UKS31343

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EXAMINE THE RELEVANCE AND IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON HOSPITALITY MARKETING. TAKING A SMALL BUSINESS PERSPECTIVE, CONSIDER ITS INFLUENCE ON DEVELOPING STRATEGIC ALLIANCES WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS.

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Introduction

This assignment focuses on the SMM strategy adopted by small hospitality businesses and companies to grow and develop in the industry as they are aware of the benefits of social media services to the hospitality industry. The small hospitality businesses that do not have such investment to invest in SMM get attached to big hospitality companies that have SMM facilities to grow their businesses. This assignment also focuses on the points describing the positive impacts of introducing social media in the marketing strategy of the hospitality industry, and the challenges and difficulties faced by small hospitality businesses while implementing SM. it also states the factors affecting small hospitality businesses to meet hands with big hospitality businesses that ensure the growth of the small businesses.

Discussion

Increase of SM use in the hospitality industry

The increase of SM use in the marketing industry motivated small hospitality businesses to start using social media in their marketing strategy. As SMM platform is very huge and it helps to promote and develop the small hospitality business to achieve their desired goals. As per Torous et al. (2021), technology is growing day by day and the use of social media is becoming very common these days. The hospitality industry is becoming customized with the help of SMM as it helps in promoting the brand profile and value, also increases website sessions and increases hotel reservations. earlier people have to visit the hotels and also they have to come to the hotels and have to register their details. Nowadays all these procedures are digitized as people now first check the reviews and ratings of the hotels and then make their decision. As per Dewnarain et al. (2019), the SMM strategy has created a very positive outlook for the hospitality industry as it permits customers to gather hotel experiences from personal sources. It breaks the traditional marketing strategy of the hospitality industry and authorizes controlling the targeted customers' decisions. As the big hospitality businesses are engaged with social media in implementing marketing strategies, the small hospitality businesses also engage in social media for marketing strategies. It will help small hospitality businesses to reach many people worldwide and increase sales and bookings. Earlier the hospitality industry could only communicate with one customer at a time, however as per Bazrkar et al. (2021), after applying the SMM strategy they can communicate with various customers at a time. The hospitality businesses can upload their details on social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and more. This way, the

hospitality industry upgraded and developed its business to the next level of marketing.As per Sánchez-Casado *et al*. (2019), the hospitality industry also uses social media advertising strategy as social media advertising strategy is one of the best strategies that can be implemented by the hospitality industry. Earlier the hospitality industry had to spend a huge amount of money for their advertising through television, banners, radio and more, as after the entry of social media hospitality businesses and companies can advertise and promote themselves on various social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and more. As per Dimitrieska and Efremova (2021), The hospitality industry also offers exclusive discounts, rewards, promotions and various offers schemes to attract many clients. Hence SMM use in the hospitality industry helps in increasing communication skills, increases customer satisfaction, increases customer engagement and also helps to reach the products of the hospitality businesses worldwide in the modern days.

Impact of using SM in hospitality businesses

The SMM of hospitality has both positive and negative impacts. As per Haudi *et al*. (2022), the positive impact of SMM on the hospitality industry is increasing brand awareness, constant interaction with customers, promotion and more. As the SMM of the hospitality industry attracts their target audience by providing various facilities and information through SMM of the hospitality industry. The offers and facilities provided by the hospitality industry through the SMM help to grow sales and bookings which increases the customer satisfaction level. As per Ilyas *et al*. (2020), customer satisfaction is an important part of increasing brand awareness. Therefore satisfied customers' positive reviews increase the brand value or brand awareness of the hospitality industry with the help of SMM. The constant interaction with the customers of the hospitality industry through SMM helps the customers to know the offers and discounts and also helps the customers by giving answers to their queries for which the customer loyalty towards the hospitality industry increases. As per Bahadur *et al*. (2020), interacting with customers increases trust and customer loyalty towards the brand. Hence interacting with the customers of the hospitality industry through SMM has a positive impact. The promotion of the hospitality industry with the help of SMM has a huge positive impact as the hospitality industry spreads their businesses with the help of promotion through SMM, advertising and more. Therefore the hospitality industry uses promotion through SMM to engage more customers and increase sales of the hospitality industry. However, as per Katsikeas *et al*. (2020), the negative impact of SMM on the hospitality industry is negative feedback, rumours spreading, and the risk of customer

private data spreading or cybersecurity concerns. The negative feedback from the customer on the website of the hospitality industry through social media has a huge negative effect on the existing customers, impression of the hospitality industry and brand value of the hospitality industry. As per Mariani and Borghi (2021), customers always check the ratings and reviews of other customers and then decide where to stay based on the reviews of the hospitality services. Therefore the negative feedback from the customers through SMM can ruin the business of the hospitality industry as reputation in business is very important. The spreading of rumours about the hospitality industry through SMM has also had a big negative impact on the hospitality industry. Rumours about the hospitality industry spread through social media worldwide to their target audience which creates problems for the hospitality industry in achieving its goals. As per Juanamasta *et al*. (2019), the reputation and impression of a business are very important for its development of growth, therefore rumours can ruin the stability of the customers of the hospitality industry. Hence spreading rumours through SMM had a huge negative impact on the hospitality industry. The cybersecurity concerns or the spreading of customer data by SMM also hurt the hospitality industry. As per Sun *et al*. (2022), the spreading of customer data by SMM threatens the customer to interact with the hospitality industry Therefore customers are very sophisticated about their personal information and the spreading of their details by SMM threatens and creates trust issues for the hospitality industry. Hence the cybersecurity concern creates trust issues among customers and decreases the interaction between the marketers and the customers which decreases sales and also creates losses for the hospitality industry.

Challenges of using SM in the hospitality business

There are various challenges in using SMM in the hospitality business such as creating quality content, collaborating with influencers, selecting perfect SM platforms, engaging followers and more. As per Haenlein *et al*. (2020), quality content is necessary for every business to reach its target audience. Therefore to achieve the goals of reaching people worldwide, the marketers of the hospitality business need to create content quality and develop their content to a higher level to reach and attract the customer's attention. As it is hard for the hospitality business to create quality content perfectly that can attract the target audience. Hence creating quality content in SM to attract the attention of customers is a big challenge for the markets of the hospitality industry. As per Cornellia *et al*. (2022), SMM is based on the choice of SM platforms regarding the target audience. The hospitality business nowadays is dependent on advertising and SMM,

therefore to interact with the target audience the marketers of hospitality businesses should choose the right SM platform where they can reach their target audience easily. Choosing the wrong platforms in SMM can create losses for marketers in the hospitality industry. Hence choosing the right platform in SMM is a big challenge for the marketers of the hospitality businesses as the right platform is the key to interacting and engaging with more customers. As per Cuevas-Molano *et al*. (2021), businesses that use SMM are dependent on customer engagement or engaging followers. The process of engaging followers to an SM platform is very lengthy and hard. Therefore to get success in SMM of hospitality businesses, the markers need to keep patients to grow the social media page and to engage followers for the growth of the SMM of hospitality businesses. Hence engaging followers in the SM platforms is a big challenge for the marketers of hospitality businesses.

Difficulties faced by the small business while implementing SMM

There are various difficulties faced by small businesses while implementing SMM. As per Cuevas-Molano *et al*. (2023), the major difficulties of small businesses while implementing SMM are low budget, lack of technical skilled labour, limitation on time, balancing several platforms and more. Small businesses have a certain amount of money, thus adopting SMM for small businesses is costly. As SMM is cheap and anyone can create a page on social media platforms without investing however to adopt SMM appropriately, the marketers of small businesses need to invest money for creating quality content and also have to take influencer who can promote and advertises the page of small businesses for which the target audience would reach to the small businesses social media pages. Hence low budget of small businesses is one of the difficulties faced by small businesses while implementing SMM. As per Barrett and Rose (2022), small businesses have less work as well as less capacity to adapt well technical skilled employees. Therefore to adopt the SMM in small businesses, the marketers of the small businesses need to recruit some well-skilled professional employees who can handle the SMM. As the less capacity of small businesses cannot afford the well-skilled technical employees who can handle the SM platforms. Hence the lack of technically skilled workers is also a big difficulty faced by small businesses while implementing SMM. Fewer workers mean more time consumed by the workers for completing the work of the small businesses. As per Matli (2020), a lack of employees in a workplace needs more time to complete the work than others who have a huge number of employees. Therefore due to the lack of employees, the working time is

limited and the limitation of time decreases the chances to adopt the SMM by the employees. Hence due to the limitation of time, small businesses faced difficulties implementing the SMM. Balancing on several platforms is also difficult for small businesses. As per Haenlein *et al.* (2020), small businesses have fewer funds and therefore hard to balance with several platforms due to budget regarding quality content and more. High-level hospitality businesses advertise their brand on various SM platforms through SMM which create difficulties for small hospitality businesses as they have fewer funds so they cannot afford the expenses of various quality content and influencer for different types of SM platforms. Hence the lack of balance between several SM platforms is also a big difficulty faced by small hospitality businesses while implementing SMM.

Factors influencing small businesses to develop strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses

The difficulties faced by small hospitality businesses while implementing SMM are discussed above. As per He *et al.* (2020), the strategic alliance helps small businesses to work or merge with big companies to gain profit by giving a share of their products to the big businesses. Small hospitality businesses have low budgets which creates problems for their SMM. As per Wang *et al.* (2020), strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses can help small hospitality businesses to increase their budget of the small hospitality businesses. Therefore small hospitality businesses have an opportunity to develop strategic alliances with the big hospitality businesses which can help them to implement SMM by improving their financial condition.

Small hospital businesses lack technically skilled employees who can handle the SMM of the business. As per Sen and Bhattacharya (2019), strategic alliances with big hospitality of businesses can help to train the employees of small hospitality businesses. Therefore due to the lack of budget in small hospital businesses, the employees are also fewer and thus to perform SMM the small businesses need to get well-skilled employees which they cannot afford. As SMM helps small hospitality businesses for customer engagement worldwide and they cannot afford SMM due to their lack of employees. Thus with the help of strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses small hospitality businesses can train their employees and therefore it will help the small hospitality business in managing the SMM. The marketers of small hospitality businesses use strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses to gain profits. Hence lack of well-skilled employees is also a factor influencing small hospitality businesses to develop

strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses. Small business has fewer workers which consume more time to work. As per Rodríguez-Antón *et al*. (2019), strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses can increase the limitation of time as the big hospitality businesses have more employees. Therefore due to the limitation of time, the employees of small hospitality businesses cannot give time to the SMM of small hospitality businesses. The strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses help the small hospitality businesses as the big hospitality businesses have huge numbers of employees and thus they will not have any time limitations which can increase the customer engagement of small hospitality businesses. Hence this is also a big factor influencing small businesses to develop strategic alliances with big hospitality customers. Small businesses cannot balance several SM platforms due to. As per Alaimo *et al*. (2020), strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses can help small hospitality businesses to balance on various social media platforms. Small businesses have fewer funds as well as fewer employees and time, therefore balancing on various social media platforms is hard for small hospitality employees. Thus strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses increase the balancing power of the small hospitality businesses in various SM platforms as it has many employees and funds who can take care of the funds as well as balance the various types of social media platforms.

Benefits of developing strategic alliances

A strategic alliance is defined as the agreement between two or more business entities to work together for attaining a target set by them by maintaining the individuality and independence of all the involved entities. According to the studies conducted by Cacciolatti *et al*. (2020), strategic alliance benefits a company by providing them with expertise in specific areas where there is a lack of proficiency due to a lack of resources.

There are several benefits that can be enjoyed by a small hospitality company by developing strategic alliances with bigger businesses as well as its stakeholders. The primary stakeholders of the companies are the investors, employees, customers and suppliers (Pedrini and Ferri, 2019). Their well-being is directly related to the scale and profit of the business. Therefore, companies treat the interest of the stakeholders as a priority and often it drives them to form an alliance with the comparatively bigger market players so that the interest of the stakeholders is met. Small-scale companies in the hospitality business often lack social media marketing (SMM) hence they are not able to build recognition among the people regarding their brands due to scarce resources.

However, this can be mitigated by forming a strategic alliance with a company that helps them in SMM by promoting their brands through social media, website advertisement and many other modes of advertisements through quality content. In some cases, small-scale businesses often lack infrastructure even after serving quality and variety of food (Akpan *et al*. 2022). The lack of funding is the major reason behind it, which stops them from having a place that can provide dining facilities to a large number of people. This causes them to lose revenue despite having potential customers. Through strategic alliances, small-scale businesses are able to generate sufficient funding which helps them to afford a bigger place that can serve a large number of people at a time. This results in increasing the revenue of the business. SMM also proves its worth in articulating information about the increased capacity of the restaurants (Mason *et al*. 2021). Influencers like food vloggers who have a significant number of followers are able to reach out to a large number of people through their quality content and they are supposed to receive a large number of customers when the customers are aware of their increased capacity. Another advantage that a relatively new entrant in the hospitality industry can enjoy through strategic alliance is regarding the reputation of the brand. It is particularly impossible for a small business to have an overnight reputation in the hospitality industry since building a reputation is a prolonged process (Sergeevna, 2020). Brands enjoy a reputation by catering for the trust of customers for a specific period. When they frame an alliance with a company of the same industry which has an identity among the customers, the reputation seems to get transferred to them. Here social media proves to be helpful in circulating this information. Through social media advertisements, customers who are familiar with the partner company get to know about their alliance with the new company. Thus SMM helps them to create a reputation in a short period of time.

Conclusion

It is concluded after doing the research work that the research aimed to examine the relevance and impact of social media on hospitality marketing. It also aimed to find the increasing use of SM in the hospitality industry that will benefit the small hospitality businesses after getting connected with the big hospitality businesses. It improves the overall development, customer satisfaction and brand loyalty of small hospitality businesses. It also states the impact of using SM in hospitality businesses which includes both positive and negative impacts such as increasing brand awareness, constant interaction with customers, and promotion positive impact
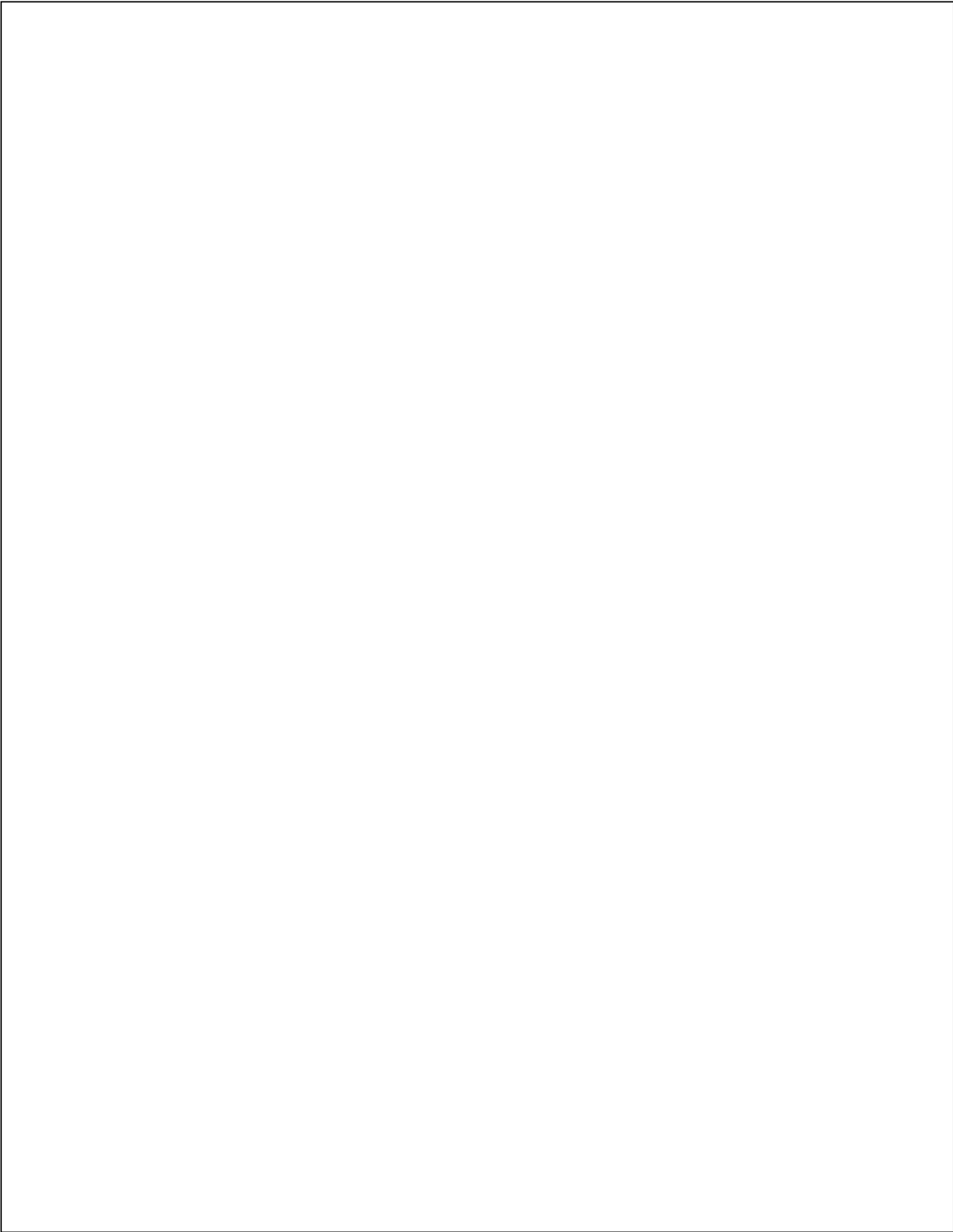
whereas negative feedback, rumours spreading, and the risk of customer private data spreading or cybersecurity concerns. It also concludes the challenges faced by hospitality businesses by using SM in marketing strategy such as creating quality content, collaborating with influencers, selecting perfect SM platforms, and engaging followers. It describes the difficulties faced by small businesses while implementing SMM which include low budget, lack of technical skilled labour, limitation on time, and balancing several platforms. Lastly, it concludes with the factors which influence small hospitality businesses to create strategic alliances with big hospitality businesses to grow and develop in this changing environment.

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