers' Perspective

The internet is a resource that 84 percent of travelers use to plan their journeys before they go, according to the most current results of a research done by Google (Leung, Law, Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013). Xiang and Gretzel (2010) discovered that social networking accounted for more than one tenth of the search results when they investigated the likelihood that web users would come across content from social media while doing a web search. This was done in order to determine the likelihood that online travelers may come across content from social media platforms. Several researchers have recently brought attention to the dominating influence that social media plays in the process of trip preparation research. Additionally, it has been hypothesized by a number of authors that the primary motivation for travelers to use User Generated Content (UGC) and social media was to obtain travel information. This theory has been supported by the findings of a number of studies (Huang, Basu, & Hsu, 2010). According to Xiang and Gretze (2010), a number of these social media platforms enable users to publish and share their own ideas, perspectives and personal experiences in relation to travel. This content may then serve as a source of information for other people. According to the findings of a recent survey conducted on American vacationers, social media is often the very first place that individuals go for information while making reservations for travel. The study also demonstrates how heavily reliant tourists are on information technology while looking for and preparing for prospective tourist experiences (Xiang, Wang, O'Leary, & Fesenmaier, 2014). The findings of this research were published in the journal Xiang, Wang, O'Leary and Fesenmaier. The public at large has recently come to the realization that social media platforms are much superior to other resources when it comes to assisting tourists in making decisions on shopping, dining and entertainment options. While this is going on, users are growing a lot more used to the encryption and tailored services that the internet offers (Wei, 2015).

Impact of Social Media in Tourism from the Suppliers' Perspective

The use of social networking sites has become a significant factor in the development of future promotion tools and has the potential to influence the purchasing choice of customers. By offering information about a place or even

changing that information, social networking data have the potential to attract future travelers. They had the chance for significant exposure through social media in a dynamic and unified manner, which allowed them to convey information swiftly. In addition, since individuals may now voice their thoughts on themes linked to those topics, social media has an impact on a range of businesses, commodities, services, regions, cultures, political, economic and social concerns (Hidayat & Are, 2018). The way that information is shared and traded has undergone substantial changes as a result of social networking as an information technology. Additionally, in order to change how it works, social networking has increasingly evolved into a kind of direct sales channel route that also involves the delivery of tourism (Lewis & Bridger, 2001). Visitors are able to access social media anytime, anywhere, thanks to the increasing usage of smart mobile phones, which has a considerable impact on the kind of information they seek and how they anticipate behaving in the future (Dan, Xiang, & Fesenmaier, 2014). Because of this, it should come as no surprise that the Internet has brought about significant shifts in the ways in which tourists look for and purchase items linked to tourism, changing how those goods are delivered and making the combination of their design more customized. The business processes of all companies participating in distribution networks have been gradually reconstructed thanks to social media, forcing those participating in distribution channels to rethink their primary sources of competitive advantage (Wei, 2015). Social media-based organizations have gradually shown that ease of transaction is more essential than product selectivity as they have developed one business model after another, so causing normal distribution techniques to undergo significant transformation. According to Hidayat and Are (2018), there are four key pillars that determine the contact success rate through social media and those pillars are as follows:

- Organize an effective method of contact with the customer
- Working in conjunction with the customer
- Make an effort to educate the customer something new
- Making certain that the customers have a good time

These foundations were set up so that the promotion of the products and services could be carried out in an efficient and effective manner. Because simple word of mouth advertising is ineffective for long-term projects, it is critical to cultivate a positive relationship with the client in order to guarantee the effectiveness of the service provided, as well as to demonstrate reliability and continuity with the content that has been distributed. Both the topic that is being investigated and the approach that is being taken to study often have a significant impact on the degree to which social media platforms have a good or negative

impact on communication. If users of social media are going to have an experience with a product or service that is on par with what is offered by the competition, convincing ads and the convergence of all marketing methods are going to be necessary. Electronic word of mouth, also known as e-WOM, is a relatively new kind of communication that is essential for marketers to comprehend. It has the potential to assist customer interactions in the most beneficial manner imaginable. According to Ivkovi, Gajic and Brdar (2014), the exploitation of electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM), which occurs when a product or service is enhanced, may result in an increase in customer satisfaction. This may be a beneficial outcome for businesses. E-WOM can concurrently solve difficulties and enquiries while also assisting in understanding what visitors feel and say about their experience. This may be done while travelers are on the road. The primary advantage, on the other hand, may consist of maintaining vigilance over the organization's reputation and image or even conducting an audit of its current strategic plans (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008). The use of social media has two effects: first, by building positive and fruitful relationships with customers, which increases customer loyalty; second, it may be a potent instrument for obtaining customer feedback, which is used to attract new customers and keep hold of existing ones. Both of these effects are beneficial to the business. Both of these ramifications are very important for businesses to take into consideration (Leung, Law, Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013). Second, it may result in a decrease in the market worth of the brand as well as a decrease in the customer's faith in the brand if it is not employed efficiently. In other words, the management of this essential source of strategic information on social media is the key that will determine the outcome of the company's adoption of social media and the level of profitability it will achieve as a result. The use of user-generated content, often known as UGC, as a digital information source for market research as well as internal and external environmental studies is gaining popularity on social media platforms. The study of user-generated content on social media provided by UGC has the potential to lead to a deeper comprehension of the characteristics shared by customers who make use of certain social media applications. When it comes to particular social media data, the information may serve as a source of creativity for the creation of targeted advertisements and a marketing message (Noone, McGuire, & Rohlf, 2011).

Discussion

The use of social media platforms has made it easier than ever before to communicate and form connections with large numbers of masses. Individuals, businesses and public personalities all utilize social media as a forum for advertising their products and services. In the society we live in today, it is impossible to imagine what the future

would be like without social networks. Because of their ongoing expansion across the globe, not only does it have an impact on the lives of individuals on a day-to-day basis, but it also has an effect on a variety of other industries, most notably the tourism and hospitality industry, specifically in the tasks of market management, analysis and promotion. Businesses in the tourism industry have the chance to use social media to simply distribute information and get extensive exposure to a variety of audiences and to exert some level of influence over particular brands, products, services, places, communities, political, social and economic issues, given that people now want to share their opinion on issues that are of significance. For the actors in the distribution channel, social media has continually rebuilt the sales process of all the firms that are part of the distribution networks, forcing those companies to redefine their primary competitors. It is possible for social media to be an efficient method for gathering customer feedback, which can be used to attract new consumers and keep hold of existing ones and this feedback is used to create strong and positive relationships with customers, which improves the level of satisfaction experienced by the business. The management process and the investigation of the characteristics of customers are also made use of social media. The use of social networking sites has rapidly become the most popular and effective method for contacting and connecting with large numbers of masses. Individuals, corporations and celebrities have used their power to create social networks with the intention of using them as promotional tools. Since social media is such a widely used communication medium, an effective social media network will continue to share information with individuals who need to access it. All stages of the travel experience, including the pre-, during- and post-stages, are significantly impacted by social media. Social media is used by tourists to arrange their travel. Recent polls of tourists have shown that social media, as opposed to other sources, is the most crucial aspect for them to take into account while making decisions on the venue, the food and the shopping. It is common practice for tourists to gather information before making plans for their tourists in the modern world due to the proliferation of social media sites that allow users to upload and express their travel-related comments, perspectives and specific observations, which then serve as feedback for other users. Additionally, it is difficult to imagine what travel would be like without social networks in the modern era. Because of their ongoing global development, not only do they have an effect on the day-to-day lives of people, but they also have an effect on a variety of businesses.

Conclusion

The use of social networking sites has rapidly become the most popular and effective method for contacting and connecting with large numbers of masses. Individuals,

corporations and celebrities have used their power to create social networks with the intention of using them as promotional tools. As a potent outreach tool, a robust social media platform may facilitate the spread of information to individuals who have a need to get access to it. It is what one has to do better in order to establish a large following base in order to engage and improve a post and it is lively since it delivers helpful information and insight into the services that are provided to customers. At this point in time, it is practically impossible to imagine what life would be like without social networks. Because of their ongoing global development, they have an effect on a variety of businesses, especially in fields like promotion, business management and research roles and those working in the tourism and hospitality sectors. They also have an impact on how people conduct their daily lives. Due to the quick distribution of information on social media and the fact that people use them, it is conceivable to business that the tourism and hospitality industries must keep up with any technical improvements.

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