



ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE PROMOTION OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN INDIA: A STUDY

Venkataramireddy Bonamukkala* Dr. Madhavaiah Chendragiri**

**Research Scholar (Full-Time), Department of Management, Pondicherry University, Karaikal Campus.*

***Associate Professor, Department of Management, Pondicherry University, Karaikal-609605.*

Abstract

Promotion of tourism through social media is one of the best marketing strategies in the present business competitive world. This social media tourism marketing strategy is helpful in understanding the attitude of tourists and further designing a competitive marketing strategy. Which, the service providers use these social media networks and design internet-based applications for social media interaction among tourists from different places. And also social networks allow consumers an opportunity to share opinions with millions of consumers about tourism destinations, and service quality further which enables electronic word-of-mouth. Additionally, this can be helpful in attracting more tourists and exploiting the competitive advantage. Although, it is important to analyze the knowledge of tourist consumer behavior for promoting tourism business activity social media should be integrated into the marketing mix and lead the customer to the useful and right direction. Therefore, the present study is aimed to examine the role of social media in the marketing and promotion of the tourism industry in India

Keywords: *Social media; Tourism marketing strategy; Competitive advantage; Social networks.*

1. Introduction

Information and communication technology (ICT) plays a vital role in the marketing of tourism using social media and other online-based instruments for promoting the tourism industry in India. In the present scenario, India's tourism marketing is obviously increasing through social media. This social media marketing strategy helps in attracting domestic as well as foreign tourists. Now a days several tourism service providers develop won websites and blogs on tourism Besides, an Alongside the increase in visitors (Falk & Hagsten, 2021), the behaviors of travelers that are motivated by social media can be irresponsible (Siegel et al., 2022) the concept of the smart tourism destination (STD) has emerged strongly in recent years, linked to the development of smart cities (Boes, Buhalis, & Inversini, 2015; Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015; Gretzel, Sigala, Xiang, & Koo, 2015; IvarsBaidal, Celdran Bernabe & Femenia-Serra, 2017) A travel influencer is an individual who has a sizable number of active followers on their social media; they are known to post travel-related content and reviews. Travel influencer utilizes photos, videos, comments, and captions to share their experience on a travel destination; often influencing their followers' perception of the destination in the process, and in turn, shaping their follower's travel decision (Guleria, 2018; Ho & Lee, 2015; Rios et al., 2019) The use of social networks and their inclusion in integrated marketing strategies are becoming increasingly important as users spend more time communicating through social media channels (Chaffey, 2022; Matikiti-Manyeverere & Kruger, 2019; Hanaysha & Momani, 2021). By focusing on the audiences that use a particular social network the most, companies and social media creators were the first to introduce advertising, which became much more important than pure advertising in WEB 2.0 and social networks based on two-way communication with all interested stakeholders (Sigala, 2012; Gupta 2019; Firoz et al., 2021). Tourist destinations face complex challenges in their attempts to leverage social media and

information technology (Mistilis, Buhalis, and Gretzel 2014). In particular, DMOs often lack technical expertise and face funding, time, and capacity constraints, as well as less support from partners, including hotels, travel agencies, and government agencies (Gretzel, Yuan, and Fesenmaier 2000). Today's diffusion of technology contributes to a more efficient and easy spread of information, which in turn makes information, spread faster (Apulu & Latham, 2011). In the distant past, people were only able to communicate directly. While it is a more intimate form of communication, it has several downsides: it is effortful, inefficient, and sometimes disruptive (Apulu & Latham, 2011; Nardi & Whittaker, 2002).

2. Problem Statement

Ever since the advent of digital web 2.0, different researchers have conducted qualitative and quantitative studies to understand the ever-changing role of social media and its adoption and usage for tourism marketing. It has been discussed that Social Media marketing efforts in the tourism industry will most likely be an important element in the marketing mix for many years to come. As the usage of Social Media tools continues to grow and evolve, we need to form a better understanding of the ardent role of social media in travelers' travel choices and develop a working relationship model that could help tourism officials better understand the optimum approaches to Social Media marketing to promote their tourism products and destinations.

3. Literature Review

There are different methods used to collect studies and research papers based on the relationship between social media and tourism across the world. Which through promising literature on keywords like 'social media tourism campaigns', 'social media and tourism', Facebook and tourism, tourism branding through social media, and more. The most helpful piece of literature that was found was on social media as a destination marketing tool and its use by national tourism organizations which was published in current issues in 2012. It seems that the current and constantly evolving phenomenon of social media continues to evade a universally accepted definition, however, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) argue that understanding the concepts of Web 2.0 and User-Generated Content is the key to understanding social media.

4. Research questions

- How is social media tool used in tourism marketing?
- Is social media used as a source of information by during pre-travel stage?
- Do social media have a role in promoting tourism destinations and products?

5. Objective of the study

- To understand the extent of social media platforms' role in tourism promotion and marketing.

6. Research Methodology

The research design involves quantitative techniques as the study wishes to understand whether social media have a direct influence on tourism destinations and their marketing strategies. The study used secondary data which were collected from journals and internet sources.

7. Conclusion

One of the most competitive fields of the service sector is the tourism industry which requires effective management of natural, financial, and human resources existing in the country. For developing the tourism industry in any country is there for important to provide relevant infrastructure, improve



service, and increase of customer satisfaction. There are different types of instruments in marketing, which aim to achieve of customer satisfaction. Social media is a crucial tool for success in business today. Social media refers to the activities of different customers in society, gathering and sharing online information and knowledge. The impact and usage of social media marketing strategies are very crucial for satisfying tourist demand in the global world.

References

1. Andereck, K. L., Valentine, K. M., Vogt, C. A., & Knopf, R. C. (2007). A cross-cultural analysis of tourism and quality of life perceptions. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 15 (5), 483–502.
2. Beall, J. M., Boley, B. B., Landon, A. C., & Woosnam, K. M. (2020). What drives ecotourism: Environmental values or symbolic conspicuous consumption? *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1–20.
3. Bianco, V. (2020). Analysis of electricity consumption in the tourism sector. A decomposition approach. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 248, 119286.
4. Boes, K., Buhalis, D, & Inversini, A. (2015). Conceptualising smart tourism destination dimensions. In *Information and communication technologies in tourism 2015*, Cham: Springer, pp. 391-403
5. Arya, V., Paul, J., & Sethi, D. (2021). Like it or not! Brand communication on social networking sites triggers consumer-based brand equity. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 1-18.
6. Benckendorff, P. J., Xiang, Z., & Sheldon, P. J. (2019). *Tourism information technology*. Cabi.
7. Abdullah, A., M. M. Ismail, and A. Albani. 2018. “At-Risk Generation Z: Values, Talents and Challenges.” *International Journal of Asian Social Science* 8 (7): 373–8. doi:10.18488/journal.1.2018.87.373.378.
8. Amaro, S., P. Duarte, and C. Henriques. 2016. “Travelers’ Use of Social Media: A Clustering Approach.” *Annals of Tourism Research* 59:1–15. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2016.03.007
9. Apulu, I., & Latham, A. (2011). An evaluation of the impact of information and communication technologies: Two case study examples. *International Business Research*, 4(3), 3.
10. Ayeh, J. K. (2015). Travelers’ acceptance of consumer-generated media: An integrated model of technology acceptance and source credibility theories. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 48, 173–180.