THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SHAPING TOURIST BEHAVIOR

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Annotation. *This article will provide an in-depth analysis of the role of social media in the tourism industry and the influence of tourists on the decision-making process. The study focuses on exploring key areas, opportunities, and risks, highlighting aspects such as visual inspiration, recommendations, real-time updates, and interactive communities. However, the article also discusses negative effects that can occur in the use of social networks, such as manipulations, privacy concerns, and spammy content. The results of the study show the possibilities of meeting the needs of users more effectively through innovative marketing strategies and personalized services in the future tourism sector.*

Keyvwords: *social media, tourism, tourism, decision-making, visual inspiration, referrals, real-time updates, influencers.*

With the rapid development of modern information technologies, social networks have also grown exponentially following the world. In every industry, including tourism, these platforms are having a huge impact. Through social networks, the opportunity to quickly get information about tourist attractions, experiences and recommendations has become possible. This article will talk about how social networks influence tourists' travel decisions, how they shape their behavior and what opportunities and risks are present in this process.

Social network is an effective marketing channel in the tourism industry. Nowadays, the importance of social networks is manifesting itself in every direction. The combination of advanced ideas and ideas in the development of tourism does not leave indifferent to many students of tourism, awakens aspirations and interest in their direction. Promotion, dissemination, development of tourism is very effective both for the country and for the country. Hospitality and tourism companies recognize that

social media plays an important role as a source of tourist information and has a powerful impact.

With the use of social networks, i.e. Instagram, Fasebook, Tik-tok, are much more active networks, through which the partial development of tourism is also carried out. Because access to social media has taken up most of our lives, we have become accustomed to posting everything we do, the places we go, our travels on social networks. The experiences gained by travelers through microblogs, online groups, which are widely used by travelers to search, organize and share interesting travel destinations on social networks, will also have an impact on the development of tourism destinations. Active social media users are considered by most research to be the strongest group with the most influence. Lots of research emerges in the process of stretching and strengthening a social network. Social networks gave users the opportunity to join and participate in the service process.

Social networking is a part of our daily usable activities, which can embody a lot of information that can be easily accessed via personal computers or smart phones. For students in general, the use of the internet is considered more important than other groups because social networking helps to expand and strengthen sociality in online activities. Although students aren't sure if they'll be able to use parks, vlogs, and other common systems, they're considered leaders in the use of text messages and navigation. In the tourism industry, social media is involved in all phases of the travel experience. This includes activities before, during, and after a trip. The social networks used during the trip are also considered as advertisements for travel destinations, hotel views, restaurants or exhibition centers to be booked in.

While promoting travel, social media is also promoted as a knowledge base about travelers destinations and attractions, accommodations. Instagram is one of the leading social networks in promoting a specific location, as online users share their photo albums at exactly the same time during the trip, so travellers use Instagram to get information about their destination and influence others as well. The potential of the media will lead to an increase in social exploitation in the tourism sector. The tourism industry is becoming increasingly interested in social media research topics,

scholars and researchers. Social media has become an important area of tourism. The development of communication techniques has an impact on travel and tourism, especially contributing to the development of business strategies. Due to the development of communication technology, the behaviour of tourism consumers has changed significantly. The Internet became the first choice to search for information about tourism destinations and suppliers markenimg became an important tool of tourism services. Buying and consuming products and services on the Internet The travel industry is fundamentally changing thanks to a new generation of social. The way we evaluate and analyze interactions on the internet and the traveler has also changed.

Social networks, including platforms like Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube, have become one of the most important sources of information for tourists. Through beautiful photos, videos, and user experiences, people are discovering new travel destinations. It is visual inspiration, an invitation to see the various attractions and to learn about them in more detail.

Ratings and comments that tourists leave on social networks play an important role in making travel plans. Users' personal opinions and experiences about a place or service tend to be a reassuring factor to other potential tourists. For example, user resumes and ratings for hotels, restaurants, excursions and other services have a huge influence on the decision-making process.

The spread of news and real-time information on social media plays an important role in the planning process of tourists. For example, weather conditions, area emergencies and special promotions allow tourists to quickly reconsider their decisions. This is an important factor in ensuring safety and convenience.

The abundance of content on social networks and feedback from users shape the decisions of tourists. Positive reviews and recommendations encourage you to choose new areas, while negative feedback can lead to rethinking possibilities. However, content shared through influencers and bloggers plays a major role in strengthening the reputation of tourist destinations and creating a brand image.

Personal experiences and stories offered through social media can help identify options that suit tourists' specific needs and tastes. Each person's attitudes and desires for travel are different. Therefore, the variety of content available on social media encourages planning that is tailored to personal interests.

Social networks are a convenient platform to strengthen interactive communication between tourists, ask questions and get answers. Travelers receive support and advice by sharing experiences. Such communities serve as a valuable resource, especially for those who are new to a place.

Opportunities and Risks

1. Facilities Innovative Marketing: Tourism organizations can use social media to promote their services to a wide audience. Personalized Recommendations: Users can gain more reliable and real-world information by sharing their experiences.

Quick Updates: Get real-time information for convenience for tourists.

2. Risks

Manipulation and Misinformation: Incorrect or manipulative information circulated on social media can lead tourists to make poor decisions.

Privacy Concerns: There is risk that users' personal information may be misused.

Spam and Advertising: Excessive advertising and spammy content can be very misleading for users.[1]

Considering the above factors, the development of social media and their role in the tourism industry is expected to grow further in the future. It is imperative that tourism organizations and government agencies promote the rational use of social media by ensuring the personal safety and reliability of users. At the same time, technological innovations and the development of artificial intelligence will create opportunities for more personalization of tourist experiences through social networks.

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[1] Beckendorff, P. S. (2014). Tourism information technology 2nd ed. London: CABI

In conclusion, Social Media plays a key role in the modern tourism industry. Thanks to their influence, tourists not only get acquainted with new places and experiences, but also gain reliable information in the decision-making process. Also, given the opportunities and risks that social networks bring, it is important to use these platforms wisely, especially in countries that are open to technological innovation. Thus, it is possible to provide quality and safe services in the tourism sector, meet the needs of users and increase competitiveness.

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