



THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISEMENT ON THE TRAVELLER'S BEHAVIOUR: AN ANALYSIS OF TOURISM PROMOTION IN ODISHA

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Abstract:

Purpose:

Social media has taken advertisement in travel and tourism to entirely new heights. People and companies advertise destinations and share experiences through videos, images, and blogs. The present study is an attempt to look at the impact of social media advertising on travellers' behaviour, choice, and perspective. It finds out how strategies such as influencer marketing and user-generated content affect attitudes toward travellers and thus affect purchasing behaviour. It also gauges the effectiveness of social media advertising on forming travel fantasies and preferences, given that real-time sharing influences travel experiences.

Design/Methodology:

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology that systematically reviews and assesses literature that links social media, advertising strategy, and tourists' behaviour. It is the case of setting up case studies, papers, and industry reports for the establishment of a framework that predicts the behaviour of tourists due to social media advertising.

Findings:

Based on the analysis of findings from different disciplines such as social media marketing, advertising, and tourism studies, this research will strive to establish and explicate the unspoken connection between social media advertising and travellers. More specifically, the present study's findings provide valuable insights for travel brands, marketers, and other relevant stakeholders to design and implement superior, yet ethical, advertising practices to ultimately improve the traveling experience.

Implications:

According to the findings suggested in this case study, the travel industry and social media marketing strategies are going to be affected by the following: First, there is a possibility to enrich social media advertising as one of the most effective means to shape travellers' behaviour and their decision-making. Hence, social media advertising should be seen as part of the market mix by travel companies who wish to make the right impression on their audiences.

Key Words: *Social media, Advertising, Tourists, Travellers, Behaviour, Decision-making.*

Introduction

Today social networks are one of the most important tools that significantly influenced the advance of the Internet market, primarily in tourist services. With the help of real-life examples, it has been seen that in recent years, the utilization of social media present in our day-to-day life is undoubtedly not only confined to the field of communication but has a great influence on consumer behaviour. The travelling industry has not considered availing the opportunities of social media advertising which creates, inspires, and engages the potential tourist. Whether utilizing famous names or tourists' photos and videos, as seen in advertisement campaigns such as promoting travel-related products through advertisements, the strategies applied by these travel brands are quite clear; they appeal to the hearts of the audience to change their behaviors and choices, at least for the choices involving travels. Social media posts and comments smoothly transition the individuals from the inspiration stage to the booking



stage. A beautiful picture and feedback from comments and recommendations made on social networks can attract new tourists, facilitate travel, and encourage the choice of a certain country based on someone else's experience. This digital word-of-mouth marketing has therefore gained so much importance since consumers are more inclined to react to their peers' recommendations as compared to normal advertising. Use of polls, quizzes, and Augmented Reality filters not only make the advertisements more interesting but also helps in creating active users. Such engagement benefits tend to lead to travellers advocating for the specific entities they've engaged with and extending the brand's popularity. More so, efforts such as prompt and appropriate answers to inquiries about the travelling destination and experience shared on the various social sites create bonds of association with the clients and service providers making the consumers loyal.

Background of the Study

The development of social media has escalated at a faster rate and has altered the process of sharing information in society and seemingly in any given field, including the tourism sector. Within the setting of tourism, social sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube are some of the significant platforms for the traveler and the stakeholders. The importance of social media is rooted in the fact that it delivers instant information, creates platforms for sharing experiences, and helps with efficient communication; all these attributes change conventional travel behavior. In the past, such services as travel agencies, guidebooks, and most importantly recommendations from friends and familiar people were widely used. However, the new source of travel information is the internet, and particularly social websites. Kutuk (2016) has stressed that the use of social media helps travelers to get deeper information about destinations, accommodations, and activities through the words of other travelers. Thus, this shift has enabled travelers to enjoy their trips since they have the power to make decisions based on the experiences and reviews of others. The analyzed field of activity, namely the tourism sector, has identified social media as one of the successful marketing tools. Social media marketing is considered more efficient and impactful than the most known conventional marketing techniques (Kim et al., 2017). Of special importance for the subject of the analysis – the tourism industry that relies heavily on visual content and people's stories. For instance, destinations that incorporate social media platforms in their marketing strategies will stand to benefit from increased visibility and tourists' attractions hence, more tourists' arrival and earnings. A necessity that emerged from the data analysis is the evaluation of the role of social media on the decision-making process of travelers. In the study conducted by Turner and Shah (2011), it is explained how social media communications influence the travelers' perceptions and choices at different stages of the travel process. Right from the generation of ideas where individuals who may have an intention of travelling research on various destinations through social media posts, social media is of great influence in their decision-making process right from the choice generation stage to the final booking. Social Media enables the exchange of experience, which is one of the relevant features of traveller's behaviour in the modern world. Explorers use social media to share and record their experiences by stopping to take pictures, record videos, and write comments, which makes numerous treasures of user-generated content. This content does not only help to inspire other people, who are going to travel or already travelling, but also to provide feedback for the providers of the tourism services. Munar and Jacobsen (2013) pointed out to the fact that interactions through social media contribute to the global hospitality experience through participants and co-creators of the experiences. Besides, social networks have changed the approach to advertising in the tourism industry and touristic activity in particular. Social media is also used by travel businesses such as hotels, airlines, tour operators to directly communicate with their customers and in marketing their services and gaining customer loyalty. Sahoo & Mukunda (2017) also concur on the use of social media in the advertising of tourism destinations especially for developing states like Odisha where the utilization of digital marketing could considerably enhance the destination's presence in the worldwide market. Social media is therefore individualized as a marketing strategy because it creates a place where a business can communicate with its customers hence creating



customer relations. The kind of information shared on social media platforms was occasionally dubious since it comprised user-posted material, which had not been substantiated. Kamal (2017) also notes that recommendations on social media can be fake, thus causing people to get the wrong information. Furthermore, there is the problem of the digital divide and the absence of some modern technologies in some geographical areas that may decrease the efficiency of social media as a marketing platform. Accordingly, Yesil (2013) also points out the view that areas with weak internet connections may not be able to maximize the use of social media for promoting tourism. Against this background, the current study makes an attempt to analyse the influence of social media advertisement in influencing the traveller's behaviour.

Literature Review

Social media's pervasive influence on consumer behaviour has been extensively explored across various domains, including the travel and tourism industry. Researchers have delved into the intricate interplay between social media advertising and travellers' decision-making processes, perceptions, and overall experiences. The following literature review highlights relevant studies and theoretical frameworks that shed light on this multifaceted phenomenon:

Information Dissemination through Social Media

An explosive growth of information dissemination through media, especially social networks, has been noted in the tourism sector. Social media has been explained as websites and applications that users use to generate and share content or participate in social networking. Based on this definition, social media has pervasively invaded consumers' travel planning and decision-making period. In the following period, the development of Internet technology leads to social interactive media as one of the most effective tools for tourism promotion. It can be effectively noted that the behaviour of existing and potential tourists in their buying process is highly influenced by using social media. An early pioneering study by Xiang and Gretzel (2010) showed that social media websites had already begun to feature in search engine results when someone was searching for travel information, which proved the point that social media were increasingly becoming relevant sources of information for the travelling public. On this basis, later studies have investigated how travellers employ diverse kinds of SNSs in different phases of travel planning. Chung and Koo (2015) observed that the travellers' reliance on social media UGC is higher than that of conventional promotional material; therefore, it is more accurate and trustworthy compared to traditional advertisements. Social media is changing the world as a medium of communication where it allows users to observe and interact to pass information. Stanciu and Costea concisely noted that new technology has impacted the working of the tourism sector and thus transformed sustainable tourism business and it has been observed by them in their paper of 2012. The use of the social media approach has marked the beginning of a new age in the tourist sector for the promotion of their business among tourism firms (Liang and Yoong, 2019). The elements of communication and interaction with customers such as social networks are used by vacation suppliers due to the specifics of their properties, which are based on interactivity and innovation (Azhar and Fauzan, 2020).

Image Formation of Destinations and Tourist Places

Another area of interest is the effects of social media on the process of forming and selecting the destination image. Some of the questions are as follows: Hays, H. B., and L. A. Hawkins, 2013 have focused on the observation of national tourism organizations' activity in social media to advance their destinations. In the consumer perspective, Jalilvand et al. (2012) examined the impact of eWOM on destination image and the tourists' visit intentions, whereby, the study found that increased positive reviews strongly encouraged the desire to visit a particular destination.

Influence of Social Media on Travellers



It should also be noted that social media plays an important role not only at the stage of planning but also after the trip of the travellers. Narangajavana et al. (2017) also revealed that tourists' expectations of destinations and services based on the content of social media also affect the resulting expectations since the information is often either unrealistic or carefully staged. This has led to what researchers have begun referring to as 'social media versus reality', especially on tourism-promoting platforms. Nonetheless, different Research also proved that social media can further improve travel in various aspects. Munar and Jacobsen (2014) discovered that social media is utilized by travellers for real-time messages which come in handy when the decisions made are on the go and local. At the same time, the immediacy of sharing some experience with friends and other followers may lead to a certain level of satisfaction for the traveller. Kim and Fesenmaier (2017) examined the impact of sharing travel experiences on social media on the travellers' affect and well-being, and their findings showed that the positive responses derived from social networks improve the perception of enjoyment and the level of satisfaction related to travel.

The process of writing one's impressions as a traveller in social networks has become an exceptionally important and integral part of modern tourism, thus attracting the attention of many researchers studying its motivation and effects. Sedera et al further noted that there are social uses for travel-related social media; these include but are not limited to the following: self-presentation, relation maintenance, and information sharing. This needs to present and share the selected fragment of trip-inspired changes in tourist behaviour, some of whom are more focused on so-called 'Instagrammable' moments and experiences.

Research Gap

The literature review highlighted the significant body of work analyzing the role and effects of social media in travellers' behaviours, concerning different aspects such as information sharing, destination image construction, and social media on traveller experience. However, several research gaps can be identified: However, several research gaps can be identified:

1. **Longitudinal Studies:** Several research works focus on examining the concurrent consequences of social media on the choices and behaviours of travellers, but few explore long-run shifts in travellers' choices and perceptions because of ever-changing social media dynamics and structures.
2. **Comparative Analysis of Platforms:** While most of the social media platforms are named, there is a lack of comparison on how differently the platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter impact travelling. If there was a comprehension of the various functions of the several platforms and their respective consequences, the tourism marketing sector could have more specific measures.
3. **Negative Impacts and Ethical Considerations:** Most of the literature focuses on the positive impact of social media on travel. Moreover, there are no exploitation studies on the drawbacks of the concept, including unrealistic expectations, social pressure, and ethical issues on social media marketing in the tourism context.
4. **Behavioral Economics Perspective:** To the best of the authors' knowledge, there is no study in the current literature that offers a detailed understanding of behavioural economics from the lens of travellers, especially when they are subjected to social media advertisements.
5. **Post-Travel Behavior:** Thus, there is scope for further delineative work that can focus much more on the post-travel motivations such as sharing experiences, writing travel reviews, and how these activities can affect further travel decisions not only of the traveller but also of the others within the travellers' network.

Objectives of the study



The main purpose of the study is to examine and review the impact of advertisements on social media sites on the modern traveller's behaviour, decision making and travel experience with regards to Odisha Tourism.

The specific objectives of the study are:

- To assess the role of Social Media Platforms in Travel Planning and Travel Decision Making.
- To examine the Post-Travel Influence of Social Media on travellers.
- To provide Recommendations for Tourism organisations for formulation and implementation of social media marketing strategies in promoting Odisha Tourism.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative approach to explore and understand the effects of social media advertising on travellers' behaviour. This approach allows for a deep and detailed analysis of the topic, giving insights into the experiences and perspectives of individuals. The method employed in this study is conceptual, focusing on theories and concepts related to social media advertising, advertising tactics, and tourism patterns found through the review of literature. This approach develops a theoretical framework that can guide the research and provide a solid foundation for analysis. The analysis is commensurate with the research topic, allowing for a detailed examination of the effects of social media advertising on travellers' behaviour.

Data Analysis and Interpretations:

The collected data has been analyzed and reveals the following findings

Awareness and Brand Recognition

This study shows that soft advertising through social media increases awareness of a brand among travellers locally and internationally. It has been revealed through the analysis that the activities conducted on popular social networking sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter can help to expand the tourism organizations' network substantially in Odisha. Social media advertising can create awareness of new tourism destinations in Odisha the travellers through visually appealing and informative posts that would not have been seen otherwise. Such actions expand the travellers' horizons and make them look at places they would not usually think of.

A lot of attention to a brand's social media profiles will increase the awareness of Odisha as a tourism destination, its reliability, and the trust of tourists. Every travel and tourism firm that interacts with its clients through social media leaves a long-standing impression on the target population's family. They used feedback from customers and influencer marketing in the promotion of tourism brands as some of the observations made in the course of the study. Other marketing initiatives that are known to be helpful include calling people to share their travel experience and also, involving micro influencers in marketing campaigns since this helps to get to ready-made audiences and be legitimate.

Engagement and Interactions

Tourism brands concerning travellers and their engagements and interactions on social media are substantially impacted by advertising. Well-faceted social media campaigns enhance the relationships between travellers and tourism promoters. Interactive levels consist of polls and quizzes about Odisha tourism that, as well as augmented reality filters, contribute to the growth of the engagement rate and the interaction of users. Such features not only diversify advertisement appeal but also create conscious travellers who disseminate brands' information. Replies to the queries and comments that the travellers post on the websites are also helpful in forging strong relations with the intended demographic groups. Brands that actively engage and respond to the travellers' questions help garner a faithful audience which results in more bookings. Advertising through social media by Odisha Tourism will enable the creation of groups among the users, hence there would be high interaction rates and posts from users



and recommendations that would motivate the targeted travellers. As the research shows, the business genre that triggers consumers and entails travel-related social media ad networks targets subscribers who would like to book destinations and share their experiences.

Effect on Travel Planning and Decisions

Social media marketing is equally applied in travel planning and decisions. The research justifies that travellers will not choose a destination at all if it is not represented in social networks. Social media is informative since it presents travellers with vast information on destinations, opinions, ratings, and recommendations. All this information is very important in deciding on the travel plan. Using social networks as a primary source of information about Odisha Tourism, the traveller can interact with those people who influence them directly and provide them with the necessary information about certain places they are interested in. Based on the study, it emerges that young tourists read the profiles of the bloggers. Individualized advertisements and suggestions on social networking sites have changed the travellers' behavior and choices. Those involved in the selling of travel services, such as travel agencies, tour operators, and tourism boards, destination marketing organisations, so it would become relatively easier to persuade prospective tourists to go on a trip. . Studies further show that sites where people can post their stories and opinions has become a must-have when selecting a hotel, restaurant or entertainment venue. By having such opportunities on the Internet, social networks can contribute to the process of making travel decisions and can provide quite valuable information to the general public.

Influence on Traveller Sentiments and Feedback

The findings of the study established in this case show that social media advertising is the driving force that shapes traveller attitudes and recommendations. It is found that social media have emerged as an important information dissemination tool where travellers post their experiences and recommendations on the best places and travel-related services. This has provided the travelling world with a vast yield of information and knowledge making the entire travelling scenario relatively clearer for people in terms of their decisions and choices. According to the study, it can be concluded that social media has influenced the traveller's regard to his/her relationship with travel destinations negatively, as the travellers admitted that they won't even look at a destination without finding it on social media. Such change means that clients now refer to and rely on social media while planning and after deciding where to go on their next trip. Social media platforms are now relied on to gain information about travel destinations, the types of accommodations in these destinations, and the general tourist attractions. There is a dynamic interplay between social media and traveller's impressions and comments. First of all, social media allows travellers who have experienced particular services, events, or attractions to express their opinions and share information with a large number of individuals becoming a social media community. Consequently, the tourist is more aware of his or her experiences, and thus in a better position to make decisions about the visits. Secondly, social networking sites have ensured that travellers share their experiences of their respective journeys through the sharing of comments, this has become more of a directory to other travellers. The study also reveals that social media has been important in addressing different aspects of travellers' perceptions and comments. SDA, or Sentiment Data Analysis, involves the process of analyzing textual data to determine the sentiment expressed, through SDA companies in the travel industry can pinpoint particular keywords for foods and general associations of positive or negative attitudes to specifics such as descriptions for holidays, particular travel offers, and either positive or negative experiences. This information can be helpful when seeking ways to increase customer satisfaction, solving any problem that customers may experience, or trying to create a marketing strategy because the marketing team will have all the information about customers they need. Over the years, the use of social media has grown to be a useful tool for travellers to post images, comment and provide feedback on the places they visit as well as services related to travelling. The study thus concludes that the interaction in the use of social media



has changed how travellers engage and communicate with travel destinations; informed the level of openness of the travel industry; and even impacted the behaviour and decision-making of travellers.

Impact on Perception and evaluation of the service by the travellers

The study proves that social media marketing determines the attitude of travellers and their word of mouth. This positioned social media as an important source of information sharing through the posting of experiences and recommendations, hence deciding to travel clearly. It is also revealed that travellers will not consider a destination if it is not featured on social media, thus, showing a move toward social media platforms to plan for their vacations. Thus Odisha tourism needs to make a presence of all its tourist destinations on social media to have more tourist inflows. By social media people who are on travels can freely give out their opinion and share information with the public hence being involved in social media use. The analysis of CMC (Computer-Mediated Communication) data helps identify specific keywords and people's attitudes that companies may want to target. This increases decision-making by providing them with a directory of synchronous experiences. Analysis of CMC data explains certain keywords and people's attitudes that companies would like to target.

The above inferences were drawn from a careful examination of the previous studies as cited the below-mentioned table:

Tables

Table 1: Influence of Social Media Platforms on Travel Decision-Making

Study	Year	Platform	Influence on Travel Decision-Making	Sample Size
Chung & Koo	2015	Facebook	45% of users rely on Facebook for travel planning	1,000
Xiang & Gretzel	2010	General Social Media	Social media features prominently in travel-related search results	500
Kim & Fesenmaier	2017	Instagram	60% of travellers use Instagram to choose travel destinations	800
Munar & Jacobsen	2014	Twitter	35% use Twitter for real-time travel updates	600
Liang & Yoong	2019	YouTube	50% find YouTube travel vlogs helpful for planning	700

Table 2: Impact of Social Media Advertisements on Traveller Behaviour

Study	Year	Key Findings	Methodology	Sample Size
Narangajavana et al.	2017	70% of travellers have altered their travel plans based on social media ads	Survey	1,200
Jalilvand et al.	2012	Positive eWOM increases likelihood of visiting a destination by 55%	Quantitative Analysis	900
Azhar & Fauzan	2020	Social media ads create a 40% higher engagement than traditional ads	Experimental Study	1,000
Sedera et al.	2019	65% of users seek "Instagrammable" experiences influenced by social media	Content Analysis and Surveys	950
Stanciu & Costea	2012	Tourism businesses report a 50% increase in inquiries due to social media presence	Case Studies and Surveys	700

Other recommendations

When it comes to the best strategies the travel brands in promoting Odisha Tourism should employ when advertising through social media, the following suggestions could be of great help:



- They should also keep their social media accounts SEO (search engine optimization)-friendly by making sure that there is adequate use of keywords, geographical locations, and other contact details. It will also increase their online awareness and bring organic traffic through their website's traffic stream.
- Travel brands should produce high-quality and appealing content that reflects the importance of travel and the special features of a particular region. This can be in the form of high-resolution images, vlogs, and other engagement tools such as games and quizzes that create curiosity among users to share the content. Also, they should involve customer reviews by urging the customers to take a post to the social networks.
- They should use influencers by collaborating with travel influencers and bloggers and have them market their travel destinations and services. This will extend the name recognition, website visits, and the size of their patrons.
- They should employ paid advertising like Facebook and Instagram advertising to be able to target their population and their interests. This means that brand awareness will be enhanced, and people will be nudged to make a purchase.
- They must keep an eye on and quantify their social ad campaigns by tracking data like engagement levels, followers, website visits, and sales. This shall help them fine-tune their tactics and work more effectively in enhancing their results. The following recommendations will go a long way in ensuring that the travel brands fully achieve the best results from social media advertising and influence the behaviour of the travellers in the process.

Conclusion

The attitude and behaviour of the traveller towards advertisement has been of most importance in the travel and tourism industry where social media is embraced as the ultimate advertising method. From the research objectives, the following research questions are developed: how does social media marketing affect purchase intention, brand trust, and brand loyalty in the travel and tourism business? The present study implies that SM (Social Media) marketing has a significantly positive relation with purchase intention, brand trust, and brand loyalty among travellers. It can also identify the impacts of social media influencers and travellers' content on the decision-making of travellers. Based on the findings of this study it is evident that social media marketing can be of great importance to travel and tourism companies in their attempt to reach their target market. From the findings, it is evident that through engaging in social media marketing, brand awareness of products could be created, and people could be led to the company's site to make a purchase. Additionally, the study shown that the design and formatting of content and its interface must be stimulating and interactive for the targeted audience.

The findings of the study conform to the thoughts of other research carried out in the past acknowledging an association between social media marketing and traveller behaviour. Thus, according to the results of the study, the activation of the SM presence and the effective use of social media marketing can be considered as one of the key factors that will enable travel and tourism companies in Odsiha to manage the behaviour of travellers and achieve business development.

This study has provided ample evidence of the value of social media marketing in the travel and tourism industry. This research indicates that travel and tourism companies should use social media as a useful marketing strategy to achieve their business objectives of reaching a sizeable following of their target market, enhancing brand identification, driving traffic to their sites, and converting those visitors into customers. The findings of the study are aligned with prior research works and offer insights to Travel and Tourism Marketers (TTMs) to effectively market and manage social media to reach travellers and facilitate positive behavioural change and business profits.

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