

Review of Literature on Marketing Strategy of Tourism Sector

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Abstract

This literature review has sought to contribute to the existing literature on the role of tourism marketing that underpins the development of successful sustainable tourist destinations. It is a review that specifically looked at the role of tourism marketing in successful sustainable tourist destinations. The review has identified some of the underlying the challenges facing tourism marketing and the sale of sustainable tourism destinations and highlighted some areas where future research could indeed focus its attention on, in order to support the ongoing development of conservation tourism at destination levels. Importantly, there is a strong requirement for appropriate training and advice for tourism marketing staff in sustainable tourist destinations, including effective both policy formulation and optimal implementation. Training can help to lift misunderstanding about sustainable tourist destinations and the wide uncertainty of the role of marketing, as well as serve to introduce innovative practices. Finally, there is a key need for tourism marketers to share experiences so as to coordinate their work and disseminate their results on working with sustainable tourist destinations. The issues identified are critical and this review is only a first step and therefore offers significant potential future review paths for similar studies.

Key words: Marketing Strategy, Social Media, Sustainable Tourist Destinations, Tourism Marketing, Tourism Sector.

Introduction

Agricultural development, industrial development and tourism development are three ways to bring money and business into a given region. The goal of promotion is behaviour modification. The task is to initiate a purchase where none has been made before or initiate a change in purchase behaviour. The result is accomplished through messages that seek to inform, perform or remind the receiving people.

Tourism is as much a part of socio-economic development as any other related activity. Examples can be cited where tourism sector has advanced as a result of general development. The industrialized West including Europe and North America underline this linkage between tourism and growth. Organised tourism in India began in the 1950s with the launching of the Five Year Plans. It is a matter of regret that after more than seven decades we still have only 1.61 percent of the world tourist trade.

India is a country with huge diversity and dissimilarities in speech, art, architecture, music, dance, cuisine, geographical conditions, rituals, etc. Different regions of the country and different religion followed by countrymen add a unique flavour to Indian culture and society. Diversities and varieties inherited in Indian culture, society and geography are clearly reflected in the tourism products of the country.

Tourism and travel industry has achieved growing internationalization (**Reisinger & Turner, 2003**). In recent years, tourism has emerged as one of the major sectors for growth in Indian economy (**Dey & Sarma, 2010**). It generates revenue, jobs, investment, export, etc., and thus stimulates economic activities around the world. On the other hand, it also generates opportunities for alleviation of poverty and inequality in society as well as preservation of natural and cultural heritage of the country. India represents an interesting case of a country which, despite its size and its immense potential as a tourist destination, has seen relatively low levels of international tourist arrivals and receipts (**Raguraman, 1998**).

To survive in the tourism sector and excel in the competitive works. It is essential for the country should know their potential and target customers and be aware their needs and convert their products according to the target needs and demands. It's an art that how they convince their potential customers and convert them into real customers. Design their product, services like hotels, foods and other facilities according to their desire. It is most likely that the success of any type of organizations that work in the private sector depends on effective marketing and delivering fun service in the trip by plane, having rooms in chain guest houses or conducting leisure groups and specific travellers. Tourism organizations in their marketing process pay special attention to the specific cultural groups, and they emphasize on the attractiveness of the products they offer.

The competition in tourism sector at both national and international level is growing as more and more destinations seek to attract tourists and more companies and organizations become involved in the highly skilled business of destination planning, transportation, accommodation and catering for the tourists.

Past Studies on Tourism Marketing

Tourism marketing as a concept comprises of two terms, namely, tourism and marketing. Tourism can be defined as an essential social phenomenon which includes “the movement of people from and to and their temporary stay at places away from their usual residents” (**Chang & Katrichis, 2016**). Marketing can be described as a management process for “identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer requirements and profitably”. When tourism marketers promote tourist products, this increases consumption and being a source of depletion, pollution and species destruction together with climate change at the tourist destination, this is problematic (**Sharpley & Pearce, 2014**). In that sense, tourism marketing is an essential element to tourism in general as it lies in designing strategies and communications appropriate for target markets so that profits can be generated (**Donohoe, 2012**). Tourism marketers can thus be a source of threatening the sustainability of the tourist destination if they don't include the element of sustainability when they promote such destinations (**Albrecht, 2016**).

Thus, tourism destination marketers and managers have a significant role to facilitate sustainability actions and behaviours in tourist development at the destination in their marketing processes (**Jamal & Camargo, 2014**). However sustainability increases only when there is provision of quality tourism services and environments at the same time increasing the opportunities for residents to improve the quality of life at the tourist destination (**Hartwell et al., 2016**). Tourism theory recognizes the key importance of environmental quality for ensuring the competitiveness of most types of tourist destination and destination marketers also have to recognize that competitiveness is illusive when it comes to sustainability (**Simon et al 2014; Artal-Tur & Melinkozak, 2016**).

Tourist destination sustainability can relate to carrying capacity theory as the “idea of sustainability implies limit” (**Jurado et al., 2012**), therefore it reflects on the objectives of tourism marketer's and managers and those who promote tourist destinations, to satisfy both tourists and residents, although in some cases competitiveness in tourism marketing can contribute to sustainability of the destinations (**Esparon et al., 2015**). Tourism destinations are central to the tourism industry and the sustainability of the destinations can help tourists to repeat visits to the same destination (**Kozak & Kazol, 2016**).

Nevertheless, the critical question is how tourism marketing plays a role for sustainability at the destination level (**Higham & Moyle, 2016**). If marketers market without

taking into account the carrying capacity of the destination itself for simple the reason that it may be about to disappear (**Mckellar & McNamara, 2016**) this is shortsighted.

Sheham et al. (2016) pointed out that as the tourism industry has a significant impact in the economy of different nations in the world, tourism marketing and tourist destination sustainability are some of the most important things in research for the sustainability of the industry. According to **Hartwell et al. (2016)** there is little research on the role of tourism marketing in contributing to sustainable tourist destinations. However, the increasing rivalry in tourism marketing and a greater awareness that retaining effective strategies are critical to sustainable tourist destination development is changing views.

Thus, tourism destination marketers and managers have a significant role to facilitate sustainability actions and behaviours in tourist development at the destination in their marketing processes. However sustainability increases only when there is provision of quality tourism services and environments at the same time increasing the opportunities for residents to improve the quality of life at the tourist destination. **Chang & Katrichis (2016)** Tourism marketing as a concept comprises of two terms, namely, tourism and marketing. Tourism can be defined as an essential social phenomenon which includes “the movement of people from and to and their temporary stay at places away from their usual residents”

According to the **Bogdan Sofronov (2018)** Travel and tourism industry is one of the world’s greatest industrial sectors. It drives economic growth, creates jobs, improves social development and promotes peace. Hundreds of millions of people around the world are dependent on the sector for their employment. In some island economies, travel and tourism industry is not just the biggest employer; it is effectively the only employer. The role is to contribute to the creation of sustainable economies. Travel and tourism industry is a diverse sector consisting of millions of companies and employers, from the biggest global travel brands to the smallest tour operators or hostel owners. Together, we form a formidable force with a voice to be heard at the highest levels of society and government.

Tourism Marketing and Sustainability

As the tourism industry has a significant impact in the economy of different nations in the world, tourism marketing and tourist destination sustainability are some of the most important things in research for the sustainability of the industry (**Hartwell et al., 2016**). While these two concepts have a unique importance in the sustainable development of tourism, there is little research on the role of tourism marketing in contributing to sustainable

tourist destinations (**Sheehem et al., 2016**). However, the increasing rivalry in tourism marketing and a greater awareness that retaining effective strategies are critical to sustainable tourist destination development is changing views (**Esparon et al., 2015**).

Tourism is a significant component of the growing footprint (**Truong & Hall, 2016**), while tourism marketing is the application of marketing concept in travel and tourism industry (**Ketter & McMillan, 2016**) as it uses the four Ps, product, price, place and promotion in advertising tourist destination to consumers. However, tourism marketing to date, is perceived as the enemy of sustainability as it traditionally concentrates on increasing tourist numbers and treating tourism like a commodity (**Pomering, Noble & Johnson, 2012**). Tourism marketing is a cooperate activity as consumers rarely use just “one brand in consuming the overall tourism experiences” (**Liu & Chou, 2016**).

The literature shows that it is a very important functional area in a tourism business organisation and always uses a wide variety of communications strategies and techniques to promote areas and destinations (**Avraham & McMillan, 2016**). The purpose for tourism marketing is thus to sell the site to a potential customer base (**Donohoe, 2012**), and Tourism marketers themselves ensure that they satisfy the two criteria that customer needs are met and organisational goals are attained. The literature also argues that there is little academic research focusing on the tourism marketing role in facilitating the sustainability of the destination in general (**Higham & Moyle, 2016**). Tourist destination quality is the key to success in tourism development and the role of tourism marketing and management in improving the quality of tourist destination is important to be identified by academic researchers (**Lei, Kostopoulou & Huibin, 2014**).

Tourist destination is regarded as a well-defined “geographical entity under a brand name, mixing of all tourism products, services and environments as an integrated experience which can be understood and identified by consumers” (**Hartwel et al., 2016**). Nevertheless, not much academic research has been conducted yet in finding out the role of tourism marketing in contributing towards successful and sustainable tourist destinations (**Eagle, Hamann & Low, 2016**). **Starting with Sharpley & Pearce, (2014)**, it is argued that there is no specific tourism marketing role specifically for sustainable tourism in English National park destination but sustainable tourism is rather promoted by other organisations. Marketing for them, is only socio-economic although it increases tourism to a destination. Similarly, **Mossaz and Coghlan, (2016)** in the role of travel agents in the marketing and sale of sustainable tourism, found that most tourism agents market or sell sustainable tourism in the

destination as an effort to get customers and they do not really have any influence in conserving the environment of the destination. This suggests that tourism marketers do not real engage in the sustainability of the destination for future use.

A sustainable tourism destination is used as competitive tourism marketing strategy, as **(Esparon et al., 2015)** show. Sustainable tourism in some areas acts as a destination competitiveness tool in tourism marketing processes and not in a meaningful way in contributing to a successful tourist destination. Also, the relationship between destination marketing and sustainable destination management has been researched by academics. **Lei, Kostopoulon and Huibin (2014)**, pointed out that there is a big relationship between these aspects, and that marketing has a subsequently direct effect and impact on a tourist destination.

Jamal and Camargo (2014) showed that there is a problem in sustainable tourism justice at the destination as the wellbeing of disadvantaged population is not considered and the cultural commodification and inequalities among disadvantaged groups, prove that there is gap on the role of tourism marketing in efforts at successful destination sustainability. The literature argues that It is important for tourism marketers to consider the justice of the destination itself. On the other hand, the literature shows that there is a critical question here namely, destination tourism marketers promote places and planners plan their local spaces but how often do the two meet to ensure sustainable destination development is achieved? **(McCamley & Gilmore, 2016)**.

Social Media Marketing-A Crucial Instrument for the Promotion and Marketing of Tourism in India

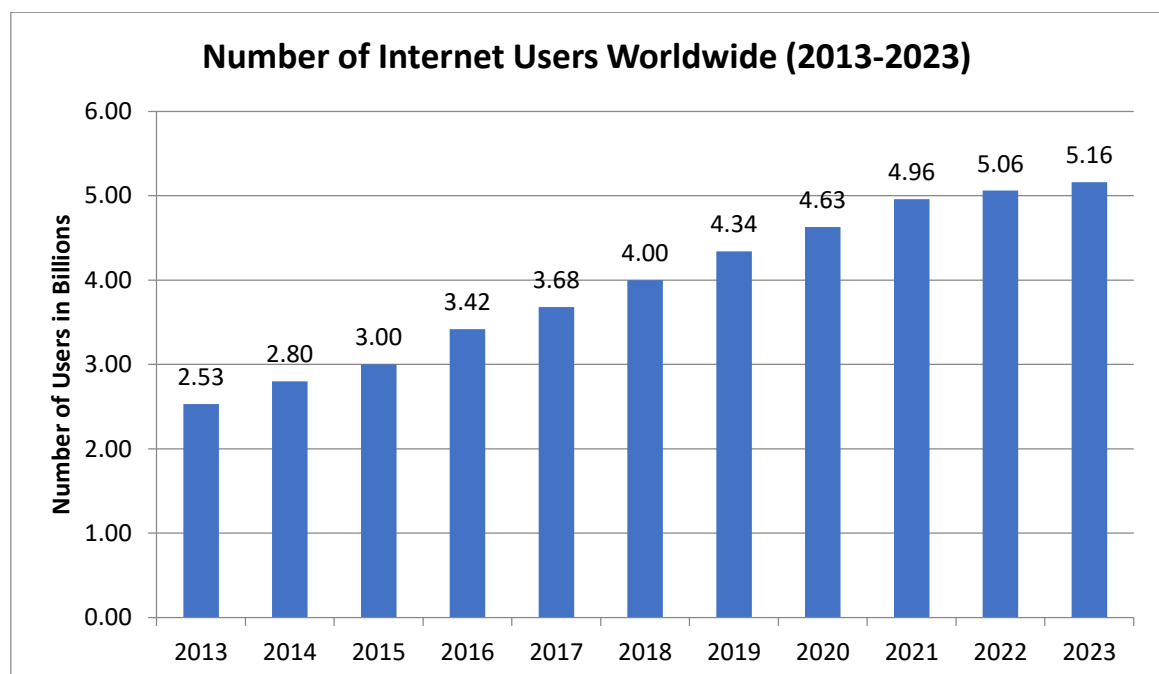
Social media marketing has emerged as a crucial instrument for the promotion and marketing of tourism in India. The employment of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube has become an indispensable component of the tourism industry's marketing and promotional tactics. The utilisation of these platforms presents a distinctive prospect for tourism operators to expand their reach to a broader demographic and foster interaction with them through immersive and captivating material.

The advent of social media has brought about a transformation in the manner in which individuals strategize and undergo their travel. Contemporary travellers heavily depend on social media platforms to conduct destination research, peruse reviews, and obtain recommendations from other travellers. In addition, individuals leverage social media

platforms as a means to disseminate their travel experiences, photographic documentation, and video recordings, consequently expanding the reach of destination promotion to a wider demographic. The significance of social media as a platform for destination marketing and promotion has been established.

Social media marketing has become a vital component of marketing and promotional strategies in the Indian tourism industry in recent years. The utilisation of social media platforms by tourism operators facilitates the presentation of their products and services, customization of experiences for individual customers, and establishment of a committed customer base. In addition, it facilitates the establishment of a brand's identity and the promotion of brand recognition among prospective travellers.

Figure 1: Facebook Active Users in millions vs Years from 2013-2023



Source: DataReportal

LinkedIn has emerged as a valuable tool for marketing companies operating on a professional platform. This platform has a user base of 396 million individuals and facilitates connections between registered companies from various global locations. According to Hudson S, individuals can be located and contacted regardless of their current geographical location. The observed trend indicates a shift towards the development of online profiles and representations, which organisations have successfully leveraged to generate substantial profits. According to statistical data, electronic mails and messages are currently the most commonly employed marketing strategy, owing to their dependable nature in terms of time

efficiency. The organisational structure and hierarchy have undergone modifications, whereby marketing activities at a personal level are exclusively carried out by top-level managers, while lower-level executives employ e-commerce and digital marketing strategies to expand their outreach to a wider demographic. By way of comparison, it is possible to aggregate the number of users across various social media platforms and assess the disparities between contemporary and past marketing practises. Presently, global spending on marketing exceeds \$400 billion annually, encompassing a range of mediums such as videos, images, emails, web portals, online banners, and research. Consumer habits, which can be tracked by companies through their search cookies, constitute a crucial factor in determining their impact on the market. The hotel and hospitality industry is currently experiencing a global trend of advancement. According to Julian.K. Ayeh et al. and Leung D, data related to tourism searches is of utmost significance for the hotel industry. By analysing these patterns, hotels can tailor their advertising strategies to effectively promote their services.

The swift expansion of social media platforms has altered the nature of consumer engagement, both in relation to businesses and among individuals. This has given rise to the phenomenon of social media, which has rapidly grown in popularity. As a result, strategies, tactics, and tools for communicating with customers and other stakeholders have undergone significant transformation. Hence, the manner in which commerce is conducted and the strategies employed by businesses to acquire and retain customers undergo a transformation. According to Cizreliogullari, M. et al. a research, social media platforms were more frequently utilised by American enterprises to establish communication with their clients or potential customers in comparison to Google. According to recent statistics, the majority of businesses, specifically 70%, utilise Facebook as a social media platform. This is followed by 46% of businesses using Twitter, 37% using LinkedIn, and 25% using YouTube. Over the previous two years, marketers have predominantly utilised Facebook and Twitter as their primary social media platforms. Approximately 75% of hotels within the hospitality sector have employed social media platforms as a means of promoting their brand. According to Leung D. et al. research, the hospitality industry has identified Facebook and Twitter as the two most advantageous social media platforms for marketing purposes.

Research indicates that conventional Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) strategies have achieved notable progress in the realm of social media advertising for the hospitality sector. The conventional forms of media encompass various channels of broadcasting, such as television, radio, and cinema, as well as print media, including newspapers and magazines. Additionally, public advertising mediums, such as billboards and

signposts, are also considered as part of traditional media. According to Alizadeh A. and Isa RM., the hospitality sector allocates roughly 70% of its advertising budget to traditional media channels such as television, radio, and print. These channels have consistently been the primary means of advertising for the industry. Tourism scholars across various disciplines have shown a growing interest in social media research as a means of comprehending the importance of tourists' behaviour, decision-making, and corporate communication, as noted by Minazzi R.. Despite the fact that many companies in the tourism industry have adopted social media practises in recent years, the full potential of this emerging data and communication resource in terms of customer engagement has not yet been fully realized.

Numerous research endeavours have been undertaken to examine the utilisation of social media from the standpoint of consumers. Several authors have presented significant findings, which are summarised below.

Kaplan AM. and Haenlein M. have classified social media users into four distinct categories, namely creators, critics, collectors, and joiners. Creators refer to individuals who generate content on social media platforms, including but not limited to blog posts and videos. Critics are individuals who provide commentary or evaluations of various forms of content. Individuals who engage in collecting activities tend to archive materials for potential future use, while those who participate in social media platforms as joiners tend to utilise these platforms as a means of establishing connections with others.

According to Mangold WG. and Faulds DJ. research, social media is utilised by consumers for the purposes of acquiring information regarding products and services, engaging in communication with fellow consumers, and exchanging personal experiences. According to Boyd D. M. and Ellison N. observations, social media platforms offer individuals the opportunity to present themselves in a particular manner and establish social connections with like-minded individuals. According to Muntinga D. et al. research, consumers are driven to utilise social media platforms for the purposes of self-expression, entertainment, social connection, and information acquisition. According to Jyotisman Das Mohapatra et al., Social media presentation significantly impacts the luxury travel industry's long-term viability, with luxury travelers preferring factual content over emotional ones. Sustainability may be secondary to information and prompt responses. The authors Kietzmann JH. et al. have identified seven functional building blocks of social media, which include identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation, and groups.

In general, the aforementioned studies indicate that individuals utilise social media platforms for diverse purposes such as acquiring knowledge, establishing social connections, self-expression, and entertainment. Kietzmann et al. have identified the functional components of social media that can serve as a structure for comprehending the diverse manners in which social media is utilised by consumers. The utilisation of social media platforms from the standpoint of an organisation operating within the tourism sector has been extensively examined. Several authors have presented significant discoveries, which include:

According to Buhalis D. assertion, social media has revolutionised the mode of interaction between tourism organisations and their customers, facilitating a two-way communication process, enabling feedback response, and promoting the creation of customized marketing campaigns. According to Xiang Z. and Gretzel U. research, social media presents an opportunity for tourism organizations to establish connections with prospective clients, foster relationships, disseminate information, and enhance brand promotion.

According to Gretzel U. et al. research, social media can be utilized by tourism organizations to obtain valuable information regarding customer behaviour and preferences. Additionally, social media can be used to monitor and respond to online reviews and comments. According to Morris B., social media has the potential to improve the customer experience through the provision of tailored recommendations, streamlined booking and payment processes, and prompt customer support. According to Polese F. research, social media has the potential to facilitate the co-creation of value with customers in the tourism industry. This can be achieved by actively engaging customers in the design and delivery of tourism products and services.

Collectively, the aforementioned studies indicate that social media platforms have the potential to offer various advantages to tourism entities, such as heightened customer engagement, refined comprehension of customer preferences, and prospects for collaborative innovation and customization. Tourism organisations can develop compelling and efficient social media strategies by utilising the functional components of social media, as identified by Kietzmann et al., which include identity, conversations, and sharing.

Conclusion

When it comes to the tourism in a country, a large scale of research has been undertaken concerning with the issues like the role of tourism sector in an economy to the

factors affecting the tourism sector and role of various tourists organizations in the development of the industry and also analyzing the trends and patterns in the tourism sector both temporally as well as spatially. The present study deals with the marketing aspect of tourism which is the ultimate promotional and branding tool for the enhancement and growth of the tourism industry in India.

The use of social media while travel also contributes to an improvement in the overall quality of the experience that tourists have throughout their trips. It gives a platform for travellers to connect with other tourists, plan their itineraries, and interact with locals in the area they are visiting. Additionally, social media platforms such as Instagram offer personalised travel recommendations to users depending on the preferences that the user has indicated. This results in a more tailored experience for the user.

Promotion of tourism through social media marketing is a cost-effective method, thanks to its use of social media. Because of its relatively low cost and extensive reach, it is an alternative that small and medium-sized tourism firms should strongly consider. Additionally, social media sites such as Facebook offer opportunities for customised advertising, which enables businesses to more effectively communicate with the audiences they wish to reach.

The use of social media for marketing has a number of opportunities, but it also has the potential to be difficult at times. One of the issues that needs to be handled is keeping a consistent brand image across all of the different social media channels. Other challenges include controlling negative criticism and ensuring that continual monitoring takes place.

We cannot deny that Tourism has been recognized as one of the major industries of many countries. National and State tourism is also recognized as one of the major contributors in their revenue generation. Many countries are known for their best practices in the marketing of the tourism activities. However, organized research activities in the area are yet to be seen. Thus, although there has been an encouraging trend in the recent years, sufficient literature on marketing strategy of tourism is yet to be generated. There is immense scope of research in the area.

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