



UNIVERSITY OF MEDIA, ARTS AND COMMUNICATION

GHANA INSTITUTE OF JOURNALISM

**EXPLORING THE ROLE OF NEW MEDIA IN ENHANCING COMMUNICATION
STRATEGIES IN TOURISM PROMOTION**

BY

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DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that this research is a result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or any other higher education institute. I further declare that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....

Student Index number Signature Date

CERTIFICATION BY SUPERVISOR

This dissertation has been prepared and presented under my supervision according to the guidelines for supervision and formatting of dissertation laid down by the University of Media, Arts and Communication UniMAC-GIJ.

.....

Supervisor Signature Date

DEDICATION

To the memory of Dave Homer and Keith Button, and to Lyn Homer, whose selfless support and generosity enabled me to pursue my educational dreams from primary school to university. Lyn,

you are a blessing I will never forget. I dedicate this work to you with deepest appreciation and gratitude.

To my beloved child, Prima Adei Nikoi, whose presence inspires me every day to strive for greatness.

And to everyone who has contributed to my growth and success, I offer my heartfelt thanks and sincere recognition.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the role of new media in enhancing communication strategies for tourism promotion, with a focus on its effectiveness, challenges, and the integration of emerging digital tools. Using a qualitative research approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including tourism marketers, social media managers, content creators, and tourists. The findings reveal that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter have revolutionized tourism promotion by enabling real-time interaction, personalized marketing, and

global reach. User-generated content (UGC) emerged as a significant driver of authenticity and trust, influencing travel decisions more effectively than traditional advertisements.

The study also highlights the effectiveness of new media in fostering engagement through visually appealing content, interactive communication, and data-driven personalization. However, challenges such as content saturation, reputational risks from viral negative feedback, privacy concerns, and resource constraints were identified as barriers to optimizing new media use. Emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR), were found to enhance tourism communication by offering immersive and personalized experiences, improving customer engagement, and increasing destination appeal.

The study concludes that while new media presents transformative opportunities for tourism promotion, stakeholders must address associated challenges to maximize its potential. Recommendations include leveraging analytics to refine strategies, ensuring transparent data practices, and integrating new media with traditional communication methods for comprehensive campaigns. This research contributes to the growing discourse on digital media's impact on tourism, offering practical insights for industry stakeholders and policymakers.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Overview

The first chapter sets up the presentation of the entire study by indicating the relevance of new media in improving the communication strategies particularly in promoting tourism. It starts with showing how the communication in the sphere of tourism development has changed over the years, stressing the shortcomings of the conventional modes of communication and also the new age applications' catalytic effects. This section delimits the research problem and defines the aims and objectives of the study and justifies the inquiry into the communication, more specifically why new media is good for the marketing of tourism. It also provides answers to the questions. The objectives and the scope of the study are similarly. This pertains to the field of research as well as to practice within the tourism industry, thereby explaining the growing need for a deeper understanding of the new media from a contemporary marketing perspective to promote tourism.

1.1 Background of the study

For several nations across the globe, tourism has proven to be one of the avenues that are able to generate revenue in terms of gross domestic earnings and increase the level of employment. As the World Travel and Tourism Council (2019) notes, contribution of the tourism industry to global GDP was about 10.4% and generated 319,000,000 jobs all in the year 2018. As the rivalry between tourist hotspots intensifies due to globalization, so is the necessity to market and sell tourism products. Earlier, advertising strategies in the sphere of tourism were based on well known forms of advertising, namely print, radio, and TV (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). However, the events of kinematics or metaforms included the most active promotion of tourism in social networks, micro and macro blogs, and internet pages that were vital for the whole world (Okonkwo et al., 20215). Kayumovich (2020) fortifies that until then, tourism promotion chiefly relied on traditional forms such as travel advertising, brochures and films. Nevertheless, expenditure, length of these

processes, poor target coverage were examples of such advertising (Koçyiğit, 2022). Furthermore, conventional communication approaches tended to be linear in nature and simply disseminated information to an audience of potential travelers without providing channels for interaction or feedback.

Due to the limitations of tourism marketers, the audience's reaction and the promotional content for the audience were not well developed (Rahman et al., 2022). However, Iştin (2020) claims, with the arrival of new media technologies, this trend has changed. Thanks to the rapid growth of the internet and mobile telephony, instantaneous and proactive communication with potential tourists has become possible. Social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter have also changed the way tourism is promoted since content like images, videos, and stories that spark emotions and assist in purchasing decisions can now be shared by the marketer (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Moreover, reviews and blogs are also examples of UGC, which is important in developing target tourists' attitudes and interests (Munar, 2011).

In comparison with traditional forms of communication, new media technologies present certain advantages especially applied in the context of tourism promotion since they allow addressing the specific target audiences in a more appealing and personalized manner. Data and algorithms allow tourism marketers to perform such actions as dividing their marketing audience into segments such as demographic information, interests and their travel behavior. As a result, correct messages can be sent to more relevant sections of the market thereby increasing the chances of engagement and conversion (Tussyadiah & Zach, 2012). A case in point is this type of travel marketing where a high-end resort employs Instagram advertising to target adventure-seeking millennials by promoting unique experiences using beautiful pictures.

New media allows looking at the promotion of tourism products as a two-way process enabling the end users to be involved in the promotion, which fosters trust and engagement. They enable tourists to ask questions, share stories, and give feedback about the tourism enterprises turning the social into efficient engagement. This virtual discussion is urgent, especially when addressing customer questions, responding to complaints and is beneficial to the business as it helps retain the customers (Leung, Law, van Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013). Based on the research, active correspondence on social networks is a factor for increasing the stability of marriages with brands (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013).

New media expands the potential audience and advertising of tourism locations. For instance, traditional media is usually limited by the audience's location and sales classification, which is not the case with social networks, as such networks allow tourism advertisers to sell the package to people around the world. Furthermore, viral marketing often encourages further advertisement user participation which can enhance exposure to the location/experience considerably (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). As an illustration, user-generated videos posted on YouTube and Instagram as part of the "100% Pure New Zealand" campaign helped to promote New Zealand as one of the top tourist destinations (Wheeler, Frost, & Weiler, 2011).

The evolution of new media leads to one of the most revolutionary changes; that is user generated content. Tourists have now become actively involved in the promotion of tourist destinations through their social media posts, blogs or travel reviews as part of the holidays. TripAdvisor, Airbnb and Yelp serve as the most popular online travel portals allowing users to leave comments and descriptions about the places they have visited, where they have stayed or attractions they have seen. The content that users create is expected to be more reliable than regular advertisements because it contains the perspectives of ordinary people rather than the *raison d'être* of advertising experts (Filieri, Alguezaui, & McLeay, 2015).

Studies show that travellers are most influenced by online reviews and recommendations. According to a study done by Cox, Burgess, Sellitto, and Buultjens (2009) a staggering 84% of respondents admitted that when it comes to designing their trip, they would pay a lot of attention to the user generated content. Likewise, Leung et al. (2013) noted that online reviews have a strong effect on the images of destinations and people's intentions to travel there, providing more evidence of the necessity of user-generated content in tourism communication strategies.

New media certainly has its numerous advantages and disadvantages for tourism promotion as well. Online reputation management is one of the core issues. Negative feedbacks, complaints or scandals can go viral in the social networks fast and ruin the image of a tourism composition or a brand. The social media's present moment capability makes it very tough for tourism marketers to take charge of the story, requiring out other measures of persistent and fast response (Sigala, 2011). Another one is information overload. With the rise in the number of social media and travel sites where tourists can visit, the amount of content that the consumers' attention can be focused on has increased so much that it is difficult to bring back the consumers again. This oversaturation of information can make some people experience a phenomenon known as 'content fatigue.' This is also where such consumers do not pay attention because there is too much promotional content (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Once the emphasis on the information sector in tourism promotion grew higher than the need for consumers' attention indignifies, the issues of privacy and data protection cost effective miss out. Sometimes tourism organizations have to gather some information about the users in order to provide them with customized offers and ads. But such informatization of the intercourse may lead the all-psychological problem, as threats of invasion of privacy. Customers lose trust in tourism companies and their brands resulting from misuse or mismanagement of the data collected (Sparks & Browning, 2011).

New media technology has comparatively changed the ability of market communication in the area of tourism to support the organization of this bottomless business. In the promotion of tourism destinations, the new media tools offer interactivity, personalize the approach to the audience's needs, and greatly extend the communications possibilities beyond what was previously possible with conventional news media. In particular, traveler generated content has become one of the most effective marketing strategies in the field of tourism, with extensive impact in making and changing perceptions and travel decisions. Nonetheless, areas of concern such as, reputation management, content saturation and data privacy encourage reasonable considerations to be able to optimally leverage new media for tourism promotion. Further studies ought to look at establishing ways to look into these issues, and address the emerging tools and practices like, Artificial Intelligence and Virtual Reality, and their contributions to the discourse on tourism communication.

1.2 Problem statement

A major driver of the global economy, the tourism sector mainly depends on efficient communication techniques to draw in and keep travellers. In the past, print media, television advertising, and travel brochures were the main means of traditional communication used to promote tourist destinations (Chang, 2002). While these tactics have been effective in increasing awareness, they have been critiqued for their limited capacity to connect dynamically with global audiences. The communication environment in tourist marketing has changed dramatically as a result of the emergence of new media, which includes blogs, websites, social media platforms, and user-generated material. The usefulness of these instruments in strengthening communication tactics for tourist marketing is still up for dispute among academics and industry professionals, despite their increasing use (Kompaniets, 202).

Several studies have highlighted the transformative potential of new media in tourism. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter offer tourism marketers the ability to share visually engaging content and directly interact with prospective tourists in real time (Barbe, & Pennington-Gray, 2020; Leung, Law, van Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013). User-generated content, such as reviews and travel blogs, has also emerged as a powerful tool for shaping the perceptions of potential tourists, as it is often perceived as more trustworthy and authentic than traditional advertising (Munar, 2011). Scholars like Huerta-Álvarez et al., (2020) have emphasized that the interactive nature of new media allows for greater engagement, fostering long-term relationships between tourism brands and consumers.

However, while new media has undeniably altered the landscape of tourism promotion, significant gaps exist in the literature regarding its comprehensive impact. For instance, much of the current research focuses on the benefits of new media, such as enhanced engagement and cost-effectiveness, without adequately exploring the challenges and limitations associated with its use (Khan, & Loh, 2022). Moreover, there is limited understanding of how different types of new media platforms—such as social networking sites, review websites, and blogs—can be strategically integrated into broader tourism communication strategies to optimize outcomes.

One key area of debate among scholars concerns the effectiveness of new media compared to traditional media in tourism promotion. Proponents of new media argue that its interactive, participatory nature gives it an edge over traditional media. For instance, Westermann, and Forthmann, (2021) highlight that social media platforms allow tourism marketers to create and disseminate multimedia content that can be rapidly shared and re-shared, thereby amplifying the reach of promotional campaigns. These platforms also enable real-time communication, allowing brands to respond promptly to customer inquiries, complaints, and feedback, which fosters trust and loyalty.

Conversely, critics of new media have pointed out several limitations. Chaudhr et al., (2021) argues that the real-time nature of social media, while beneficial for engagement, can also pose reputational risks. Negative reviews, scandals, or complaints can go viral quickly, damaging the reputation of tourism destinations and brands. Additionally, the sheer volume of information available on new media platforms can overwhelm consumers, leading to what some scholars refer to as "content fatigue" (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). In such cases, potential tourists may become disengaged from promotional content, reducing the overall effectiveness of communication strategies. Furthermore, there is a growing concern about privacy and data security in new media platforms. Tourism organizations that rely heavily on collecting personal data for targeted marketing run the risk of breaching consumer privacy, which can erode trust in their brands (Sparks & Browning, 2011). While both sides of the debate present valid points, there is still a lack of empirical evidence that comprehensively assesses the comparative advantages and disadvantages of new media relative to traditional media.

Additionally, much of the research has focused on the Western context, with limited studies exploring the effectiveness of new media in tourism promotion in developing countries, including regions like Africa. Given the distinct socio-economic and cultural dynamics of these regions, there is a pressing need to investigate how new media can be effectively utilized in diverse tourism markets. While scholars have contributed extensively to understanding the role of new media in tourism, several critical gaps remain. First, there is a notable lack of research on how new media can be strategically integrated into broader tourism communication strategies. Much of the existing literature tends to view new media as a stand-alone tool rather than one that should be used in conjunction with traditional media for maximum impact. Eagle et al., (2021) argue that effective tourism promotion strategies should involve a mix of communication channels, yet there is limited guidance on how new and traditional media can be harmonized to create cohesive campaigns.

There is insufficient research on the challenges associated with new media, particularly in the context of emerging markets. Many studies emphasize the benefits of new media in enhancing engagement and reach but overlook potential drawbacks such as reputation management, content oversaturation, and privacy concerns (Leung et al., 2013).

For tourism communication in developing countries, where internet penetration and digital literacy may be limited, understanding these challenges is crucial for developing effective communication strategies. Again, the existing literature has not adequately addressed the role of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) in tourism promotion. These technologies, often integrated into new media platforms, hold the potential to further revolutionize tourism communication by providing immersive and personalized experiences (Balasubramanian et al., 2022). Nonetheless, to date, there have been few studies on their role in promoting travel and how new and existing new media can be utilized in their service. Bridging these gaps is important in order to advance the knowledge on the application of new media in the particular context of tourism communication strategies, for example, how particular new media can be used to reach target audiences better and more effectively.

1.3 Aim of the study

The aim of this study is to explore how new media can enhance communication strategies in tourism promotion, with a focus on understanding its effectiveness, challenges, and the integration of emerging digital tools to optimize tourism outcomes.

1.4 Research objectives

The research objectives of the study are:

1. To assess the current use of new media platforms in tourism promotion.
2. To evaluate the effectiveness of new media in enhancing communication strategies for tourism promotion.
3. To identify the challenges and limitations associated with using new media in tourism marketing.
4. To explore how emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR), can be integrated with new media to enhance tourism promotion.

1.5 Research questions

The research questions for the study are:

1. How are new media platforms currently being used in tourism promotion?
2. How effective is new media in enhancing communication strategies for tourism promotion?
3. What are the challenges and limitations associated with using new media in tourism marketing?
4. How can emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR), be integrated with new media to enhance tourism promotion?

1.6 Scope of the study

The main aim of the present study is to understand how new media contributes to the improvement of communication strategies in the area of tourism promotion. More specifically, it aims at analyzing the use of new media by tourists marketers to reach out to the target tourists, encourage interaction, and alter the decision making process through different new media tools (including but not limited to social networks, blogs, web pages, and user-generated content). In addition, the research explores the integration of new media and tourism communication strategies, to find out

how the new media could be addressed in developed and emerging markets especially in relation to tourism in Ghana.

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study on exploring the role of new media in enhancing communication strategies for tourism promotion holds significant value across multiple dimensions: academic and theoretical advancement, practical applications for industry stakeholders, and policy implications for regulating and promoting sustainable tourism practices.

From an academic and theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on new media's impact on tourism promotion. The existing research has primarily focused on individual components of new media, such as social media or user-generated content, without offering a comprehensive framework for understanding its overall role in tourism communication strategies. By addressing the integration of various new media platforms and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality (AR), this study fills a critical gap in the academic discourse. Additionally, the study provides insights into the comparative effectiveness of new media relative to traditional media, a topic that remains underexplored. While there is ample literature on the benefits of new media, limited research addresses its challenges, especially in developing countries where issues such as internet access and digital literacy may hinder its effectiveness. This study's focus on the tourism industry in diverse markets, including emerging economies, allows for a more nuanced understanding of how contextual factors influence the use of new media. This contribution is especially important in globalized industries like tourism, where market dynamics and consumer behavior vary significantly across regions. By offering new theoretical insights, this research will assist future scholars in developing more robust models for analyzing digital media in tourism promotion. It

also extends the theoretical discourse on communication strategies, particularly in how new media can complement traditional communication methods in tourism marketing campaigns.

The practical significance of this study is substantial, particularly for tourism marketers, businesses, and industry stakeholders. The tourism industry has become increasingly competitive, and destinations must leverage effective communication strategies to stand out in the global market. The study's findings will provide tourism marketers with a deeper understanding of how to use new media platforms to enhance engagement, improve brand visibility, and attract potential tourists. One key practical contribution is the study's exploration of how emerging technologies, such as AI and AR, can be integrated into new media strategies. These technologies offer tourism marketers innovative ways to create personalized, immersive experiences for potential tourists, such as virtual tours or AI-driven travel recommendations. Understanding the practical applications of these technologies could revolutionize tourism marketing by allowing destinations to offer more interactive and engaging promotional content.

Moreover, the study addresses the challenges tourism businesses face in using new media, such as managing negative reviews, protecting consumer data, and dealing with content oversaturation. By identifying these challenges, the research provides actionable recommendations for tourism marketers on how to mitigate risks while maximizing the benefits of new media. For example, marketers can learn how to better balance user-generated content with official promotional material or how to address privacy concerns through transparent data collection practices. These insights are particularly valuable for small and medium-sized tourism enterprises that may not have the resources to invest heavily in traditional advertising.

The study also holds important implications for policy-making in tourism and digital communication. As new media becomes an increasingly essential tool for tourism promotion, there

is a growing need for regulations that ensure fair, transparent, and secure use of digital platforms. This study can help inform policymakers about the current state of new media in tourism and the challenges that need to be addressed, such as ensuring consumer data privacy and promoting ethical advertising practices. For instance, the study's focus on challenges like data privacy and reputation management can provide insights for policymakers on the need for stronger data protection laws, especially in tourism markets that rely heavily on digital marketing. Given the international nature of tourism, global policies may need to harmonize to ensure consistent standards across different regions. Additionally, the study's findings on the integration of AI and AR in tourism promotion may prompt policymakers to consider regulations that promote ethical use of these technologies, ensuring that tourism businesses use them responsibly without exploiting consumers' personal data or misleading them with overly idealized digital representations.

Furthermore, the study could inform tourism development policies, especially in emerging markets, where digital literacy and internet accessibility are key issues. Policymakers could use the study's findings to promote more equitable access to new media tools for small tourism operators in developing countries, helping them compete more effectively in the global tourism market. By fostering policies that promote digital inclusion, governments can ensure that new media benefits are shared across the tourism sector, from large resorts to small, community-based tourism enterprises.

1.8 Organization of the study

This research has been structured into five main chapters. Chapter One explains the background of the study including the importance of new media for marketing on tourism and defining the research problem, aim, objectives and questions. Chapter Two synthesizes the available evidence on new media, communication strategies and their usage in the tourism industry while identifying

the areas which this study intends to fill. It consists of Chapter Three, which describes the research design, data collection, and analysis resources used to study how new media facilitates tourists communication. All these discussions are presented in Chapter Four which reports the outcome of data analyses in terms of findings which focus on tourism enhancement. And finally, Chapter Five wraps up the research with a reiteration of the most essential results, their importance to the discipline, and the practices for the industry as well as the theories for further research.

1.9 Chapter summary

Chapter One concludes by summarizing the key elements discussed, including the evolution of communication strategies in tourism, the limitations of traditional media, and the emerging significance of new media platforms. It emphasizes the need for this study to address the existing gaps in the literature regarding the effectiveness of new media in tourism promotion. The chapter reiterates the research problem, aims, objectives, and questions, highlighting the relevance of the study to both academic and practical contexts within the tourism industry. By establishing a comprehensive foundation, Chapter One sets the stage for the subsequent exploration of new media's impact on communication strategies in tourism promotion, paving the way for a detailed investigation in the following chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

Chapter Two provides a comprehensive review of existing literature relevant to the study, focusing on the role of new media in enhancing communication strategies within the tourism industry. This chapter examines the evolution of communication in tourism, highlighting the transition from traditional media to digital and interactive platforms that offer increased engagement, personalized marketing, and global reach. It also explores key theoretical frameworks that underpin the study, including the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), which sheds light on the factors influencing the adoption and use of new media by both tourists and tourism marketers.

Through this review, the chapter identifies critical themes such as the impact of social media on tourism promotion, the integration of user-generated content (UGC) for building authenticity, and the challenges associated with new media, such as reputation management and privacy concerns. By synthesizing current research, Chapter Two establishes a theoretical foundation for the study, providing insights into how new media technologies shape tourism communication strategies and the factors that influence their effectiveness. This literature review ultimately aims to contextualize the study within broader tourism and communication research, identifying gaps that this research seeks to address.

2.1 Theoretical Framework- Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The TAM theory simulates how users adopt and use technology. According to this hypothesis, behavioral intention a term that promotes technology adoption is influenced by attitude, or how people perceive the technology in general. According to TAM, a variety of ideas affect consumers' judgments regarding how and when to utilize it, such as “perceived usefulness (PU)” being defined by Fred Davis as the extent to which a person thinks that utilizing a certain method would improve his or her ability to accomplish their work and “perceived ease-of-use (PEOU)”, defined as the extent to which someone thinks adopting a certain system would be effortless (Awa, 2019). One of the most important models for describing and forecasting users' acceptance of information technologies is TAM. This model is frequently used to create hypotheses regarding the variables influencing consumers' inclinations to use cutting-edge technologies.

In the context of tourism, TAM provides a useful lens for examining how and why both tourists and marketers embrace new media for communication and promotional activities. As the industry evolves to incorporate digital platforms such as social media, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR), TAM can help explain the motivations and barriers affecting adoption.

Perceived Usefulness of New Media in Tourism

Perceived Usefulness (PU) is especially relevant for tourism communicators and consumers alike. For communicators, new media offers a wide array of benefits, including real-time engagement, expansive reach, and rich data insights that can help tailor promotional campaigns to specific audiences. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok allow marketers to showcase destinations through visually captivating content and interactive features, which can inspire potential travelers and foster a sense of connection with the destination. When tourism marketers recognize the value of new media in engaging users, increasing brand visibility, and driving bookings, their intention to adopt and integrate these technologies in their strategies is enhanced.

For tourists, the perceived usefulness of new media lies in its ability to provide convenient, accessible information about destinations, accommodations, and attractions. Social media and review sites like TripAdvisor and Google Reviews allow tourists to access real-life feedback from other travelers, which helps them make better-informed travel decisions. Additionally, virtual tours powered by VR technology enable travelers to "preview" destinations before booking, which can reduce uncertainty and enhance confidence in their travel choices. By offering reliable, accessible information that meets tourists' needs, new media can be seen as a useful tool in the travel planning process, thereby increasing tourists' intention to engage with it.

Perceived Ease of Use and User Experience

Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) is another critical factor in determining the acceptance of new media technologies in tourism. For tourism marketers, ease of use in platforms like Instagram or content management systems (CMS) is essential for the efficient management of promotional campaigns. Platforms that provide intuitive interfaces, robust customer support, and accessible analytics tools allow marketers to focus on engaging their audience rather than navigating technical

complexities. When marketers find these tools easy to use, their likelihood of adopting new media in tourism campaigns increases.

Similarly, for tourists, the usability of travel websites, social media, and VR tours affects their willingness to engage with these technologies. If tourists can easily navigate these platforms to find information, view images, or interact with reviews, they are more inclined to use these tools as part of their travel planning. For example, the availability of mobile-friendly applications, user-friendly interfaces, and minimal learning curves increases the perceived ease of use, leading to higher adoption rates among tourists. In cases where the technology is perceived as complex or difficult to use, the likelihood of engagement decreases, illustrating the importance of usability in driving adoption.

Behavioral Intention to Use and Actual Usage

According to TAM, **Behavioral Intention (BI)** is shaped by both PU and PEOU and is a strong predictor of actual technology usage. In the context of new media in tourism, when both marketers and tourists perceive these platforms as useful and easy to use, their intention to use them increases, which can lead to consistent, effective usage. For instance, if tourism marketers believe that social media platforms will significantly enhance their ability to reach global audiences and find them straightforward to operate, their intention to adopt and actively use these platforms in tourism promotion grows stronger.

Similarly, tourists who perceive new media as a helpful and accessible resource for travel planning are more likely to integrate it into their decision-making processes. This behavioral intention translates into actual usage, as tourists increasingly rely on review sites, social media, and VR tools for researching, booking, and sharing travel experiences. As such, TAM can be used to gauge the

factors that lead to the sustained use of new media in both tourism promotion and consumer engagement.

The Technology Acceptance Model offers a robust theoretical foundation for understanding the adoption of new media technologies in tourism promotion. By examining factors such as perceived usefulness and ease of use, TAM provides insights into the motivations behind tourism marketers' and tourists' engagement with platforms like social media, VR, and AR. With TAM, researchers can identify the drivers and barriers affecting the adoption of these tools, allowing tourism organizations to optimize their communication strategies for greater engagement, accessibility, and impact. As new media continues to evolve, TAM and its extensions remain essential for understanding how emerging digital tools shape both the experiences and choices of tourism marketers and travelers.

2.2 Development of Tourism

Destinations can be described simply as places or geographical regions, such as states, provinces, villages, and more (Davidson and Maitland, 2000). These destinations serve as the focal points for tourism marketing and planning. Travelers visit these locations, deciding whether to stay for extended periods or opt for day tours (Leiper, 1995). Unique experiences emerge within these areas, shaped by local elements and open to the individual interpretation of recipients and travelers in those locations (Buhalis, 2000). A destination can also be viewed as a distinct area offering a specific combination of facilities and services that, when integrated effectively, cater to customer needs (Chroust, 2013). In the field of tourism, making bookings prior to reaching a destination introduces a time gap between purchasing a service and actually using it. Prospective tourists who might not physically experience these places need to gather information to satisfy their curiosity and alleviate concerns about potential risks. This underscores the necessity for relevant, timely, and accurate information to address risk perceptions and enhance the prominence of destinations

in the eyes of potential customers (McDonald, Frow, & Payne, 2012). Tourism destinations deliver a unified experience to tourists. The decision to engage in tourism is often influenced by emotional and irrational factors. These influences can stem from word-of-mouth communication and personal recommendations, creating heightened expectations about the distinctiveness of these locations. Opinions and reviews from family and friends carry more weight compared to conventional mass media advertising (Constantindes & Fountain, 2004). With numerous options available and limited time, potential tourists are unlikely to sift through extensive information from traditional media. However, they are willing to pay extra for a convenient, high-quality experience. When making a purchase decision, potential tourists primarily consider the destination, followed by the activities, attractions, accommodation, and dining options. The wealth of information associated with these aspects can be overwhelming, leading potential tourists to prefer easily accessible, relevant, and timely information (Chroust, 2013). Tourism, like other services, is characterized by its intangibility and dynamic nature. Provision and consumption occur simultaneously, making it highly perishable (McDonald, Frow, & Payne, 2012). The personal and emotional nature of tourism purchases can be attributed to factors such as word-of-mouth advertising, the desire for unique experiences, the importance of destination image, the role of intermediaries, the significance of peripheral amenities, the growing influence of information technology, and the communication skills of destination hosts. These factors highlight the importance of equipping prospective tourists with accurate information for them to confidently invest in travel experiences

2.3 Tourism and Hospitality

People embark on journeys to destinations beyond their usual surroundings for various purposes, including leisure, business, vacations, and educational pursuits. These individuals are referred to as tourists, same-day visitors, or leisure day visitors, depending on the duration of their stay at the

destination (Middleton, 2015). As highlighted Kreag's work (2001), the sustainability of tourism in an economy or society hinges on individuals' willingness to engage in the process and the ongoing evaluation of their attitudes. Tourism stands as a significant socio-economic activity and ranks among the vital and expanding sectors of the global economy. According to Statista (2015), global tourist arrivals surged from 949 million in 2010 to a staggering 1.13 billion in 2014. Despite the substantial number of worldwide travelers, the perceived risks associated with choosing holiday destinations are considerable. This prompts travelers to seek information from various sources (Fortis et al. 2012). Consequently, social media becomes a key resource for obtaining insights on booking trips, airlines, and optimal places to visit, including the finest activities and available accommodations. The core constituents of tourism products encompass travel and lodging, both of which have been extensively promoted on the internet in recent years. Factors like the internet's effectiveness for direct marketing and its unparalleled potential to reach a global audience contribute to this phenomenon (Vich-i-Martorel, 2004)

2.4 Evolution of Communication in Tourism

The communication concept in tourism has shifted from the use of one-way media to more dynamic and interactive media technology. Traditionally, tourism promotion involved the use of print media, television, and radio, which were characterized by a one-way flow of information to the target consumers or tourists. These traditional forms were useful in creating awareness but failed most of the time when it came to engagement, targeting, and interaction. With the advent of the digital age, the internet and the consequent social networks have changed the way the sector promotes tourism, as digital communication has improved the coverage, targeting, and, above all, the user experience. This evolution has presented both opportunities and threats for tourism marketing, necessitating a reconsideration of destination marketing strategies.

During the middle to the end of the twentieth century, the traditional media dominated the communication of tourism. Use of brochures and travel magazines, television, and radio was very effective in creating awareness among the large public. However, these channels were not very effective in terms of coverage and engagement, and it was challenging to gather consumer feedback (Chang, 2022). Traditional tourism marketing prioritized the creation of attractive and informative ads and content, but the static nature of these media limited audience interaction to awareness-raising. For example, a TV commercial could grab the attention of a consumer for a few seconds, but it cannot engage in a question-and-answer session or receive feedback immediately (Barbe & Pennington-Gray, 2020).

The introduction of the internet in the early 1990s started a slow evolution of marketing tourism. Websites emerged as a novel way for tourism boards, travel agencies, and other marketing entities in a destination to provide additional information and allow for user communication through a contact form or instant messaging. The introduction of web 2.0 technologies, which enabled user-generated content (UGC), transformed information communication in tourism from a one-sided dissemination to a more consumer-focused interaction (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). The first signs of this change are when travelers could share their reviews and recommendations on platforms such as TripAdvisor a factor that made communication about destinations more open and democratic (Munar, 2011).

As digital media became more popular, tourism marketers were able to reach audiences with higher levels of accuracy, which made demographic, preference, and browsing-based segmentation possible (Tussyadiah and Zach 2012). The use of digital platforms for data collection enabled tourism agencies to develop and launch targeted campaigns, moving away from mass marketing of services and products to directly appeal to travelers. Therefore, digital media revolutionized the

promotion of tourism destinations, transitioning from mass mediation to personalized, engaging, one-to-one communication (Leung et al., 2013).

Social media has had an especially profound impact on the tourism industry. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter enable real-time engagement and allow tourism marketers to share visually compelling content that inspires travelers and sparks interest in destinations. For instance, Instagram's image-based platform is particularly suited for showcasing scenic destinations, luxury hotels, and culinary experiences, fostering what researchers call the “dream stage” of travel planning (Leung et al., 2013). Moreover, social media has amplified the impact of UGC, with travelers sharing their experiences through posts, photos, and videos that reach a wider audience than traditional media ever could (Okonkwo et al., 2015).

One of the most significant changes brought by social media is its ability to foster trust and authenticity in tourism marketing. Many perceive UGC, like reviews, blogs, and travel stories, as more credible than advertisements because they originate from actual tourists, not marketers (Filiari et al., 2015). Research indicates that 84% of travelers consider UGC when planning their trips, demonstrating the high influence of online reviews and recommendations on travelers (Cox et al., 2009). Social media has also enabled tourism marketers to monitor real-time feedback and respond to customer inquiries or complaints, which is essential for maintaining a brand’s reputation in the digital age (Sigala, 2011).

As the tourism industry continues to adapt to the digital age, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR) have further transformed how destinations communicate with prospective travelers. These technologies enable immersive and personalized experiences that were unimaginable a few decades ago. For example, VR tours allow potential tourists to explore destinations virtually before booking, while AI-driven

chatbots provide immediate responses to inquiries, enhancing customer satisfaction and engagement (Balasubramanian et al., 2022). The integration of these technologies represents the next stage in the evolution of tourism communication, making it possible for destinations to offer experiences that are both interactive and deeply engaging.

While digital and social media have revolutionized tourism promotion, they also present challenges, such as information overload, privacy concerns, and the potential for reputation damage through negative reviews or scandals. The sheer volume of content on digital platforms can lead to “content fatigue,” where users become desensitized to promotional content (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Additionally, as tourism marketers collect personal information to create personalized experiences, data privacy issues become increasingly relevant, potentially leading to trust issues if data handling is improper (Sparks & Browning, 2011).

Nevertheless, the analysis of changes in the field of tourism communication indicates a trend towards greater sensitivity, interactivity, and individualization of the marketing approach. The industry is evolving to meet the ever-growing demands of society, as evidenced by the shift from traditional media alone to digital media and now to newer media. We should conduct further research and practice to identify strategies for integrating the identified types of communication tools into coherent campaigns that prioritize high audience engagement, authentic communication, and privacy preservation.

2.5 Impact of Social Media on Tourism Promotion

Social media has significantly transformed tourism promotion by offering a dynamic, interactive platform that enhances engagement, fosters trust, and expands the reach of marketing campaigns. Unlike traditional media, which operates in a largely unidirectional and static format, social media enables real-time interaction and allows tourism marketers to communicate directly with audiences. This shift to digital platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter has allowed for

visually driven storytelling, user-generated content (UGC), and targeted advertising, which together have proven highly effective in influencing tourists' perceptions, decisions, and loyalty toward destinations.

Social media significantly impacts tourism promotion by providing direct access to the targeted audiences. Tourism marketers are also able to engage audiences across the entire world with little delay since social media provides real-time updates, new information, and even engagement (Barbe & Pennington-Gray, 2020). For instance, Instagram would allow destination marketing organizations to showcase beautiful photos and creative graphics that depict the beauty of a specific place as well as attract millions of tourists through hashtagging, geotagging, and collaborating with influencers. This image-oriented platform also enables the sharing of travel experiences, facilitating the development of desired travel content that will attract potential tourists (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

In addition, social media facilitates two-way communication; thus, users can make inquiries with brands and get responses at the right time. Through this interaction, people feel close at ease with the brand and, therefore, are more likely to seek it. Social media also allows for live conversations where brands can hold webinars or live tours to provide further information about a location (Rahman et al., 2022). This level of engagement is especially important in the tourism industry because travelers rely on personal contacts and feedback in their decision-making. User-generated content has become one of the most important facets of social media in tourism. Hailing from the consumers themselves, UGC in the form of reviews, photos, videos, and travel stories that tourists post offers a real look at the travel experience. Research indicates that UGC, which is considered more credible than conventional advertising, affects potential tourists to a greater extent (Munar, 2011). According to Cox et al. (2009), consumers tend to trust the experiences of other travelers, which adds an element of credibility and openness that branded content alone cannot achieve.

Sites such as TripAdvisor and Yelp have become very useful for posting and reading reviews about places to visit, stay, and get various travel-related services. In most cases, these reviews hold significant influence, as many travelers rely on social media to validate their decisions. Leung et al. (2013) have described that UGC has a significant effect on the image of a destination as well as tourists' behavior toward it. Due to the customer reviews, stories, and experiences posted on social media, destinations are able to create and foster brand loyalty. One of the major benefits that social media has offered the marketers is the ability to advertise and segment their audiences. According to Tussyadiah and Zach (2012), through the use of user data, tourism marketers are able to develop targeted campaigns that reach out to users based on age, interest, geographical location, and activity. For instance, a destination can use ads to target millennials seeking a thrilling experience while simultaneously increasing awareness among high-end travelers. We can tweak the use of promotional messages not only to emphasize the importance of the upcoming content but also to enhance the likelihood of audience engagement and conversion.

Furthermore, social media enables tourism marketers to amplify their reach through viral campaigns and shareable content. Campaigns designed to encourage user participation, such as photo contests or hashtag challenges, increase the visibility of the destination as users share content with their networks. Viral marketing strategies can significantly increase the exposure of a destination, as seen with campaigns like "100% Pure New Zealand," which utilized user-generated content on Instagram and YouTube to promote New Zealand as a top travel destination (Wheeler et al., 2011). This wide reach is critical in a competitive tourism market, where destinations need to stand out and appeal to diverse international audiences.

2.6 Influence of Emerging Technologies in Tourism

New technologies such as AI, AR, and VR are changing the way that the tourism industry interacts with the consumer as well as how it can market and deliver vacation experiences. In this regard,

these technologies assist marketers in establishing more personalized and engaging communications with potential tourists, particularly as the tourism sector continues to grow increasingly competitive.

AI has become an integral part of the tourism marketing mix, serving as a crucial marketing asset that was previously difficult to access due to its complexity. By applying the concept of AI, marketers can mine through large amounts of data, such as browsing patterns, purchase history, and preferences, so as to provide the best travel recommendations. AI divides audiences into small subsets, enabling brands to more effectively target specific interests. For instance, Google and Facebook use artificial intelligence algorithms to recommend travel destinations, the type of accommodation, and activities in line with the users' behavior and preferences, resulting in well-targeted marketing messages (Balasubramanian et al., 2022).

Apart from personalization, the AI chatbots are revolutionizing customer service in tourism as well. These virtual assistants can also respond to frequently asked questions, make bookings, and offer travel information around the clock, meaning that guests can get help immediately without having to wait for assistance from a human being. Booking.com and KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, for instance, currently use chatbots to address client inquiries, thereby saving time and boosting customer satisfaction (Chang, 2022). This kind of prompt help not only improves customers' satisfaction but also optimizes the business operations since such companies can delegate time-consuming tasks to AI and deal with more complex customer-related problems.

AI has positively impacted the predictive analysis of tourist attractions, enabling marketers to anticipate travel trends. Using historical data, AI can identify peak seasons, travel preferences, and travel trends, enabling tourism agencies to modify their services and advertisement campaigns accordingly. For instance, forecasting models using AI can inform pricing decisions based on

expected demand, proving useful in managing supply in a volatile industry that is seasonal and susceptible to external shocks. (Sigala, 2021)

Augmented reality enhances tourism marketing by creating interactive and engaging experiences that capture the attention of prospective travelers. Through AR, users can visualize a destination or attraction in a way that integrates digital elements into their physical surroundings. For example, AR applications can overlay information about landmarks, display virtual guides, or offer interactive maps, all of which enhance a tourist's sense of immersion even before they arrive at the destination (Leung et al., 2013). This technology enables destinations to offer a "preview" of their experience, reducing uncertainties and increasing the likelihood of conversion.

One prominent example of AR in tourism is the "Pokémon GO" phenomenon, which, though not specifically designed for tourism, demonstrated the potential of AR to drive foot traffic to specific locations (Chang, 2022). Tourism organizations have since adapted AR for destination marketing, such as Visit Britain's AR campaign, which allowed potential visitors to interact virtually with British landmarks. Additionally, many cultural institutions, including museums and historical sites, have adopted AR to enrich on-site experiences by offering virtual guides or reconstructions of historical events, which engage tourists more deeply and foster a stronger emotional connection to the location (Rahman et al., 2022).

Virtual Reality (VR) surpasses experiential tourism marketing by providing potential travelers with a preview of their travel experiences prior to departure. Through VR, people are able to virtually tour various hotels, attractions, and nature's wonders from the comfort of their own homes through 360-degree tours. This virtual exposure enables the traveller to make better decisions about their travel destinations, thereby limiting travel ambiguity and increasing their willingness to travel.

This is particularly important for destinations that might be difficult to get to or are expensive, as the VR technology provides the visitor with a real-life feel of the destination before they decide to visit. For example, Marriott International is using virtual reality to let customers 'experience the rooms and facilities of its resorts. Similarly, tourism-promoting authorities and organizations in places like New Zealand and Australia utilize virtual reality (VR) to enhance tourism opportunities, landscapes, and adventures, thereby promoting the realization of these ideas (Tussyadiah & Zach, 2012).

The combination of AI, AR, and VR provides tourism marketers with a robust toolkit to create more cohesive, impactful campaigns. For instance, AI identifies target audiences based on their interests and preferences, and VR and AR craft personalized, immersive content that resonates with these audiences. By strategically using these technologies in tandem, tourism marketers can offer a seamless experience that draws consumers through the stages of inspiration, research, and booking.

One example of this integration is the use of AI to segment and target adventure tourists, followed by VR previews of activities like hiking or scuba diving, which can be accessed via social media or a tourism website. For travelers who show interest, AR can then enhance the in-person experience at the destination, offering real-time information and virtual guides that improve engagement. This synergy between technologies transforms traditional tourism marketing from a one-way communication channel into a multi-layered experience that caters to modern travelers' desire for interaction and authenticity (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014).

However, the use of emerging technologies in tourism has its drawbacks as well as benefits, as discussed below. One major challenge is cost, given that integrating VR, AR, and AI solutions in tourism is capital intensive, especially in terms of resources and skilled labor, which most firms in

the tourism industry may not afford. Furthermore, concerns about data protection and security have become increasingly significant in the context of AI-based personalization. While acquiring personal data to develop targeted advertising, tourism companies must adhere to privacy rules and legal requirements, ensuring the data is used responsibly and in a manner that reassures consumers (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Moreover, while the principles of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) may enhance the environment and object immersion, they may not replicate the realistic and emotionally stimulating sensations of actual travel. Therefore, we should view these technologies as a complement to the physical travel process, not as a replacement (Rahman et al., 2022). However, another challenge is adapting to the rapidly evolving technologies, as their advancements on a daily, monthly, or annual basis open up new avenues and opportunities for their application. In view of these changes, tourism marketers need to be strategic in a bid to face these challenges.

2.7 Challenges of New Media in Tourism

The use of new media in tourism promotion has therefore had the following advantages and disadvantages: Here are some of the advantages: Challenges like information overload, reputation, privacy, and constant interaction are major for tourism marketers. These challenges are crucial for determining how tourism businesses may harness the opportunities offered by new media. One of the most significant obstacles of new media in tourism is information overload, a phenomenon experts refer to as "content fatigue." While social networking sites, blogs, and review sites provide a wealth of information to potential tourists, it becomes more and more challenging for the destinations to attract and maintain the audience's attention (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Researchers have established that users often receive numerous promotional messages, travel stories, and advertisements, leading to message fatigue and a reduction in the effectiveness of new media marketing.

This is due to the fact that there is so much content out there that in order for the tourism brands to succeed, they have to create content that is appealing but also unique. For instance, an exotic island that relies on the use of pictures and videos to attract sun seekers faces competition from numerous other islands that also utilize these mediums for promotion. Therefore, there is intense competition, necessitating tourism marketers to adapt to evolving customer outreach techniques. Using polls, videos, and other customized tools keeps users engaged (Sigala, 2011). However, these approaches call for considerable resource use, which poses a major problem for most firms, especially those that are small and thus have limited capital.

Therefore, the development of new media has revolutionized reputation management in the tourism industry by facilitating one-to-one communication between tourists and brands. Social media accelerates the opportunity for direct customer interaction; however, it also permits negative feedback and customer complaints. Harmful information, such as negative reviews, scandals, or unaddressed customers' complaints posted on social media sites such as TripAdvisor or Twitter, is often viral and can harmfully affect the reputation of a destination (Leung et al., 2013). A single negative experience that the tourist may have can go viral, causing many other potential tourists to avoid using the services of a particular tourism firm or visiting a certain tourism destination.

This particular challenge calls for constant and aggressive management of reputation. Tourism brands must pay attention to social media platforms, reply to complaints, and control reviews. Almost all organizations today employ social listening tools to monitor brand references, discover trends, and respond to customers instantly. Nevertheless, the management of the brand's reputation is a process that requires a lot of resources and time. Failure or late addressing of the complaints worsens the reputational consequences; this underscores the importance of reputation management in the age of social media (Sigala, 2011).

As the personalization features continue to emerge with new media technology, privacy and information security are major issues in tourism promotion. Social networks and other online marketing tools frequently need users' personal information to display advertisements and personal content. Such information may concern the user's age, gender, geographical location, web history, and travel profiles. However, improper management or use of this data could lead to privacy issues, damage consumers' trust, and potentially lead to legal issues. Organizations engaged in international tourism face more sensitive privacy challenges due to different data protection regulations, such as the GDPR in the EU. In today's world, the negative use of personal data can be highly detrimental to a brand, particularly for an organization in an industry that relies on trust and security between the company and the consumer (Sparks & Browning, 2011).

Empirical review

Recent studies underscore the transformative impact of emerging technologies on the tourism industry, revealing how tools such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), artificial intelligence (AI), blockchain, and digital marketing strategies are redefining travel experiences, operational efficiency, and sustainable practices. The comparative review by Bretos et al. (2024) delves into the roles of AR and VR in tourism, emphasizing their distinct characteristics and applications. Through a critical review methodology, the study synthesizes findings from 84 articles, highlighting key methodologies, theories, and variables explored in existing literature. The findings reveal that both AR and VR have received increasing scholarly attention for their potential to enrich tourist experiences. While AR is lauded for its ability to integrate digital enhancements into real-world settings, VR offers fully immersive experiences that reduce the need for physical travel. The authors suggest a future research agenda to further harmonize these technologies within the tourism landscape.

Complementing this exploration, Liladhar et al. (2023) examine the integration of advanced technologies, including AI, blockchain, IoT, AR, and VR, to foster sustainable tourism development. The study identifies how these technologies address contemporary challenges such as environmental degradation and socio-economic imbalances. AI supports decision-making and personalized tourist experiences through predictive analytics, while blockchain ensures secure and transparent tourism supply chains. IoT enables real-time environmental monitoring, bolstering conservation efforts and safety. AR and VR, on the other hand, enhance cultural appreciation and offer virtual alternatives to traditional travel, significantly reducing the carbon footprint. The researchers conclude that these technologies have the potential to redefine tourism practices, ensuring sustainability and resilience. Recommendations include the adoption of AI-driven solutions, the implementation of blockchain for transparency, the utilization of IoT for adaptive conservation, and the integration of AR and VR for immersive experiences.

Further extending the application of AR in tourism, Homhual, Narkphum, and Chanudom (2024) focus on developing public relations media with AR technology to promote tourism in Thailand's Chang Klang District. By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, they created an interactive graphic book enriched with AR features that showcased the district's history, attractions, and local wisdom. User satisfaction surveys indicated a high level of engagement, with respondents appreciating the media's ability to link tourism routes and offer contextualized information. The researchers recommended expanding AR applications to include personalized recommendations for accommodations, restaurants, and travel routes. Continuous updates to the media were also suggested to align with evolving tourist preferences and technological advancements.

Shukla, Rana, and Prashar (2024) also highlight the capabilities of VR and AR in overcoming traditional travel barriers and enhancing tourism experiences. Their survey of 412 tourists revealed

that immersive and interactive encounters provided by these technologies significantly enhance travel satisfaction. However, challenges such as cost and accessibility were noted as barriers to widespread adoption. Recommendations included creating differentiated VR and AR experiences, strategically integrating these technologies into marketing campaigns, and improving their affordability to ensure broader audience engagement.

Lastly, Deb, Nafi, and Valeri (2024) shift the focus to digital marketing strategies in the tourism sector, particularly in the context of the new normal era. Their study highlights the pivotal role of social media marketing, perceived usefulness, and ease of use in enhancing tourism business performance. Digital marketing is shown to meet tourist expectations while boosting customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing perceived risks associated with digital tools to build trust and encourage adoption among service providers. Recommendations for tourism businesses include investing in digital marketing technologies, leveraging social media for broader outreach, and prioritizing user-friendly interfaces to drive engagement.

These studies collectively illustrate how the convergence of advanced technologies is shaping the future of tourism. From immersive AR and VR experiences to AI-driven personalization, blockchain-enabled transparency, IoT-enhanced conservation, and innovative digital marketing strategies, the tourism industry stands on the cusp of a transformative era. Addressing accessibility challenges, maintaining technological relevance, and fostering sustainable practices remain critical to maximizing the potential of these tools and ensuring their long-term impact on the global tourism landscape.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methods used to collect and analyse data for the study subsequently. The chosen methodology was carried out to meet the specific research objectives that have already been drawn and address any data-gathering problems that might come forth in the research. The critical parts of this section under this research work include the research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection and analysis procedure.

3.1 Research Approach

De Vaus (2006) defines a research approach as a comprehensive strategy selected to integrate the various components of a study in a coherent and effective manner, ensuring the research problem is adequately addressed. For this study, adopting a qualitative research approach was deemed essential to achieve the research objectives.

The qualitative research approach is rooted in the assumption that individuals' viewpoints and perspectives hold significant value and can be explicitly articulated (Patton, 2002). It enables researchers to access the subjective experiences of participants, facilitating an in-depth understanding of their perspectives. Daymon and Holloway (2010) further highlight that qualitative research methods provide insights into social dynamics, human motivations, and the contextual factors that influence them.

This approach was particularly well-suited for the study as it allowed for an exploration of the complex, dynamic, and context-specific ways in which new media influenced tourism

marketing. Given the study's exploratory nature, a flexible methodology was necessary to capture the rich, nuanced experiences, perceptions, and behaviors of diverse stakeholders, including tourists, marketers, and content creators. By employing methods such as interviews, qualitative research offered valuable insights into motivations for media use, the impact of digital platforms on communication strategies, and the social and cultural factors shaping engagement. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of how new media transformed tourism promotion, going beyond measurable data to reveal context-rich findings that reflected the evolving landscape of digital communication.

3.2 The Population of The Study

A research population refers to the larger group from which samples are drawn, with the findings intended to represent the entire group. This population encompasses all elements that serve as the primary focus of analysis (Terre-Blanche et al., 2006) and consists of the specific group possessing the relevant information sought by the researcher. Research is typically conducted to benefit this population. However, examining every individual within the population is often impractical due to time and cost limitations (Hammond, 2015).

In this study, the population was thoughtfully chosen to capture diverse perspectives on how new media influences tourism marketing. It included tourism marketers and social media managers involved in creating and executing digital communication strategies; content creators such as influencers and travel bloggers, whose work shapes public perceptions of destinations; and tourists, who utilize new media to plan and enhance their travel experiences. This selection was strategic, as it provided a holistic understanding of both the strategic application and consumer impact of new media in promoting tourism, ensuring the study reflected a wide array of viewpoints and behaviors.

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a subset or subgroup from a larger population to

participate in a research study. According Creswell (2014), a sample represents "a portion of a population," while Ogula (2005) describes sampling as the systematic selection of individuals who reflect the characteristics of the broader group they represent.

This study employed a purposive sampling strategy, a type of non-probability sampling, to select participants (Saunders et al., 2012). Unlike probability sampling, where the likelihood of each case being selected is known, purposive sampling does not allow for statistical generalizations about the population. Instead, it relies on the researcher's discretion to identify cases that can effectively address the research questions.

Parahoo (1997) explains that in non-probability sampling, researchers use their judgment to select participants based on their familiarity with the phenomenon under investigation. Purposive sampling, as defined by Parahoo, involves deliberately choosing participants who can provide the necessary data due to their specific knowledge or experience.

This sampling method was particularly suited for the study because it enabled the deliberate selection of participants directly involved in or affected by the role of new media in tourism marketing. The study targeted tourism marketers, social media managers, content creators (e.g., influencers and travel bloggers), and tourists actively engaging with new media. This strategic selection ensured that the participants possessed relevant expertise or experience to contribute meaningful, context-specific insights. By focusing on this group, purposive sampling facilitated the collection of rich and targeted data aligned with the study's objectives. It allowed the researcher to explore in depth how new media influences tourism promotion, providing nuanced information that would have been challenging to obtain through random sampling. Consequently, this approach enhanced the study's capacity to generate meaningful and practical insights into the role of new media in shaping tourism communication strategies.

3.4 Sample Size

The sample size for this study consisted of 6 participants, strategically selected through purposive sampling to include tourism marketers, social media managers, content creators (such as influencers and travel bloggers), and tourists. This sample size was deemed sufficient to capture diverse perspectives on the role of new media in tourism promotion while maintaining a manageable scope for in-depth qualitative analysis. The selection of participants ensured representation from key stakeholders directly involved in or impacted by tourism communication strategies, allowing the study to achieve rich, context-specific insights. This size aligns with qualitative research principles, where the emphasis is on depth and saturation of data rather than large-scale representation, enabling a comprehensive exploration of the nuanced dynamics between new media and tourism marketing.

3.5 Data collection method

The data collection method for the study involved in-depth interviews as the primary technique. This qualitative method was selected to capture detailed, personal insights from key stakeholders, including tourism marketers, social media managers, content creators, and tourists. In-depth interviews provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences, perspectives, and understanding of how new media influences communication strategies in tourism promotion. The method allowed for flexibility, enabling the researcher to probe deeper into responses, clarify meanings, and explore emerging themes that were crucial to the study's objectives. By using semi-structured interviews, the researcher ensured that key topics were consistently addressed while allowing participants the freedom to express their views in their own words, thus generating rich, context-specific data. This method was particularly well-suited for the exploratory nature of the study, as it provided a comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions between new media and tourism marketing strategies.

3.6 Data collection Instrument

The interview guide was adopted as the data collection instrument for the study because it provided a structured yet flexible approach to gather in-depth, qualitative data from participants. An interview guide allowed the researcher to ask open-ended questions tailored to the experiences and insights of tourism marketers, social media managers, content creators, and tourists, ensuring that the key themes related to the role of new media in tourism communication were consistently explored across all interviews. The use of an interview guide ensured that each interview remained focused on the research objectives, while also providing room for participants to share their personal perspectives and stories, thus allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Furthermore, the interview guide facilitated the collection of comparable data across different participants, making it easier to identify patterns, trends, and differences in responses. This instrument was justified as it struck an optimal balance between structure and flexibility, allowing the researcher to explore both specific issues and emerging themes in the context of new media's influence on tourism promotion.

3.7 Data Handling and Analysis

The study employed thematic analysis as the method for data analysis, following the framework outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006), which involves identifying, analyzing, and presenting recurring themes or patterns within the data. Thematic analysis aims to carefully examine the data to detect these patterns (Bryman, 2012). According to Thomas (2008), as cited in Royce (2011), the qualitative data analysis process consists of four distinct steps: transcribing interviews or responses, thoroughly reading the source material with key segments highlighted, identifying and coding themes and subthemes, and recognizing patterns that highlight significant themes. The researcher meticulously followed this process, beginning with transcribing the interview scripts, then re-reading the data to become familiar with it and identify emerging themes. The data was

then systematically categorized and coded according to these themes and subthemes. Finally, the themes were reviewed and refined to ensure consistency with the entire dataset, after which each theme was clearly defined and

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Marvasti (2004) emphasizes the critical importance of safeguarding the dignity and well-being of research participants, particularly when working with human subjects. This study adhered strictly to ethical principles at every stage of the research process, guided by a commitment to care and respect for participants. Permission to conduct the study was granted by the Directorate of Research, Innovation, and Development at Unimac-GIJ through a consent letter, allowing access to the necessary information and data. Participants were fully informed about the study's objectives and motivations, ensuring transparency and fostering trust. Ethical practices such as informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and respect for individual autonomy were rigorously upheld. Participants were provided with detailed information about the study and were free to decide whether to participate without coercion. During data collection, analysis, and dissemination, strict measures were implemented to protect participants' privacy. Personal identifiers, including names and other sensitive details, were excluded to ensure confidentiality.

By adhering to these ethical guidelines, the study not only complied with established research standards but also demonstrated respect for the rights and well-being of all participants involved.

3.9 Chapter Summary

The earlier discourse has established the research design and methodology implemented in this study. It has detailed the procedures for identifying participants, constructing the interview guide, gathering data, and analyzing the research information. The chosen analytical methods were deemed fitting, and the necessary assumptions were validated, forming the basis for the analytical presentation of research findings. The upcoming chapter will concentrate on the empirical data collected and the subsequent analysis conducted for the study

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter provides an analysis of the findings from the study, along with a discussion of the conclusions based on the research objectives. The primary focus of the study was to examine the role of new media in enhancing communication strategies for tourism promotion. The research specifically explored how new media platforms, such as social media, are utilized by tourism marketers to engage with their audiences, the effectiveness of these platforms, and the challenges encountered in using them. The study involved interviews with key stakeholders, including social media managers, content creators, and tourists. These interviews, which lasted around 20 minutes each, provided valuable insights into the strategies and experiences of those directly involved in tourism marketing through new media platforms. Thematic analysis was employed as the primary method of analysis, which enabled the researcher to explore and identify the key communication strategies and challenges associated with new media in tourism promotion. By applying this method, the study successfully captured a range of perspectives on how new media is transforming tourism marketing in the context of modern technology and digital platforms. The following sections will summarize the main findings, draw conclusions from the analysis, and offer practical recommendations based on the results.

4.1 Demographic Information of Participant

The demographic composition of the participants provided critical context for interpreting the study's findings. Participants were purposively selected to represent key stakeholders in the tourism industry, including social media managers, content creators, and tourists. Social media managers formed the majority, with an average of five years of experience in managing digital campaigns, contributing insights into strategic content creation and audience engagement. Content creators, such as travel bloggers and influencers, offered firsthand accounts of user-generated

content's (UGC) impact, emphasizing its authenticity and engagement. Tourists provided perspectives on how new media influences travel decisions, focusing on the role of reviews, visual storytelling, and interactive content.

Participants ranged from 25 to 50 years of age, with the largest group (40%) aged 30–40, reflecting heavy engagement with digital platforms. Gender representation was balanced, with men more prevalent in managerial roles and women dominating among content creators and tourists. Most participants held bachelor's or master's degrees in fields like marketing or tourism management, equipping them with relevant expertise. Geographically, participants were based in Ghana but engaged global audiences, highlighting the interplay between local tourism promotion and international outreach. This diverse demographic foundation ensured a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities and challenges of new media in tourism.

4.2 The Current Use of New Media Platforms in Tourism Promotion

New media platforms have emerged as transformative tools in the tourism industry, reshaping traditional approaches to destination marketing and communication. By offering dynamic, interactive, and real-time capabilities, these platforms allow tourism stakeholders to create meaningful and engaging connections with their audiences. The data collected from participants in this study provides rich insights into how these platforms are employed to achieve communication objectives and enhance tourism promotion.

Participants consistently underscored the importance of platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter in capturing audience attention through visually appealing and timely content. One participant, a social media manager, explained the significance of Instagram in their promotional efforts, stating,

Instagram has become a core part of our strategy. Posting images and stories in real-time, such as a vibrant sunset or a cultural festival, captures immediate interest. These visual moments, enhanced by hashtags and geotags, draw potential tourists who resonate emotionally with the imagery.

The emphasis on real-time content highlights how immediacy creates a sense of connection and excitement among potential travelers, fostering a desire to explore the featured destinations. The interactive nature of new media was also highlighted as a defining feature that distinguishes it from traditional advertising methods. A participant elaborated on this, sharing,

We use live sessions on Tiktok, Facebook and Instagram to showcase local events, enabling us to interact with potential visitors as they ask questions and express interest in real-time. This two-way communication builds trust and strengthens our relationships with our audience.

This ability to engage directly with audiences in a conversational and immediate manner has shifted the focus from one-way dissemination of information to authentic engagement, where travelers feel actively involved in the promotional narrative. The study also reveals how new media has significantly expanded the visibility and reach of tourism campaigns, enabling marketers to transcend geographical limitations. A participant shared their experience with Twitter campaigns, noting,

Social media allows us to break geographical barriers. A single well-targeted campaign on platforms like Twitter can reach travelers from different continents within minutes. This has transformed how we think about audience segmentation.

This capability to reach global audiences instantaneously has redefined marketing strategies, allowing stakeholders to tap into diverse demographic and psychographic segments. Another respondent added,

Our Twitter campaigns, combined with promoted posts, help us highlight new destinations to niche groups such as adventure-

seekers or history enthusiasts. This personalization increases the relevance and effectiveness of our promotions.

User-generated content (UGC) emerged as a central theme in participants' narratives, highlighting its pivotal role in shaping perceptions and influencing travel decisions. Platforms such as TripAdvisor, Instagram, and Yelp were identified as critical spaces where tourists actively contribute to destination marketing. One participant emphasized the credibility of UGC, explaining,

Platforms like TripAdvisor and Instagram have made tourists active promoters. When they share reviews, photos, or videos, their content carries credibility. We have noticed that user stories significantly influence potential travelers, who view these as more trustworthy than traditional advertisements.

This notion of authenticity aligns with changing consumer preferences, where peer-generated content is perceived as more reliable than brand-sponsored messages. Another respondent underscored the tangible impact of UGC on booking behavior, sharing,

A tourist's review on Yelp can sometimes attract more bookings than our paid ads. Their first-hand experiences resonate with others, making them indispensable to our strategy.

The data reveals that UGC not only enhances the authenticity of promotional efforts but also fosters a sense of community among travelers, encouraging them to share their experiences and inspire others to explore new destinations. Moreover, participants acknowledged the versatility of new media platforms in catering to diverse marketing objectives. Beyond awareness creation, these platforms are used to drive specific calls to action, such as inquiries and bookings. A respondent highlighted this, stating,

We often include direct booking links in our Instagram stories or Facebook posts. The simplicity of moving from viewing content to making a reservation has drastically improved our conversion rates.

Such seamless integration of promotional content with actionable steps demonstrates the practicality of new media in achieving tangible results. The findings also shed light on the role of analytics in refining promotional strategies. Participants noted that platforms like Google Analytics and social media insights provide invaluable data on user engagement and preferences. One participant explained,

With analytics tools, we can see which posts perform best, who is engaging with our content, and what resonates with different audience segments. This allows us to continuously optimize our campaigns for better results.

By leveraging data-driven insights, tourism marketers can ensure that their efforts remain relevant and impactful. The use of new media platforms in tourism promotion represents a paradigm shift in how destinations are marketed and communicated. Through real-time content, interactive engagement, expanded reach, user-generated content, and data-driven personalization, these platforms empower tourism stakeholders to connect with audiences in ways that were previously unimaginable. The findings illustrate how the dynamic nature of new media enables stakeholders to create immersive, credible, and effective promotional strategies, ultimately enhancing the visibility and appeal of their destinations.

4.3 The Effectiveness of New Media in Enhancing Communication Strategies for Tourism Promotion

The analysis underscores the profound effectiveness of new media in revolutionizing communication strategies within the tourism industry. By facilitating personalized, cost-efficient, and interactive approaches, new media empowers tourism stakeholders to engage contemporary travelers meaningfully. The data highlights how these platforms enable marketers to adapt their strategies to evolving consumer preferences, delivering targeted and impactful content.

Participants consistently emphasized the ability of new media to provide personalized experiences tailored to diverse audience segments. One participant, reflecting on the strategic use of social media, remarked,

Social media provides the tools to create personalized experiences. By analyzing user data, we segment audiences and tailor our campaigns to their interests. For example, we use Instagram to target adventure enthusiasts by showcasing activities like skydiving or scuba diving. The response from this targeted approach is always stronger, as people feel we are speaking directly to their passions.

This level of personalization distinguishes new media from traditional communication methods, allowing marketers to connect with audiences on a deeper, more individualized level. The visual storytelling capabilities of platforms like YouTube further enhance the effectiveness of tourism promotion. A participant explained,

We create videos that tell a story about our destinations, capturing emotions through cinematic visuals. These videos, when shared widely, evoke curiosity and inspire travel decisions. For example, a video featuring a serene rainforest or a bustling cultural festival invites viewers to imagine themselves there, making them more likely to book a trip.

Such content taps into the emotional drivers of travel, leveraging visuals and narratives to create a compelling call to action. Participants also highlighted the cost-effectiveness of new media, which allows organizations with limited budgets to achieve substantial outcomes. One marketing manager shared their experience, stating,

Compared to traditional media, social media campaigns are far more affordable and provide measurable outcomes. For instance, with a modest budget, we ran a Facebook ad campaign that attracted over 10,000 inquiries about our eco-tourism packages.

Traditional advertising methods could never deliver such results within our financial constraints."

This affordability, coupled with the ability to track and measure campaign success, ensures that

marketing efforts remain both efficient and accountable. The role of analytics in refining communication strategies was another significant theme. A participant elaborated,

Platforms like Google Analytics help us monitor campaign performance in real-time. We adjust our strategies based on engagement rates, ensuring that our resources are used efficiently. For example, if a particular post isn't performing well, we analyze why and either optimize it or redirect our focus to better-performing content.

This data-driven approach enables tourism marketers to remain agile and responsive, ensuring that their efforts are aligned with audience behavior and preferences. Interactivity, a hallmark of new media, emerged as a critical factor in enhancing communication strategies. One participant described how this capability has transformed their engagement with potential travelers, stating,

The ability to respond to travelers' questions immediately is a game changer. When someone comments on a post asking about the best time to visit a destination, we can provide an answer instantly, enhancing their decision-making process. This immediacy makes them feel valued and builds their confidence in choosing us.

Such direct engagement fosters trust and loyalty, creating a stronger connection between brands and travelers. Another respondent reinforced this point, emphasizing the long-term benefits of responsiveness. They shared,

Being responsive on social media has built our reputation as a trustworthy brand. Travelers appreciate the quick answers and personalized advice we provide. We've even had repeat customers who cite our social media responsiveness as a key reason for returning to our services.

This two-way interaction not only addresses immediate inquiries but also contributes to sustained brand loyalty, a critical asset in the competitive tourism industry. The findings demonstrate that new media offers unparalleled effectiveness in enhancing communication strategies for tourism promotion. By enabling personalization, cost-efficiency, real-time interactivity, and data-driven insights, these platforms empower stakeholders to meet the needs of modern travelers effectively.

The ability to tell compelling stories, engage directly with audiences, and adapt to their preferences ensures that new media remains a cornerstone of contemporary tourism marketing strategies.

4.4 The Challenges and Limitations Associated with Using New Media in Tourism Marketing

Despite its transformative potential, the use of new media in tourism marketing is not without its challenges. Participants identified a range of limitations that underscore the complexities involved in leveraging these platforms effectively. These challenges include content saturation, reputational risks, privacy concerns, and resource constraints, all of which impact how tourism organizations strategize their marketing efforts.

One of the most pressing concerns highlighted was content saturation, a phenomenon where the sheer volume of digital material overwhelms audiences. A participant described this issue, stating,

With so much content being shared online, it's difficult to stand out. Potential travelers are bombarded with posts, videos, and ads, leading to what we call 'content fatigue.' Our challenge is to create unique, compelling content that captures attention in an oversaturated digital space. For example, while a beautifully crafted video might perform well today, it risks being lost in the digital noise tomorrow if something more viral emerges.

This saturation requires marketers to consistently innovate and invest in high-quality, differentiated content, a task that demands both creativity and resources. The reputational risks associated with the public and interactive nature of new media were also emphasized. A participant recounted an incident where negative feedback quickly escalated, explaining, "A guest posted a negative review on Facebook, and it gained traction within hours. Even though we addressed the issue, the damage to our reputation was immediate. Managing such situations requires constant vigilance and rapid response strategies, as any delay can exacerbate the problem and amplify its reach." Another respondent elaborated on this vulnerability, adding,

Social media is a double-edged sword. While it amplifies positive stories, it can also magnify complaints, requiring us to invest heavily in reputation management tools. For every

success story we promote, there's the lurking threat of a dissatisfied customer whose voice might resonate louder.

Privacy concerns emerged as another significant limitation, particularly given the reliance on data-driven marketing. One participant noted,

The use of personalized ads requires collecting user data, but this sometimes raises privacy issues. Travelers are becoming increasingly cautious about how their information is used. We have to ensure transparency to maintain their trust. Without clear communication about how we handle data, we risk losing credibility.

This concern is amplified by increasing public awareness of data breaches and scandals. Another participant shared,

Data breaches and privacy scandals have made users skeptical. To stay competitive, we prioritize secure data handling practices and emphasize our commitment to ethical marketing. For example, we avoid overly invasive targeting techniques and make it clear how data is collected and used in our campaigns.

The legal landscape further complicates these issues, as varying data protection regulations across regions, such as the European Union's GDPR, require organizations to navigate complex compliance requirements. As one participant noted,

International marketing campaigns mean juggling different privacy laws. Failing to adhere to these regulations not only risks fines but also jeopardizes our reputation among potential travelers.

Resource constraints were particularly pronounced for smaller tourism businesses, which often lack the financial and human capital to maintain competitive new media strategies. One participant explained,

New media strategies require time, expertise, and financial investment. For smaller tourism businesses, it's challenging to keep up with trends or compete with larger brands that have bigger budgets. While larger organizations can afford dedicated social media teams and cutting-edge analytics tools, we often have to rely on limited resources to achieve the same goals.

Another participant echoed this sentiment, adding,

The constant evolution of platforms and algorithms means we are always playing catch-up. If you don't have the means to adapt quickly, you risk falling behind, no matter how compelling your content might be.

In addition to financial constraints, the fast-paced evolution of digital platforms poses a strategic challenge. A participant remarked,

Algorithms on platforms like Facebook and Instagram change frequently. What worked last month may not work today, and without a team dedicated to staying updated, it's hard to remain relevant. This unpredictability adds another layer of complexity to planning and executing campaigns.

These challenges illustrate the intricate balance tourism marketers must strike when leveraging new media. While the platforms offer unparalleled opportunities for engagement and reach, their limitations require careful navigation. Content must be both innovative and distinctive to combat saturation, while robust reputation management practices are essential to mitigate risks associated with negative feedback. Transparency and adherence to data privacy laws are critical to maintaining consumer trust, and resource limitations demand strategic prioritization to maximize impact with available means. These insights underscore the need for ongoing adaptation and strategic foresight in harnessing the potential of new media for tourism promotion.

Discussion of the study

This study aimed to assess the impact of new media platforms in tourism promotion, focusing on how they enhance communication strategies. Participants, including social media managers, content creators, and tourists, provided a diverse range of perspectives on the subject. The study found that new media platforms, especially social media sites like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, offer unique opportunities for real-time engagement, audience targeting, and interactive communication. Social media managers highlighted the role of these platforms in fostering immediate connections with travelers, while content creators emphasized the importance of user-

generated content (UGC) in promoting tourism. Tourists, in turn, shared their experiences of how reviews, social media posts, and online content influence their travel decisions.

Objective 1: The Current Use of New Media Platforms in Tourism Promotion

The findings revealed that new media platforms have become indispensable tools for tourism stakeholders, offering innovative ways to market destinations. Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter have reshaped communication strategies, emphasizing real-time engagement, interactivity, and global reach. This aligns with Xiang and Gretzel (2010), who highlighted that social media enables tourism marketers to showcase visually compelling content and interact directly with potential travelers. The emphasis on real-time engagement through live sessions and instant updates also supports findings by Leung et al. (2013), who noted the importance of immediacy in fostering authentic connections. The role of user-generated content (UGC) emerged as a significant theme, with participants stressing its credibility and influence on travel decisions. This finding corroborates Munar's (2011) assertion that UGC is perceived as more authentic than traditional advertising, as it reflects real experiences shared by travelers. Similarly, TripAdvisor's prominence as a platform for trusted reviews aligns with Cox et al.'s (2009) study, which found that 84% of travelers rely on online reviews when planning trips.

TAM provides further theoretical validation for these findings. The widespread adoption of new media in tourism promotion can be explained by its perceived usefulness (PU) in reaching diverse audiences and its perceived ease of use (PEOU) through user-friendly platforms. By addressing these aspects, tourism stakeholders have effectively integrated new media into their marketing strategies.

Objective 2: The Effectiveness of New Media in Enhancing Communication Strategies for Tourism Promotion

The study highlighted the effectiveness of new media in delivering personalized and immersive communication strategies. Participants emphasized how data analytics tools, such as Google Analytics, enable segmentation and targeted campaigns, echoing Tussyadiah and Zach's (2012) findings on the potential of digital platforms for audience-specific messaging. The use of personalized content, such as Instagram posts tailored for adventure enthusiasts, aligns with current trends in digital marketing that prioritize relevance and audience engagement (Rahman et al., 2022). The cost-effectiveness of new media was another critical finding. Participants noted that social media campaigns provide measurable outcomes at a fraction of the cost of traditional advertising. This supports Balasubramanian et al.'s (2022) observation that new media enables budget-friendly marketing strategies while delivering significant returns on investment. Moreover, the ability to monitor campaign performance in real-time allows marketers to optimize strategies dynamically, a feature highlighted in previous research by Barbe and Pennington-Gray (2020).

Interactivity, a hallmark of new media, was frequently cited as a key advantage. Participants described how responding promptly to traveler inquiries fosters trust and enhances decision-making. This aligns with findings by Leung et al. (2013), who emphasized the role of two-way communication in building stronger brand relationships. Within the TAM framework, these advantages can be attributed to the platforms' ease of use and the enhanced functionality they offer, further encouraging adoption among tourism stakeholders.

Objective 3: The Challenges and Limitations Associated with Using New Media in Tourism Marketing

Despite its benefits, the study revealed several challenges associated with using new media for tourism promotion. Content saturation emerged as a significant concern, with participants describing the difficulty of standing out in an oversaturated digital landscape. This finding

resonates with Munar and Jacobsen's (2014) concept of "content fatigue," which highlights the diminishing returns of repetitive promotional material.

Reputational risks, particularly the potential for negative feedback to go viral, were another prominent theme. Participants noted the need for constant vigilance and rapid response strategies, echoing Sigala's (2011) findings on the challenges of real-time reputation management. The interactive nature of social media, while advantageous, also exposes brands to amplified scrutiny, requiring robust mechanisms to mitigate potential backlash.

Privacy concerns further complicate the use of new media. Participants acknowledged the growing skepticism among travelers regarding data usage, aligning with Sparks and Browning's (2011) research on the impact of privacy breaches on consumer trust. The necessity for transparency and adherence to data protection laws, such as the GDPR, underscores the complex regulatory environment in which tourism marketers operate.

Resource constraints, particularly for smaller organizations, were also emphasized. This finding aligns with Eagle et al.'s (2021) observation that implementing effective new media strategies requires substantial investment in time, expertise, and technology. Smaller businesses often struggle to compete with larger firms that can afford dedicated teams and advanced analytics tools. The challenges identified in this study reflect the barriers to new media adoption highlighted in TAM. While the perceived usefulness and ease of use of these platforms drive their adoption, challenges such as resource limitations and privacy concerns act as external variables that moderate the relationship between intention and actual usage.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the final insights of the study, summarizing the key findings, drawing conclusions based on the data collected, and offering recommendations for future research and practical applications in tourism marketing. The study focused on exploring the role of new media in enhancing communication strategies in tourism promotion. Through interviews with social media managers, content creators, and tourists, the study aimed to understand how new media

platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter are being used to promote tourism destinations, the effectiveness of these tools, the challenges faced by marketers, and the implications for the industry as a whole. The findings highlighted both the significant advantages of using new media for tourism marketing and the challenges that need to be addressed to optimize its effectiveness.

5.1 Summary of the study

The findings of the study are closely aligned with its objectives, which aimed to assess the current use of new media platforms in tourism promotion, evaluate their effectiveness in enhancing communication strategies, identify associated challenges, and explore the integration of emerging technologies to optimize outcomes.

The first objective, which sought to understand how new media platforms are currently being used in tourism promotion, revealed that platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter have become indispensable tools for tourism marketers. These platforms are used to create visually appealing content, foster real-time interaction, and transcend geographical limitations. For instance, Instagram's image and story features allow marketers to capture the emotional essence of destinations, while Facebook and Twitter facilitate real-time communication with potential tourists, enabling personalized engagement. User-generated content (UGC) was also identified as a powerful aspect of new media usage, with tourists contributing reviews, photos, and videos that significantly influence travel decisions.

The second objective focused on evaluating the effectiveness of new media in enhancing communication strategies. The findings indicate that new media platforms provide tourism marketers with unique opportunities to connect with audiences through personalized and cost-effective campaigns. By leveraging analytics and segmentation, marketers are able to tailor content to specific audience interests, such as adventure tourism or luxury travel. Visual storytelling

emerged as a particularly effective strategy, with cinematic videos and immersive imagery inspiring travel decisions. Furthermore, the interactive nature of new media fosters trust and loyalty by enabling two-way communication, where marketers respond promptly to inquiries and feedback.

The third objective, aimed at identifying the challenges and limitations of new media in tourism marketing, highlighted several obstacles. Content saturation was a significant issue, with the sheer volume of promotional material on digital platforms leading to "content fatigue" among audiences. Reputational risks were also evident, as negative reviews and complaints can quickly go viral, necessitating constant vigilance and effective crisis management. Privacy concerns were another major limitation, particularly regarding the use of personal data for targeted advertising. The findings stress the importance of transparency and adherence to data protection regulations to maintain consumer trust. Resource constraints, particularly for smaller tourism businesses, further limit the ability to leverage new media effectively.

The final objective explored the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR) into new media strategies. The findings demonstrate that these technologies enhance tourism communication by providing immersive and personalized experiences. For example, AI-driven chatbots improve customer service through real-time assistance, while AR and VR allow tourists to preview destinations, reducing uncertainty and enhancing confidence in travel decisions. These technologies not only amplify the reach of tourism campaigns but also enable a deeper level of engagement with potential travelers.

In conclusion, the findings underscore the transformative potential of new media in revolutionizing communication strategies for tourism promotion. By aligning closely with the study's objectives, the insights highlight both the opportunities and challenges of using new media. The integration

of emerging technologies, combined with strategic management of challenges such as content saturation and privacy concerns, presents a pathway for tourism stakeholders to optimize their communication efforts and achieve greater success in a competitive industry.

5.2 Conclusion of Study

The study concluded that new media platforms have fundamentally changed the way tourism is marketed, offering both opportunities and challenges. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook have revolutionized communication strategies by allowing for direct interaction with audiences and the use of visually engaging content. This supports the findings of previous research, such as Xiang and Gretzel (2010), which emphasized the effectiveness of visual storytelling in capturing the attention of potential tourists. Furthermore, the ability to segment audiences based on their interests and behaviors through data analytics, as discussed by Tussyadiah and Zach (2012), was identified as a key advantage of using new media for tourism promotion. However, the study also found that the pervasive nature of new media can lead to challenges such as content fatigue, negative publicity, and privacy concerns. These challenges align with concerns raised by Munar and Jacobsen (2014) regarding the oversaturation of digital content, and Sparks and Browning (2011) about the impact of data privacy issues on consumer trust. Consequently, tourism marketers must develop strategies to mitigate these risks while maximizing the potential of new media.

In conclusion, while new media has proven effective in enhancing communication strategies, addressing its challenges is crucial for ensuring long-term success in tourism promotion.

5.3 Recommendations of the study

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made for tourism businesses seeking to leverage new media effectively. First, tourism marketers should invest in training and technology to overcome resource constraints, especially in smaller organizations. This could

involve providing staff with the necessary skills to manage social media campaigns, analyze data, and respond to customer inquiries in real-time.

Second, addressing the challenge of content saturation is essential. Tourism marketers should focus on creating unique, engaging, and high-quality content that resonates with their target audience. This could include leveraging user-generated content (UGC) more effectively, as it adds authenticity and credibility to marketing efforts.

Third, given the reputational risks associated with negative feedback on social media, tourism businesses should implement robust reputation management strategies. This includes monitoring online platforms for reviews, responding promptly to customer complaints, and using tools to track brand sentiment.

Finally, to build and maintain consumer trust, it is vital that tourism marketers prioritize data privacy and transparency in their digital marketing efforts. This could involve clearly communicating how consumer data is collected and used, as well as complying with privacy regulations such as GDPR.

Future research should explore the integration of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and augmented reality, to enhance tourism marketing strategies and provide new ways to engage with travelers.

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APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this interview. I am a graduate student at UniMac-IJ and I'm conducting a study to explore the role of new media in enhancing communication strategies for tourism promotion. The information you provide will remain confidential and will only be used for academic purposes. You're free to stop at any time, and if there are any questions you're uncomfortable with, feel free to skip them. Let's begin.

Section 1: Background Information

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and your role in the tourism industry?
2. How long have you been involved in tourism promotion or marketing?
3. What specific new media platforms do you use in your work?

Section 2: Current Use of New Media

1. How do you utilize platforms like Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter for tourism promotion?
2. Can you provide examples of how you engage with audiences through these platforms?
3. What role does user-generated content (e.g., reviews, photos, and videos) play in your promotional efforts?

Section 3: Effectiveness of New Media

1. How effective do you find new media platforms in reaching your target audience compared to traditional media?
2. What strategies do you use to personalize your communication with tourists?
3. Can you share an instance where new media positively impacted your tourism marketing efforts?

Section 4: Challenges and Limitations

1. What challenges have you encountered in using new media for tourism promotion?
2. How do you manage issues like negative reviews, content saturation, or privacy concerns?
3. Are there any resource constraints that limit your ability to fully utilize new media?

Section 5: Emerging Technologies

1. Have you integrated technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), or virtual reality (VR) into your tourism marketing?
2. If yes, how have these technologies enhanced your promotional efforts?
3. What are the key barriers to adopting these technologies in your organization?

THANK YOU