



Tourism Analytics: Promoting Asian tourism using social media analytics.



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and context

A new age in the marketing and experience of travel destinations has been set in by the integration of digital technology and tourism. Asia has long drawn travelers from all over the world with its diverse range of cultures, historical sites, and natural wonders. The tourism industry in the area has grown to be a vital pillar of economic expansion, greatly boosting GDP and employment in neighboring nations. With the rise of social media in recent years, the landscape of tourist promotion has changed tremendously, radically changing how destinations interact with prospective guests (APAC, 2024).

Due to the widespread use of social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and WeChat, there are now more chances than ever for customized marketing. According to (Benxiang Zeng, 2017), 87% of travelers now use social media platforms for trip inspiration, their personal experiences, get ideas for new trips, and get evaluations instead of relying just on brochures and websites. As a result, there is a sizable collection of user-generated data and material that is ready for analysis and use in focused marketing campaigns. However, in the context of Asian tourism, this data is still underutilized despite the abundance of information that is available. Due to their sluggish adoption of modern analytics, many tourism boards and businesses have missed out on information that may improve their marketing campaigns.

Marketers can learn more about what drives travelers to a destination by utilizing social media analytics, which can help them decipher intricate patterns of customer behavior and preferences. Travel agents may monitor trends, gather data in real time, assess sentiments, and target particular audiences with their campaigns due to advanced technologies (Newberry, 2022). Furthermore, by identifying the subtle cultural diversity that appeal to visitors, these analytics may guarantee that advertisements are felt as well as seen, accurately portraying the diversity of Asian cultures.

Capturing the cultural diversity is not without its difficulties, though. Asia's multilingualism and regional cultural norms make a complex approach to data interpretation necessary. There is a

fine line between avoiding stereotypes and utilizing cultural aspects in marketing; what works in one nation might not be adapted well in another. Today's astute travelers look for real experiences that capture the essence of the places they have chosen, thus the promotional content's authenticity is critical to its success (S. Mostafa Rasoolimanesh, 2021).

Despite social media analytics' crucial role in developing successful tourism strategies, the Asian travel sector appears to be lacking in its use. This gap is a lost chance to interact meaningfully and significantly with prospective travelers. It also emphasizes how urgently the sector must change to survive in the digital age, when making decisions based on data is essential to maintaining competitiveness in a crowded international market.

In this context, the research looks into how to capture and incorporate cultural nuances into marketing campaigns, as well as how little social media analytics is used to promote Asian travel. The study aims to provide insights and frameworks that can advance the Asian tourism industry by analyzing the intersection of data analytics and cultural representation. It does this by utilizing social media to its fullest potential and connecting with travelers in an increasingly online and connected world.

1.2 Problem statement

The main issue that the research aims to solve is twofold. First and foremost, social media data is significantly underutilized in the context of promoting Asian travel. Tourism businesses in Asia have not yet completely utilized social media platforms' rich behavioral insights and plenty of user-generated material for data-driven marketing strategies.

Second of all, there aren't any comprehensive frameworks that respect and take into account the cultural diversity of the region while integrating social media analytics with the promotion of Asian vacation destinations. The intricate cultural diversity that distinguishes Asian nations are frequently not taken into consideration by current techniques, which might result in generic marketing efforts that ignore the distinctive cultural aspects that attract to tourists.

According to (Stephanie Hays, 2012), these issues lead to a deficit in targeted and culturally

relevant marketing campaigns, which are crucial in the current digital environment where tourists look for genuine and significant experiences. The lack of customized marketing strategies can impede the potential for expansion and competitiveness of the Asian tourism sector worldwide. The study intends to determine the reasons behind the underutilization of social media data, investigate the obstacles to creating useful frameworks, and suggest solutions to allow the Asian travel industry to adopt a more advanced, data-driven, and culturally sensitive marketing approach (Abbas Alizadeh, 2017).

1.3 Objective and research question

The objective of this research is multifaceted. It seeks to determine how underutilized social media analytics are and to critically examine the state of tourism promotion in Asia today. In addition to evaluating analytics' ability to identify and capitalize on the cultural quirks that distinguish Asian travel destinations, the study aims to disentangle the challenges of using data analytics in a culturally diverse setting.

The objective of the research is to put forward practical suggestions that will help the tourism sector make better use of social media data and create a culture where cultural diversity is acknowledged and preserved in marketing campaigns. By doing this, the study hopes to improve the marketing strategies used by the travel and tourism sector and make sure they are data-driven, culturally aware, and profitable, which will ultimately lead to a more robust and sustainable growth of tourism in Asia.

The research question:

How can social media analytics be improved to enhance the promotion of tourism in Asia while capturing unique characteristics to each destination?

Sub-questions:

a. What are the barriers preventing the effective utilization of social media analytics in Asian tourism promotion?

b. In what ways can social media data be leveraged to develop marketing strategies that

are culturally diverse and resonate with diverse audiences?
c. What best practices can be established to ensure that the promotion of Asian travel destinations respects and amplifies cultural diversity?

Table 1. Summary of research questions

1.4 Justification of the study

Tourism, an industry that drives growth, creates jobs, and fosters development, has a tremendous impact on Asia's economic and cultural landscapes. Beyond its economic value, tourism has cultural significance as it showcases Asia's unique past to the globe and fosters cultural interchange and understanding. Considering the vital role that tourism plays, efficient marketing techniques are not only advantageous but also necessary to maintain and grow the industry's influence.

Social media has emerged as the hub of information sharing and impact in the digital age, especially when it comes to making travel-related decisions. More and more travelers are using these sites to share their experiences, get inspiration, and feel validated. Social media analytics provide a unique chance to comprehend and interact with prospective travelers by instantly assessing feedback, preferences, and trends. Travel firms may create effective, tailored advertisements that speak to the unique cultural quirks and individual interests of a worldwide audience by utilizing this wealth of data.

However, the Asian travel and tourism sector has been hesitant to fully utilize social media analytics despite these promising opportunities. This reluctance makes it difficult to develop campaigns that accurately capture Asia's rich cultural diversity, which could cause stagnation in an otherwise vibrant industry. The suggested research is important because it aims to close this gap by figuring out what hinders the usage of data and creating plans for incorporating cultural quirks into marketing initiatives. Additionally, it was found that 42 (95.5%) European countries are represented in at least one social media application, indicating that Europe is the continent that uses social media the most. Africa, on the other hand, is obviously lagging behind other continents as 32 (59.3%) of its nations do not use social media. Asian Countries in Asia are

similarly lagging behind other nations in the global adoption of social media, with 17 (36.20%) of them not using any form of social media (Figure.1).

Continents		Present in at least one social media outlet?		Total
		No	Yes	
North America	Frequency	2	20	22
	%	9.1	90.90	100.0
South America	Frequency	1	11	12
	%	8.3	91.70	100.0
Europe	Frequency	2	42	44
	%	4.5	95.50	100.0
Africa	Frequency	32	22	54
	%	59.3	40.70	100.0
Asia	Frequency	17	30	47
	%	36.2	63.80	100.0
Australia/Oceania	Frequency	4	10	14
	%	28.6	71.40	100.0

Figure 1. Social Media presence by continents (Abbas Alizadeh, 2015)

This study is justified by its potential to revolutionize the promotion of Asian travel by guaranteeing that marketing tactics are both data-driven and culturally appropriate. By doing this, it hopes to enable the tourism sector in Asia to create marketing campaigns that are more successful, captivating, and representative of the distinctive features that draw tourists from around the world to Asia. The unrealized potential of social media analytics to enhance the cultural and economic fabric of Asian tourism is being realized with the help of this research (Zheng Xiang, 2010).

1.5 Significance of the study

This study has important ramifications for the tourism sector, the use of data analytics, and cultural preservation. It provides a road map for the tourism industry to improve the efficacy of promotional efforts using data-driven tactics, which could lead to a rise in visitor numbers and greater financial rewards for Asian travel destinations. Through the use of social media analytics, stakeholders can develop more accurate insights into the preferences and actions of travelers, which can result in more appealing and customized marketing campaigns that could give them a competitive advantage in the world travel industry.

In the realm of data analytics, the study underscores the importance of analytics in deciphering complex consumer data, setting a precedent for its application in regional marketing practices. By emphasizing the need for approachable analytical tools and frameworks that travel industry promoters of all skill levels can use, it also aims to bridge the digital gap.

(Daniel Leung, 2013) Culturally, the research emphasizes the need to preserve and promote the rich diversity of Asian cultures in a respectful and authentic manner. The study calls for a respectful depiction of cultural heritage by including cultural nuances into marketing techniques. This ensures that tourism development does not come at the expense of cultural identity, but rather helps to celebrate and preserve it (Ana María Munar, 2014).

1.6 Organization of the study

The dissertation is organized into various chapters that work together to provide a thorough grasp of how social media analytics are used to promote travel to Asia.

Chapter 1: The research is presented, which also lays out the introduction, background and importance of the study.

Chapter 2: A critical literature review conducted in the research is presented.

Chapter 3: The methodology is covered in full, which also includes the procedures for data collecting and research design.

Chapter 4: The results of the analysis is presented, consist of the information gathered.

Chapter 5: Discussion on the findings which is in light of the research questions and objectives.

Chapter 6: Recommendations for additional research and conclusions are presented.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The burgeoning influence of social media on global industries is unequivocal, with the tourism sector, particularly in Asia, being no exception. This review of the literature aims to methodically investigate a collection of academic material that already exists on the application of social media analytics to the advertising of travel to Asia. The objectives of this review are to summarize the results from a wide range of studies, to determine the present level of knowledge, and to highlight the gaps that require further investigation.

2.1 Asian tourism

2.1.1 The Evolution of Tourism in Asia

Asia has had tremendous expansion in the tourist sector, making it one of the key players in the global tourism market. Asia's growing appeal as a diverse travel destination is demonstrated by this expansion, which has been driven by an increase in foreign visitor arrivals (Wen-Chuan FU, 2020). The impacts of this expansion on the economy have been tremendous. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) stated that in 2019, tourism contributed roughly 10.3% of the world GDP, indicating the significance of the industry to the global economy (WTTC, 2019).

In Asia, tourism has a considerable positive economic impact, as evidenced by the jobs and foreign exchange gains it generates for the economy of that region (WTTC, 2019). Asian nations have witnessed the impact of tourism as a stimulant for other industries and as a catalyst for infrastructural development, owing to their distinctive cultural and natural resources (Abdur Rahman Aleemi, 2015), (Alina Bădulescu, 2018). Moreover, it has been determined that fluctuations in exchange rates have a significant impact on the economic contributions in tourism, indicating a close relationship between economic policies and the expansion of tourism (Wen-Chuan FU, 2020).

According to (Nexhbi Selimi, 2017) research studies that employ different economic models have demonstrated that, in Asian settings, tourism and economic growth are positively correlated. Studies particular to Asian nations, such as Japan and Korea, has demonstrated that an upsurge in tourists has a beneficial effect on GDP growth, highlighting the sector's importance to the advancement of national economies (Hakan Kum, 2015). Furthermore, studies show that the

revenue generated by foreign visitors to a country is a reliable predictor of its economic health, with some showing that tourism directly affects GDP growth in nations like Pakistan (Abdur Rahman Aleemi, 2015).

While some studies highlight the beneficial effects of tourism on the economy, others raise the possibility that these effects may not be felt in all Asian nations. For example, in some countries, tourism's ability to spur economic growth seems to be less substantial, suggesting a complex relationship between tourism and economic policy (Tugcu, 2014). This discrepancy demands a more thorough investigation of the ways in which distinct Asian nations could modify their tourist approaches to optimize economic benefits.

The economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism cannot be overlooked. The UNWTO highlighted a drastic decline in international tourism in 2020, with Asia and the Pacific experiencing an 84% reduction in arrivals (Figure. 2), the highest among all world regions (Tourism, 2021). However, the resilience of the sector is noted in recovery plans and the accelerated adoption of digital technologies to adapt to the new normal, which suggests a potential for a robust post-pandemic rebound (Tourism, 2021).

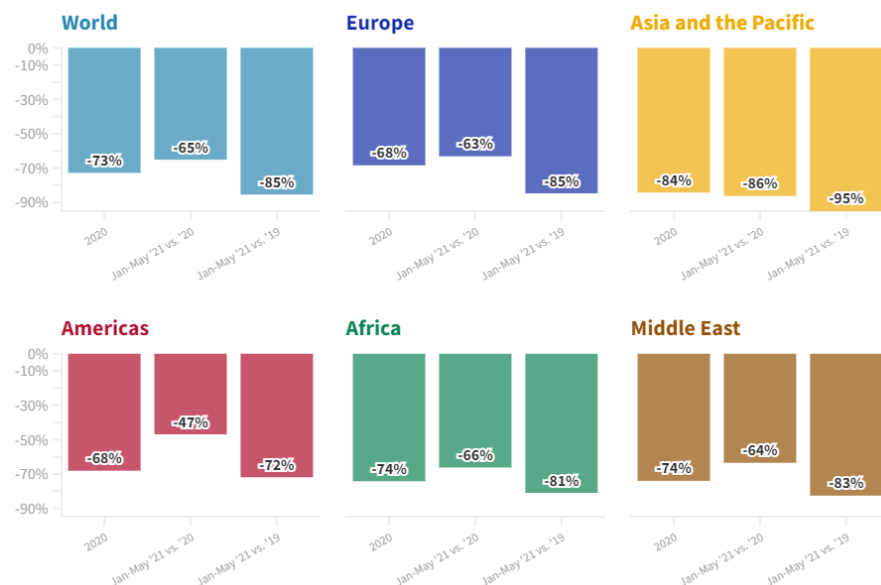


Figure 2. International Tourist Arrivals, percentage change (UNWTO, 2021)

Given that the aim of this research is to improve tourism promotion through social media

analytics, the economic importance of tourism in Asia emphasizes the necessity for creative marketing approaches that can take advantage of this expansion. The relationship between tourism and economic growth emphasizes how social media analytics may be used to optimize marketing campaigns, match them to financial objectives, and make sure they are sensitive to the subtle cultural differences of various Asian travel destinations.

Talking about one of the effective campaigns that evolved the tourism is Incredible India Campaign. The number of international visitors to India increased from 2.38 million in 2002 to 7.7 million in 2014 and 10.93 million in 2019, indicating a positive trend. India began marketing itself internationally with the Incredible India campaign, and the growth in FTAs (Foreign Tourist Arrivals) is evidence of the success. In 2013, India was also the recipient of three World Travel Awards. India's standing in the globe improved thanks to the Incredible India campaign. It also had several drawbacks, such as strong competition from China and Thailand, among others.

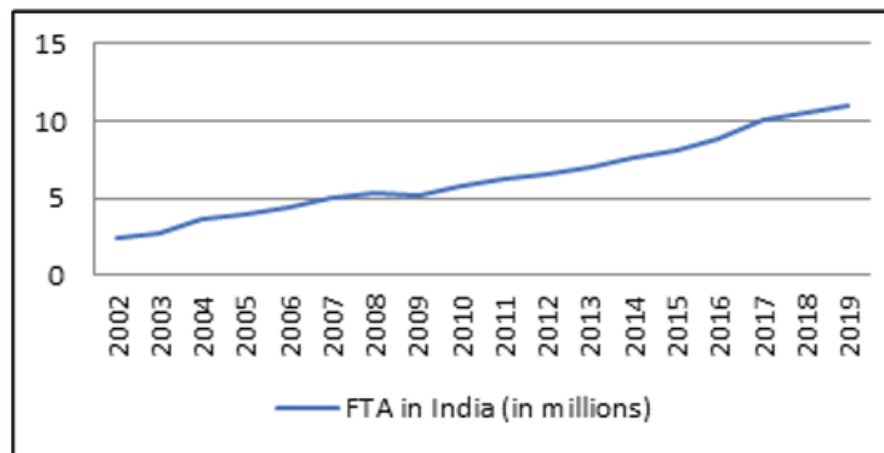


Figure 3. FTA in India (in million). Source: Ministry of tourism, Government of India

Figure 3 illustrates the increase in foreign visitor arrivals following the Government of India's Incredible India marketing campaign. The Incredible India campaign's marketing began in 2002, and since then, the bull impact has been seen in India's free trade agreements.

2.1.2. Complexities of Asian Tourism

According to (Cai, 2016), Asian tourism is intricate and diverse, ranging from the region's rich cultural diversity, vibrant politics, and swiftly growing markets. These factors are making Asia a formidable competitor to well-known travel destinations in North America and Europe. Globalization has caused a shift in focus from regional to global, which has led to an exponential rise in the number of tourists traveling to Asia and their purchasing power (Yolal, 2017). Because of this expansion, there has been a notable increase in scholarly interest in comprehending the traits, actions, and incentives of Asian tourists (Ioannis Assiouras, 2015). Marketing strategists face a maze of obstacles when it comes to Asian tourism because of the region's deeply ingrained cultural subtleties and dynamic demand. The region's tourism attraction stems from a complex interweaving of historical and modern influences, where modern tourists' search for authentic and one-of-a-kind experiences coexists with traditional behaviors like bargaining and word-of-mouth in oriental bazaars. This contradiction highlights the requirement for marketing plans that are precisely tailored to the unique cultural characteristics of Asian travel destinations.

These studies are important for practitioners, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises, as they provide practical ways to improve the tourism experience and encourage an increase in the number of visitors. For example, the varied Indian tourist market has been analyzed to identify arrival-affecting shocks, which are a sign of the larger regional complexity influencing travel behavior (Reisinger, 2009). The literature does, however, highlight a lack of comparative research that could provide a more thorough knowledge of the subtle differences between various Asian countries, in spite of the wealth of data and insights gathered. If addressed, the deficiency in comparative analysis could offer a comprehensive understanding of the tourism dynamics of the region and contribute to the development of successful cross-cultural marketing tactics. Furthermore, as seen by the growth of ASEAN and the tourism potential of nations like South Korea, the interaction of political, economic, and cultural forces in Asian tourism is another aspect that needs more research (Alieva, 2023)

2.1.3 Culture's influence on Asian tourism

The growing tourism industry on this continent is evidence of both its economic expansion and a changing cultural mindset that sees travel as a need rather than a luxury. The sharp rise in outbound travel from Asia, which climbed by 53% between 2009 and 2013, surpassing the rate of global growth and demonstrating the region's desire for tourism, is indicative of this shift (GmbH, 2014).

According to (Tripadvisor, 2016) Asian visitors have historically been thought to be less likely to take vacation time because of institutional and cultural restrictions at work. But current data suggests that Asians are becoming less averse to taking leisure trips, driven by the substantial growth of the middle class and the availability of disposable means for travel. China's explosive growth in tourism spending over the last ten years—a 1101% increase—exemplifies the potential of the area. With ramifications for the dynamics of the global tourism industry, the nation now holds the top spot in the world for foreign tourism spending. (Asianlite, 2017) demonstrated by programs like Abu Dhabi's goal to draw Chinese tourists and Australia's special tourism year targeted at the Chinese market, destinations worldwide have implemented strategic tactics to attract Asian tourists.

(Sanath N. R. Wijesinghe, 2017) emphasizes how tourism research must embrace the cultural diversity that distinguishes Asian markets by moving beyond a Western-centric perspective. Designing meaningful travel experiences that satisfy the expectations and behaviors of Asian visitors requires an understanding of these distinctions. Furthermore, recognizing these cultural aspects is about more than just avoiding marketing blunders—it's about seizing chances to establish long-lasting competitive advantages through creative, culturally relevant strategies. The review emphasizes how important it is for academics and industry professionals working in tourism to have a deeper grasp of Asian travel markets. It pushes the travel industry to look beyond only economic factors and explore the cultural foundations that influence traveler expectations and behaviors in Asia. By adopting this, the travel and tourism sector will fully capitalize on the potential of this diverse and quickly expanding market, creating experiences that are both profitable and culturally rewarding (Yuquan, 2002).

2.1.4 Cultural diversity and sensitivity in Asian tourism marketing

The cultural sensitivity and diversity of Asian travelers constitute a complex issue in the tourism industry that calls for a sophisticated approach in marketing methods. The significance of comprehending the cultural quirks that influence the choices and behaviors of Asian tourists is highlighted by the region's ascent to prominence in the world tourism sector. This knowledge is essential for creating marketing plans that will successfully appeal to this diverse group of people. The historical perspective suggests that Western practices are the origin of the modern understanding of tourism. However, the situation has changed substantially as new Asian source markets have emerged. Asia's tourism industry has evolved from welcoming Western visitors to establishing itself as a major player influencing travel trends worldwide (Winter, 2009).

It is imperative that Asian voices be represented in tourism research since this highlights the cultural nuances and diversity of Asian travelers' experiences. This diversity is demonstrated by (Tavakoli, 2016), covers a wide range of tourism-related issues and Asian tourists. These pieces emphasize how crucial it is to take into account cultural differences within the Asian market rather than viewing it as a monolithic, homogeneous entity.

In terms of theoretical frameworks, (Williamson, 2002) critiques Hofstede's model of national cultures for its lack of attention to subset variations within cultural groups. Rather, a qualitative interpretive technique is utilized to investigate the fluctuating experiences of Asian travelers. This method emphasizes the necessity of a theoretical framework that conceptualizes Asian cultures and visitor behaviors using indigenous knowledge, moving away from neocolonial influences in tourism research. (David K. Tse, 1988)), emphasizes how cultural variations affect how tourists behave, including their preferences for particular features of destinations, their expectations for level of service, and the quality of their lodging. (Aguirre-Rodriguez 2014) observed that Asian tourists exhibit culturally-influenced behaviors and preferences that can diverge greatly from those of Western tourists. For the tourism sector to provide experiences that are specifically adapted to the demands of Asian travelers, it is imperative that these disparities be acknowledged.

Emerging trends in Asian tourism, including female travel (Association, 2016), Islamic travel

(Scott, 2014), wellness tourism (institute, 2017), travel within regions (UNWTO/GTERC, 2015,2016,2017), and the quest of novel experiences (TripAdvisor 2016a, b). Certain patterns show how Asian travelers' tastes are changing and the possibilities for market expansion in certain areas. (Elisa C. L. Yang, 2018)urges academics and professionals to recognize the richness and diversity of Asian tourism and advocates for a comprehensive knowledge of these developments and the cultural circumstances that influence them.

According to (Emanuele Mele, 2021) there is a known lack of cross-cultural research on social media promotion of cultural tourism. Their study examines cultural value variations in Instagram posts using characteristics such as Collectivism-Individualism (Shuangyu Pan, 2014), Power Distance (Geert Hofstede, 2010), and High-Context vs. Low-Context communication (Hall., 1976). This is especially true for the tourism industry, where efficient marketing must connect with a variety of cultural backgrounds in order to effectively reach a wide range of geographic markets.

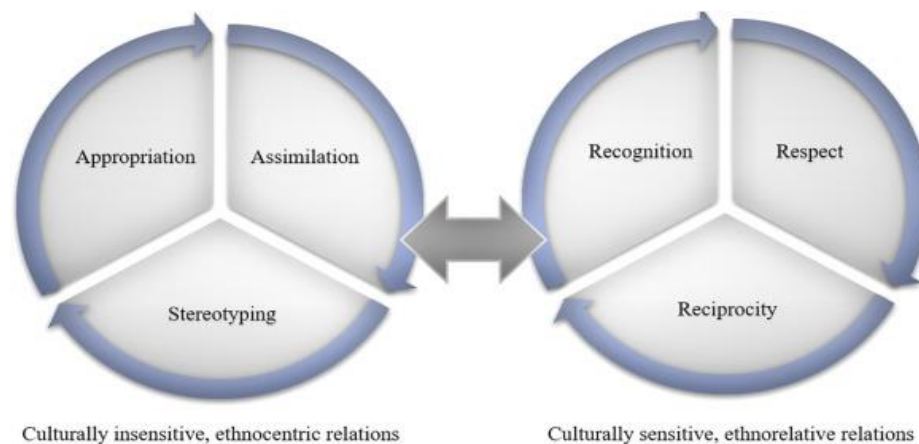


Figure 4. A conceptualization of cultural sensitivity in tourism (Arvid Viken, 2021)

2.2 Social Media in Tourism

2.2.1 Rise of social media in tourism

The rise of social media has revolutionized the way tourism destinations are marketed and experienced by travelers worldwide. According to (Leung, 2013) platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, and TripAdvisor have become integral to the travel industry,

influencing all stages of the travel experience from inspiration and planning to the post-travel review process. These platforms enable users to share experiences, reviews, and images, which in turn inspire and inform potential travelers (Munar, 2014).

According to (Huang, 2017), the pervasive impact of social media in tourism is evident in its ability to shape perceptions and travel intentions. For instance, Instagram's visual-centric platform has become a powerful tool for destination marketing, with picturesque images of destinations often leading to increased tourist interest. According to (Leung, 2013) and (Shameek Mukhopadhyay, 2022) Facebook's extensive reach and sophisticated targeted advertising capabilities allow for personalized marketing campaigns, while Twitter's real-time communication facilitates instant engagement and customer service.

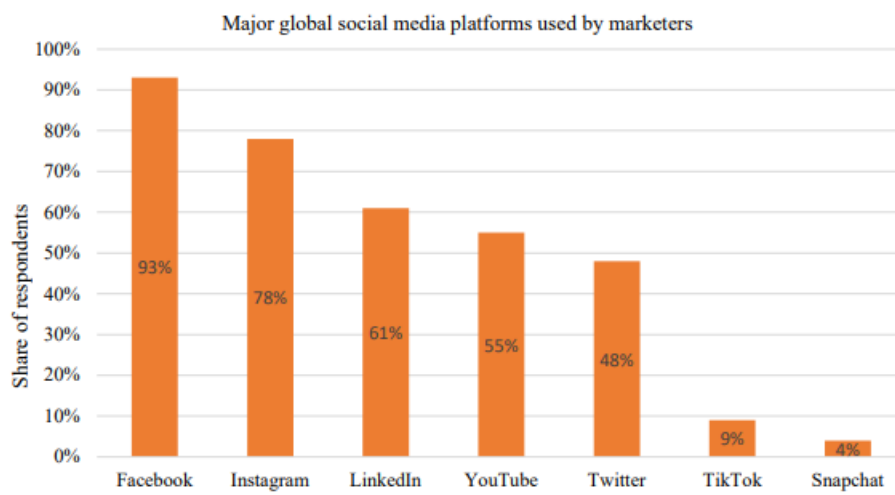


Figure 5. Social media platforms used by marketers as of October 2023 (Shameek Mukhopadhyay, 2022).

Moreover, user-generated content on social media platforms provides authentic insights into destinations, influencing others' travel decisions more than traditional marketing materials could (Gretzel, 2006). According to (Ye, 2011)TripAdvisor, with its vast repository of user reviews and ratings, has become a go-to resource for travelers seeking information on hotels, restaurants, and attractions, directly influencing booking decisions.

According to (Marine-Roig, 2015), the impact of social media on tourism is not limited to marketing and consumer decision-making; it also extends to destination management and development. Social media analytics can provide destination marketing organizations (DMOs) with valuable insights into traveler preferences and trends, which can inform strategic planning and development.

A study by (Hays, 2013) highlighted the use of social media by national tourism organizations, underscoring its importance as a strategic marketing tool. The research by (Hays, 2013) concluded that social media facilitates a two-way communication channel between destinations and tourists, enabling DMOs to engage with audiences in a dynamic and interactive manner.

The economic impact of social media on tourism is also significant. A report by (Facebook, 2019) indicated that travel-related content on the platform influenced the travel plans of its users, with many businesses in the tourism sector experiencing growth in revenue after implementing Facebook-based marketing strategies.

In summary, social media's rise has had a profound impact on the tourism industry. It has transformed the way destinations are marketed, influenced traveler behavior, and provided DMOs with tools for strategic planning and engagement. As social media continues to evolve, its role in tourism promotion is expected to grow even further, making it an essential component of any modern tourism marketing strategy.

2.2.2 Role of social media in tourism marketing

According to (Chen, 2012) ; (Wamba, 2013), tourism marketing has witnessed a sea change caused by social media analytics (SMA), which has replaced traditional data analysis with a more sophisticated, real-time understanding of customer behavior and preferences. With the goal to obtain insights into customer opinions—a crucial component in the context-sensitive tourist industry—SMA leverages both structured and unstructured data from internet platforms (Fan, 2014).

(Giglio, 2020) have highlighted the multifarious significance of sentiment, content, and trend

analysis in SMA's pertinence in the tourism industry. Sentiment analysis, for instance, uses natural language processing to classify how the public feels about certain locations, providing a direct line of communication to assess and maybe change public opinion. (He, 2017); (Wamba, 2016) Conversely, trend analysis recognizes and forecasts changes in tourist demand, while content analysis breaks down and groups data into analytical units for decision-making (McCreary, 2020), (Zarezadeh, 2020).

The widespread application of SMA in destination marketing is indicative of its strategic role, as it contributes to the development of tailored marketing strategies and improves comprehension of visitor behavior (Song, 2020). It also emphasizes how crucial digital storytelling and content sharing are to destination branding (Lund, 2020). These tools have the ability to positively or negatively impact a location's reputation.

According to (Tussyadiah, 2009), SMA offers a lot of potential, but there are downsides when using it for tourism promotion. There are still issues with data mining's ethical ramifications and the veracity of internet material. In addition, research indicates that in order to enhance conventional SMA approaches, there is a need for a deeper integration of cutting-edge strategies like machine learning (David-Negre et al., 2018).

According to (Wamba, 2016); (Mirzaalian, 2019), SMA influences prospective visitors' decisions and impressions by reflecting customer sentiments and behavioral patterns. SMA includes a wide range of analytical techniques, including geographic clustering and natural language processing, that go beyond simple data interpretation to forecast consumer behavior and market trends (Andrienko, 2013).

Effective management and interpretation of social media data necessitates the use of strong and flexible analytical tools due to its broad and ever-changing nature. For example, social media sampling approaches are frequently used to collect data. Data is then examined using a variety of computational tools, combining network analysis and statistical analysis to provide a thorough picture of consumer patterns (Van der Gaag, 2005).

Taking into account the direct influence of social media on traveler decision-making, the strategic significance of SMA is further enhanced. Traveler experiences that are shared, such as photos and tales, have a big impact on other people's location preferences (Song, 2020), (Giglio, 2020). Tourism marketers can adjust their strategy to meet changing market demands by keeping an eye on and analyzing these digital tales. But the literature also points out a big gap in the use of SMA in the tourism industry, and it calls for greater empirical study, particularly when it comes to using advanced analytics and machine learning to improve marketing tactics (Önder, 2019).

The research's aim of improving Asian travel promotion through SMA is in line with the review. It makes clear how important SMA is to comprehending and influencing the preferences, actions, and decision-making processes of tourists. Tourism stakeholders may effectively promote destinations and ensure that the cultural nuances of Asian tourism are appropriately captured and communicated by including SMA into their marketing strategies.

In conclusion, SMA proves to be an essential part of the overall marketing strategy for the tourism and travel industry because of its capacity to translate massive volumes of data into useful insights. SMA's contention is becoming more and more important as Asian tourism develops, necessitating a sophisticated strategy that takes into consideration the region's complex cultural landscape.

2.2.3 Challenges in utilizing social media data in tourism:

According to (Iglesias-Sánchez, 2019), the growing field of social media analytics offers a powerful tool for promoting travel, but in order to fully utilize this resource, a number of fundamental challenges must be addressed. The challenges of using Web 2.0 conversations to shape destinations' online reputations were. They hypothesized that although social media can strategically support decision-making and long-term brand building, systematic data exploitation from these sources is still elusive.

According to (Morgan, 2013), authenticity, brand narrative, and leadership are crucial for gaining a competitive edge in the tourism industry, where social media data monitoring and

analysis is essential. Asserting that while an active social media presence is associated with increased conservation, it does not always convert into proportionate sentiment and involvement, looks at the relationship between the competitiveness of locations and their online reputation.

According to (Buffa, 2018), there is a non-linear link between social media activity and user engagement since places that generate a lot of material do not always see a matching increase in content sharing or tourist participation. This is a crucial insight because it highlights how difficult it is to convert social media efforts into real-world interactions with tourists.

Furthermore, even though co-creation techniques on social media are acknowledged for improving visitor engagement, the results indicate that these techniques are not widely applied for product development or encouraging involvement, and the methods for offering feedback are still unclear. This disparity highlights the need for a more structured approach to co-creation and innovation and highlights a major obstacle to engaging tourists beyond simple content generation.

According to (Füller, 2009) and (Iglesias-Sánchez, 2019), these results have numerous ramifications. It is recommended that destination management organizations (DMOs) take a more comprehensive approach to reputation management by implementing a two-pronged strategy that keeps an eye on broader online discussions about their destinations in addition to their own channels. Furthermore, a quality-over-quantity paradigm for social media content strategy suggests that the content's value and appeal to tourists should be prioritized over its sheer amount. In addition to arguing for more effective methods to guarantee reputation and innovation management success, this research urges improvements in the analysis of open innovation and its effects on competitiveness. Additionally, it highlights social listening as a tactical instrument for sustainable destination construction and makes the case for the necessity of advanced technology tools to assess online reputation.

In conclusion, (Iglesias-Sánchez, 2019) study makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the difficulties associated with using social media data in the travel industry. Although it represents a significant advancement in the sector, it also serves as a wake-up call for greater investigation and the creation of more sophisticated techniques in order to fully realize

the enormous potential of social media analytics in the travel industry.

2.2.4 Social media analytics for destination branding and promotion:

In the tourism industry, destination branding is a dynamic construct that serves as an opportunity for locations to communicate to prospective tourists the promise of distinctive experiences.

(Almeyda-Ibáñez, 2017) offers a thorough analysis of the branding literature, tying it in with the specifics of the travel and tourism sector and highlighting the unique difficulties of branding in these settings. They stress that branding encompasses all of the experiences that travelers can expect to have and goes beyond just portraying a place aesthetically.

The implicit promise given to customers—a promise that includes the anticipated experiences and the destination's emotional resonance—is the fundamental component of branding.

(Almeyda-Ibáñez, 2017) emphasize the complex function of branding, which helps to communicate intrinsic values, build relationships with customers, and distinguish a product.

(Leuthesser, 1988) and (Aaker, 1991) describe brand equity as a collection of assets and liabilities associated with a brand that increase or decrease the value offered to a company or its clients. A crucial element of destination branding, brand equity, has been conceptualized in a number of ways in marketing literature. Despite the fact that its elusive nature has given rise to a variety of interpretations, it is generally understood to be a confluence of connections and behaviors that increase a product's sales and profit margins.

According to (Keller, 1993), the psychological, economic, and cultural studies approaches are the broad categories of theoretical frameworks for modeling brand equity. The psychology-based approach concentrates on the cognitive processes and associative networks that consumers develop with brands.

(Ritchie, 1998) defined Destination branding as a combination of identity, differentiation, and the assurance of a memorable travel experience that is exclusively linked to the destination. According to (Ritchie, 1998), groundbreaking research from the late 1990s credited with the development of destination branding. City slogans gave way to more comprehensive strategic initiatives as nations realized they had to stand out in the fiercely competitive tourism industry,

including Australia, Hong Kong, and Spain. According (Pike, 2012) to the destination branding process contains three fundamental core elements based on Aaker's branding concept: brand identity, brand positioning, and brand image. The fundamental ideas of the destination branding process are shown in figure 1.

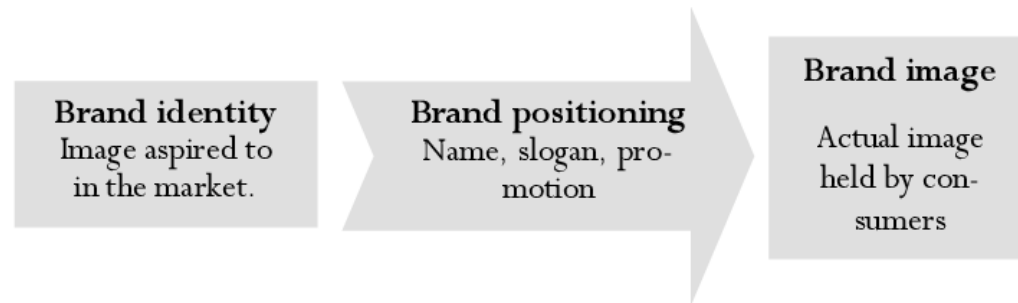


Figure 6. Destination branding elements (Pike, 2012)

Destination branding is not without its difficulties, though. According to (Blain, 2005), the challenges that destination marketing organizations (DMOs) encounter, include dealing with a variety of stakeholders that have different interests, dealing with political pressures, and dealing with frequently limited funds. Authenticity is emphasized as a primary priority, highlighting the need of sincere and principled branding that captures the essence of the destination.

The emotional characteristics of excitement, sophistication, and competence—as well as their prominence through social media interactions—are examined in relation to the emotional aspects of branding (Dickinger & Lalicic, 2016). It is suggested that the destination branding strategy should make use of this emotional capital as a new kind of value. The assessment also highlights how user-generated content (UGC) affects destination branding, highlighting how a wide range of stakeholders can have a substantial impact on brand narratives and perceptions. This highlights how participatory branding is in the digital age (Tal Samuel-Azran, 2019).

The development of destination branding strategies is also influenced by information and technological advancements. In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the habits and preferences of visitors, new methods for evaluating and utilizing the massive volumes of data generated by travelers on social media are made possible by big data, deep learning algorithms, and natural language processing (Liu Liu, 2020). The survey also highlights the rise

of younger users, especially Generation Z, who are engaged content producers on social media whose interactions with tourism organizations can impact how people view travel destinations more broadly (Luna-Cortés, n.d.).

Research is still lacking in the areas of sustainable tourism and the incorporation of green practices into branding strategies, especially in the wake of international crises like the COVID-19 pandemic that have made it necessary to develop communication strategies that specifically take into account tourists' sustainable and responsible behavior. (Shiwei Shen, 2020), (Sevin, et al., 2020)

Finally, the systematic analysis by (Rudolf, 2022) highlights the need for more scholarly attention to this synergistic relationship and offers a thorough assessment of the current state of destination branding and social media. It also identifies important study areas. The study indicates that although there is a lack of academic research in this field, there is growing importance and room for innovation in destination branding strategies, as seen by the rise in scientific production and the specialized focus in tourism publications (Rudolf, 2022).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

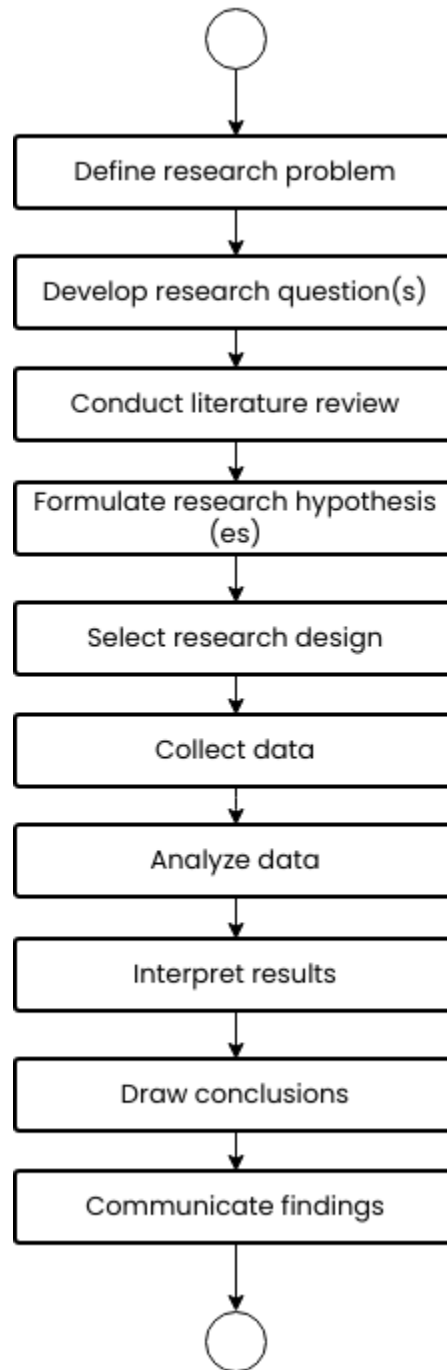


Figure 7. Flow chart of research methodology. Source: Google

According to (Mark Saunders, 2019) the research onion is a multi-layered framework that aids in the understanding of the numerous steps and components involved in planning and carrying out research. It covers many tiers of research decisions and procedures and offers an organized approach to research technique.

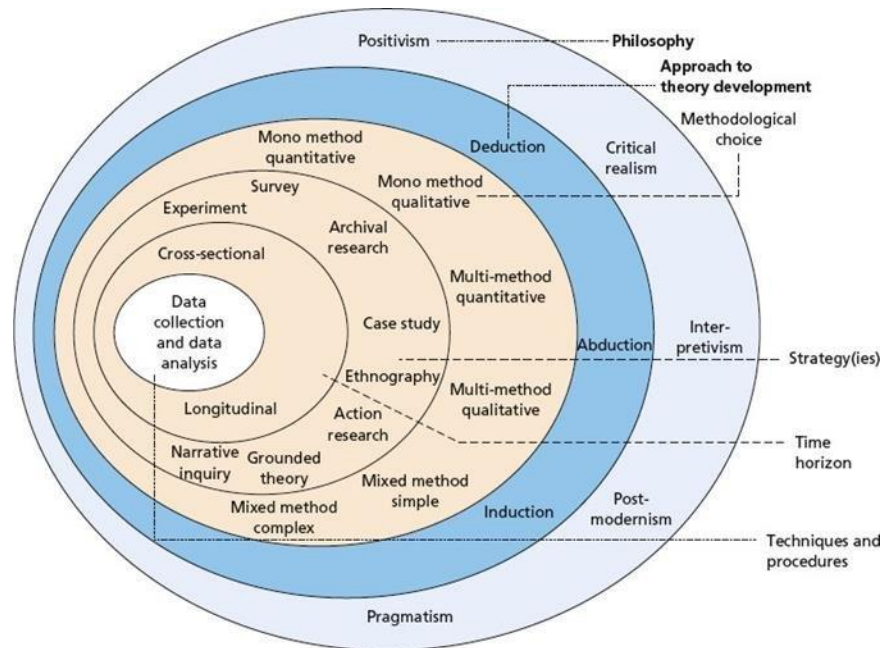


Figure 8 . Research Onion (Mark Saunders, 2019)

3.2 Research method and approach

Qualitative research explores the richness and depth of social phenomena with the goal of obtaining rich, descriptive insights, in contrast to quantitative research, which uses statistical analysis to quantify phenomena (John W. Creswell, 2017). This research approach uses a qualitative research strategy, which is essentially focused on comprehending human experiences, behaviors, emotions, and the social situations in which they arise.

The qualitative method works especially effectively for this research because it focuses on the use of social media analytics to promote travel in Asia. It makes it possible to analyze personal experiences and viewpoints, which is essential for comprehending how social media information affects the views and behaviors of tourists. Due to its very nature, the tourism industry is

complex and heavily influenced by social, cultural, and personal factors (Richards, 2018). Conversely, social media provides an evolving environment where these elements come together and manifest themselves in different ways, such as through user-generated content or well-thought-out marketing initiatives.

Considering the Asian tourism context, a qualitative method offers the necessary flexibility and sensitivity to effectively capture the nuances of cultural richness and diversity. It makes it possible to explore how various Asian cultures are portrayed and understood on social media platforms—a task that may be difficult to fully capture with just quantitative indicators (Jennings, 2005).

3.3 Research design

The research design is centered on a case study methodology that allows for a thorough investigation of particular cases of social media analytics-based tourism promotion in different Asian locations (Yin, 2014) like India, Korea and UAE. This method allows for a thorough analysis of the phenomenon under study, making it perfect for comprehending complicated topics in the context of real-life situations (Jack, 2008).

The methodology for collecting data will be by semi-structured interviews and secondary data collection using document analysis. (Crabtree, 2006) states that qualitative insights into the nuanced nature of social media analytics in tourism promotion can be obtained through interviews with marketing specialists, social media analysts, and tourism officials.

In order to detect and analyze patterns and themes in the data, thematic analysis will be used for the interview responses and document analysis (Clarke, 2006). This approach works well with qualitative data because it makes it easier to comprehend the data in great depth and with subtlety. Social media content will be analyzed methodically with an emphasis on sentiment, engagement metrics, and theme representation (Neuendorf, 2013).

The study will carefully explore ethical issues, adhering to recommendations for informed consent, privacy, and confidentiality (Resnik, 2020). A key component of this research strategy

is the emphasis on cultural sensitivity in the interpretation of data, particularly in light of the diverse Asian setting.

3.4 Research philosophy

The interpretivist research philosophy serves as the foundation for the research philosophy of this research. This philosophy is important for qualitative research, particularly for studies that center on human behavior and the social sciences (Mark Saunders, 2016) which aims to understand the varying subjective meanings and interpretations that consumers and industry experts attach to social media within the framework of Asian tourism (Bryman, 2016).

Interpretivism in the framework of this research allows for a thorough investigation of the various ways that stakeholders in the tourism industry see and use social media analytics technologies. This method is especially useful for analyzing the subtle cultural differences and individual experiences of travelers and marketers in Asia's varied and culturally rich environments (Wang, 2017). It makes it possible to comprehend the varying subjective interpretations and meanings that people and groups give to the social media experiences they have when traveling (Myers, 1999). According to (Loraine Blaxter, 2010), this research philosophy emphasizes the significance of context in comprehending social phenomena and states that the insights obtained are frequently context-specific and may not always be transferable to other settings.

3.5 Data collection method

Methods of collecting data for this study includes semi-structured interviews and secondary data collection, will be designed and implemented using an interpretivist framework. A set of questions are asked to the participants of the interview to get their perspectives and experiences on the topic. Secondary data is collected like the tourism campaigns across Asia that provide in-depth insights on the representation of tourism. These techniques have been used in order to fully convey the diversity and depth of viewpoints, attitudes, and experiences held by the many parties involved in promoting travel to Asia (Silverman, 2016). The research attempts to gain insights into the intricate interactions between social media use, cultural representation in tourism, and the analytics that inform these marketing strategies by concentrating on qualitative data.

3.6 Data analysis

A comprehensive understanding of the tactics, difficulties, and effectiveness of social media in marketing tourism can be attained by utilizing qualitative methodologies, such as secondary data analysis of social media and tourism and semi-structured interviews with stakeholders in the tourism and social media industry. Insights on social media users' opinions and attitudes toward Asian travel destinations are also provided, which is important information for creating effective marketing campaigns (Krippendorff, 2013).

Recurring themes, patterns, and narratives can be found in the gathered data by using thematic analysis, a popular technique in qualitative research (Braun, 2006). This method works especially well for examining textual information from interview transcripts and social media. It makes it easier to identify key themes that sum up users' and stakeholders' views and experiences collectively, which leads to a deeper comprehension of how social media affects travel promotion.

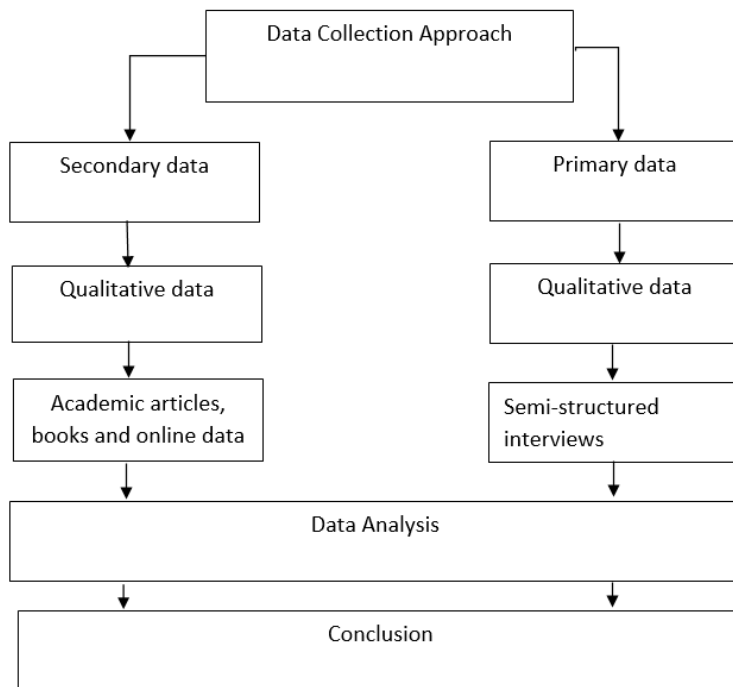


Figure 9. Data Collection Approach. Source: Self-constructed

3.7 Sample selection

According to (Mark Saunders, 2019), studies frequently face constraints that make it impractical to gather data from every single example, including time constraints, budget limitations, and restricted access. As a result, by concentrating on a representative subset of cases, researchers use sampling strategies to expedite their data collection efforts (Braun, 2006).

Usually, researchers have to choose between probability and nonprobability sampling as their general categories of sample techniques. The chosen sampling strategy for this study is consistent with purposive nonprobability sampling, which is a methodology that works well for finding the most pertinent and data-rich samples for the purpose of the research (Judith Bell, 2019). Interviewing people working as professionals provides interesting insights into the work and the marketing tactics used.

Participants	Title	Sector	Experience
Interviewer 1	Social Media Influencer	Social Media	Holds a degree in tourism management with a specialization in Digital Marketing
Interviewer 2	Marketing Manager	Tourism	An MBA in Marketing with a focus on digital strategies with an experience of over 3 years
Interviewer 3	Tourist	Tourism	With an experience of travelling all the continents in the world
Interviewer 4	Social Media Influencer	Social Media	Holds a degree in Journalism with an experience of over 5 years
Interviewer 5	Marketing Consultant	Tourism	An MBA and an experience in marketing
Interviewer 6	Social Media Analyst	Social Media	With an experience of over 5 years, primarily focusing on analysing online consumer behaviours and trends

Table 2. Sample profile. Source: Self-created

3.8 Ethical consideration

This research will utilize secondary data and interview participants perspective and adhere to the research ethics criteria provided by the Aston Business School. The researcher makes sure that all ethical standards and regulations are carefully adhered to.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The findings from the content analysis of social media posts and semi-structured interviews with participants from tourism industry and social media industry are presented in the following chapter. The industries mentioned in the literature and conceptual framework are used to categorize the data gathered from respondents in this part.

4.2 Analysis of semi-structured interviews

The following tables are the summarized perspectives of each interviews conducted which covers a variety of topics related to marketing, social media, culture and tourism.

4.2.1. Interview 1

QUESTION TOPICS	KEY INSIGHTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR DISSERTATION
Visual Content in Marketing	A focus on visually appealing material to convey the essence of Asian travel.	Suggests that captivating pictures play a vital part in drawing attention to Asian travel destinations on social media.
Influence of Analytics	Analytics are used to determine trends in interaction and trending destinations.	Emphasizes how crucial data-driven methods are for choosing and showcasing tourism attractions.
Cultural Representation	Asian cultures' traditional and modern features are balanced.	Highlights the necessity of subtle cultural representation in social media content in order to appeal to a wide range of users.
Content Engagement	High interaction with opulent yet adventurous material.	Shows a preference for content that presents a variety of experiences, indicating a tactic for drawing in a wide range of viewers.
Effectiveness of social media	Storytelling is essential in addition to gorgeous information in order to	Reaffirms that story and aesthetics must be combined for social media

	stand out.	marketing to be effective.
Emerging Trends	Switch to virtual experiences and concentrate on travel for wellness and health.	Suggests fresh directions for content creation while highlighting how social media trends in travel are constantly changing.
Future of social media in Tourism	The significance of producing creative material and adjusting to the digital age.	Suggests that in order to stay relevant in the cutthroat travel industry, social media strategy must be continuously innovative.

Table 3. Key insights and implications for research based on the interview with a social media influencer.

4.2.2. Interview 2

QUESTION TOPICS	KEY INSIGHTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR DISSERTATION
Marketing strategies	Emphasize 360-degree films, interactive storytelling, and experience marketing. Utilizing content created by users to ensure authenticity.	Highlights how Asian travel is moving toward immersive and experience marketing. recommends investigating the efficacy of various digital material formats.
Influence of Analytics	Analytics play a key role in guiding destination selection, with a focus on sentiment research, demographic targeting, and developing trends.	Emphasizes the value of using data-driven methods when developing and implementing marketing strategies.
Cultural Representation	Asian civilizations exhibit a balanced portrayal of modernity and heritage. is to dispel myths and offer a comprehensive perspective.	Indicates that the marketing of tourism needs to use inclusive and varied cultural narratives.
Content Engagement	Posts that are visually appealing, interactive, and tell a story draw	Recommends emphasizing storytelling and regional viewpoints to boost attention and

	attention. Engaging content includes behind-the-scenes shots and local perspectives.	engagement.
Effectiveness of social media	Though content saturation and the changing digital landscape provide challenges, it is effective in reaching younger demographics.	Suggests that using unique tactics is essential to making a name for yourself in the crowded social media market.
Emerging Trends	A greater focus is being placed on ethical, sustainable travel and the use of AI and AR to create individualized experiences.	Shows a trend in the marketing of tourism toward environmentally friendly methods and cutting-edge technology.
Future of social media in Tourism	For comprehensive and effective campaigns, it's critical to strike a balance between digital and conventional approaches.	Suggests a coordinated strategy that makes use of both digital innovation and traditional authenticity to effectively promote travel.

Table 4. Key insights and implications for research based on the interview with a marketing manager in tourism industry.

4.2.3. Interview 3

QUESTION TOPICS	KEY INSIGHTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR DISSERTATION
Effective marketing strategies	Preference for real-world narrative that emphasizes distinctive features and useful advice.	Implies that in order to draw tourists, content must be authentic and useful.
Influence of Analytics	Decisions impacted by acceptance in the community and popularity on social media.	Shows that popularity and social proof on social media can have a big impact on travellers' decisions about where to go.
Cultural Representation	Requirement to present authentic culture, customs, and day-to-day living.	Draws attention to the need for social media material to be authentically cultural in order to improve the traveller experience.
Content	The most captivating content is	Suggests a method for drawing attention that

Engagement	visually beautiful and tells relatable, personal stories.	centres on compelling imagery and human stories.
Effectiveness of social media	There must be a balance between authentic promotion and excessive commercialization.	Suggests that sincere, non-salesy content is necessary for places to be effectively promoted.
Emerging Trends	Travel in a more environmentally conscious, wellness-focused, and sustainable manner.	Highlights expanding tendencies that should be taken into account for next marketing plans.
Future of social media in Tourism	Strong discovery tool, but for a balanced perspective, cross-referencing is necessary.	Affirms the impact of social media on travel arrangements while highlighting the need of thorough research that goes beyond social media.

Table 5. Key insights and implications for research based on the interview with a tourist.

4.2.4. Interview 4

QUESTION TOPICS	KEY INSIGHTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR DISSERTATION
Effective marketing strategies	Emphasis is on accurately representing travel places through the inclusion of personal experiences and local tales.	Suggests that in order to promote tourism and increase audience engagement, authentic and culturally rich material is necessary.
Influence of Analytics	Analytics direct the investigation of many sites, concentrating on the preferences of the viewership.	Emphasizes the value of creating content based on audience tastes and curiosities.
Cultural Representation	A responsibility to appropriately portray Asian culture and inform the audience of its importance.	Highlights the value of responsible, instructive material that honours and values cultural heritage.
Content Engagement	High levels of engagement are achieved with interactive material such as user-driven narrative and live sessions.	Argues that interactive and participatory content may be used to effectively promote travel.

Effectiveness of social media	Challenges with preserving authenticity while making adjustments for audience preferences.	Emphasizes the necessity for a balance between audience appeal and personal style in order to promote content on social media effectively.
Emerging Trends	Switch to augmented reality experiences and sustainable tourism material.	Highlights the growing interest in eco-friendly travel and cutting-edge virtual experiences among the audience.
Future of social media in Tourism	Influencers can help spread the word about cultural awareness and responsible travel.	Highlights the influencer's function in influencing opinions and encouraging moral travel.

Table 6. Key insights and implications for research based on the interview with a social media influencer.

4.2.5. Interview 5

QUESTION TOPICS	KEY INSIGHTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR DISSERTATION
Effective marketing strategies	An emphasis on influencer partnerships, narrative, cultural experiences, and interactive content.	Explore engagement strategies and narrative in marketing.
Influence of Analytics	Analytics are useful for customizing marketing campaigns by revealing patterns, trending hashtags, and forms of engagement.	The value of data-driven marketing strategies.
Cultural Representation	Presenting genuine Asian culture is essential to drawing travellers looking for uncommon encounters.	Promotions must emphasize genuine cultural components.
Content Engagement	User-generated content, real-world experiences that are relatable, and interactive elements like surveys and live sessions attract interest.	Emphasize articles that provide accurate perspectives about travel places.
Effectiveness of	Tourism may be effectively promoted	Make intelligent and focused use of

social media	through targeted engagement on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram.	social media to promote your brand.
Emerging Trends	Switch to VR/AR for immersive content and prioritize environmentally friendly travel.	Incorporate cutting-edge and environmentally responsible techniques in your plans.

Table 7. Key insights and implications for research based on the interview with a marketing consultant.

4.2.6. Interview 6

QUESTION TOPICS	KEY INSIGHTS	IMPLICATIONS FOR DISSERTATION
Effective marketing strategies	Storytelling techniques, visually captivating information, and an emphasis on cultural elements.	Suggests that in social media campaigns, destination marketing should prioritize visual material and storytelling.
Influence of Analytics	Promotion is controlled by analytics based on user interest trends.	Highlights how important it is to make data-driven decisions when choosing locations for marketing efforts.
Cultural Representation	A true audience connection requires accurate cultural portrayal.	Suggests that in order to improve destination appeal, social media material must be authentic in terms of culture.
Content Engagement	Attractive and educational pieces, as well as information about local customs and way of life.	Shows the kind of content that appeals to viewers by highlighting regional experiences.
Effectiveness of social media	Strong instrument for reaching a worldwide audience and influencing travel choices.	Confirms the influence of social media in influencing attitudes and decisions related to travel.
Emerging Trends	Travel that is sustainable, virtual reality, and customized experiences.	Hints at potential future paths for personalized and technological tourism marketing.

Table 8. Key insights and implications for research based on the interview with a social media analyst.

4.3 Thematic analysis

The researcher follows the methodology described by (Braun, 2006), which includes understanding oneself with the data, creating initial codes, identifying themes, reviewing potential themes, defining themes, and producing the report. The results of the semi-structured interviews with participants from both social media and tourism industry are presented in the following section. The data gathered from participants is arranged in this part according to the themes identified.

4.3.1. Use of Social media analytics

Exploring the ways in which audience preferences, trends, and marketing choices for travel are influenced by data from social media.

According to Interviewer 1 and 4, social media analytics significantly shapes the content strategy significantly. Identifying trends and trending destinations using SMA influences the audiences' decisions to visit an Asian destination. Also analysing the engagement patterns and focusing on the audiences' interest about a particular destination.

"I constantly monitor what destinations are trending and which posts get the most engagement." - Interviewer 1

"I analyze trends to see what destinations my audience is curious about and tailor my content accordingly." – Interviewer 4

According to Interviewers 2 and 6, SMA has become a guide to the destination selection process. By analysing trends, predicting hotspots and tailoring the campaigns across Asia to these emerging preferences. Also, analysing the engagement levels, sentiment and the demographic data to ensure that right audiences are being targeted. This data-driven approach helps us to stay agile and relevant in highly competitive market of Asia.

"Social media analytics have become integral to our destination selection process. By analyzing trends, we can predict rising hotspots to these emerging preferences." – Interviewer 2

"Analytics provide insights into what potential tourists are interested in." –

Interviewer 6

According to Interviewer 3 and 5, analysing data on popular trends, hashtags and the types of posts that receive the most engagement-like likes, comments and shares, the marketing strategies can be tailored on the go and promote the destinations effectively.

“If I notice certain places popping up frequently on my feed, with lots of likes and positive comments, it naturally draws my interest.” – Interviewer 3

“Social media analytics play a crucial role in understanding what today’s travellers are looking for.” - Interviewer 5

4.3.2 Cultural Representation, diversity and Authenticity

To draw in and inform tourists, it's critical that social media accurately portray Asian cultures. According to Interviewer 1, there holds a significant value in a balanced traditional and contemporary aspects of tourism.

“While I love showcasing traditional aspects of Asian cultures, I also highlight the contemporary lifestyle and advancements in these regions” – Interviewer 1

However, trying to portray the integral aspects of the content in a more culturally relatable way, yet being modern is what the Interviewer 1 added.

“Cultural aspects are integral to my content, but I try to present them in a modern and relatable way” – Interviewer 1

According to Interviewer 2, there holds a significant value for balanced representation of the culture which aims to break the stereotypes and present a holistic view that has both authentic and inclusive narratives.

“Our goal is to break stereotypes and present a holistic view of Asia that appeals to a diverse range of travelers” – Interviewer 2

Interviewer 3 and 5 had similar thoughts on showcasing authentic Asian culture, different traditions like their various festivals, cuisine, traditions and daily life which promotes cultural understanding and appreciation.

“Travelers nowadays are looking for authentic experiences, something that differentiates a destination from others” - Interviewer 3

“I believe it's essential to showcase the real culture of a place” - Interviewer 5

Interviewer 4 feels the sense of responsibility to represent and educate the people about the cultural significance of Asia by understanding and portraying the stories of each place. This fosters a deep appreciation and respect among the people.

"I feel a responsibility to represent Asian culture accurately and respectfully"-

Interviewer 4

4.3.3 Marketing Strategies and Engagement

Examining successful social media marketing techniques, such as influencer partnerships, storytelling, and interactive content creation, in order to engage prospective travellers.

According to Interviewer 1, one of the most successful social media marketing techniques is by creating eye-catching images and landscapes with vibrant scenes and showcasing the luxury and essence of Asian tourism.

"In my approach to social media marketing, I emphasize creating visually striking content" – Interviewer 1

The interviewer 1 also added that collaborating with locals to showcase exclusive experiences will help find the in-depth of the cultures and traditions followed in each place which is necessary for the marketing of the destination.

"I also collaborate with local tourism boards and businesses to showcase exclusive experiences, which seems to resonate well with my audience" –

Interviewer 1

According to Interviewer 2 and 5, there hold a significant value for immersive and experimental marketing with a focus on the use of user generated content for authenticity and creating a connect with the diverse tourists with honest perspectives and interactive storytelling on the social media.

"In our strategy, we've shifted towards an experiential marketing approach and also been leveraging user-generated content more actively, as it creates a sense of authenticity" – Interviewer 2

"Social media marketing in the tourism industry is all about creating a connection with potential tourists" – Interviewer 5

According to Interviewer 3 and 6, highlighting the authenticity, rich culture, unique aspects and the practical experiences to explore off-the-beaten-path destinations or hidden gem locations of Asia like the bustling streets Bangkok or serene landscapes of rural Japan. Interactive content attracts the diverse audience by making the destination more appealing.

"Posts that include practical tips, particularly helpful and make a destination more appealing to me." – Interviewer 3

"Highlighting unique cultural aspects and local experiences is also very effective." – Interviewer 6

4.3.4 Tourism Marketing Trends and Innovations

Recognizing new trends like virtual reality experiences, sustainable travel, and customized content for social media marketing.

According to Interviewers 1, 2 and 6, there is a shift towards sustainable, responsible tourism with a greater focus on health and wellness tourism with content created around wellness retreats and nature-based experiences becoming more popular. Also, content that highlights eco-friendly practices, supports local economies, and promotes ethical travel is becoming important.

"I foresee a greater emphasis on sustainable and responsible tourism in Asia." – Interviewer 1

"I see a growing trend is the increased focus on health and wellness tourism" – Interviewer 2

"Virtual reality experiences and sustainable travel are becoming popular." – Interviewer 6

According to Interviewers 4 and 5, there a shift in immersive and interactive content on social media to promote tourism. There is a massive potential for the virtual and augmented reality like AI and AR.' This shift is becoming more popular in the Asian cities.

"Another trend is the use of augmented reality to provide virtual travel experiences, which I believe will become more popular." – Interviewer 4

"This includes the use of virtual and augmented reality to give potential tourists a 'try before you buy' experience" - Interviewer 5

4.4 Analysis of tourism campaigns

4.4.1 Visit Thailand Year 2023 Amazing New Chapters

The Tourism Authority of Thailand's "Visit Thailand Year 2023 Amazing New Chapters" campaign offers a thorough strategy for promoting travel. Through the strategic use of engagement tactics, the presentation of Thailand's rich cultural diversity, and the use of up-to-date tourism marketing trends, the campaign presents Thailand to prospective travellers as an alluring and varied travel destination. This research highlights the campaign's multipronged strategy for meeting the demands and preferences of a worldwide audience while upholding and promoting Thailand's true cultural character.

Cultural Representation and Authenticity

Authenticity in Representation: Traditional arts, festivals, and regional lifestyles are just a few of the elements of Thai culture that the campaign showcases. Thailand's rich cultural legacy is highlighted in the marketing materials (social media posts, films, etc.) through the use of real photography and storytelling approaches. This campaign element is essential for encouraging prospective tourists to appreciate and understand different cultures.

Diversity in Cultural Experiences: There is a lot of emphasis on Thailand's varied cultural landscape, which includes calm beaches, ancient temples, and busy town like Bangkok. This diversity draws in a broad spectrum of visitors with a variety of interests and highlights the complex and diverse aspects of Thai culture.

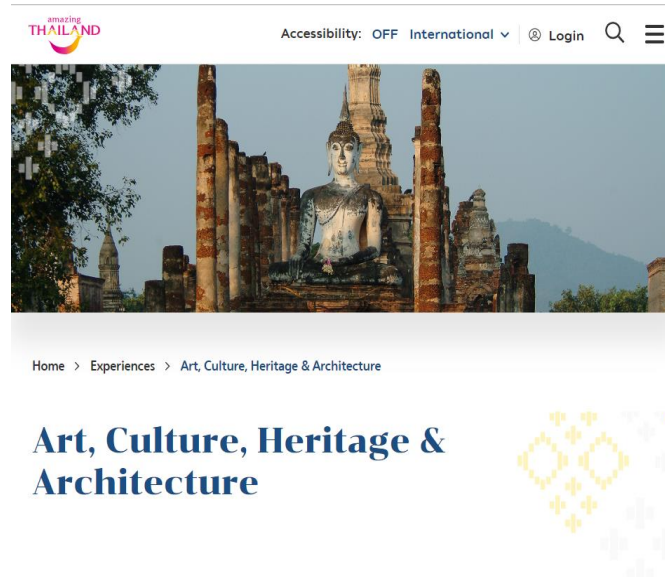


Figure 10. Post on website (Thailand, 2023)

Figure 9. Screenshot from the official website of Thailand Tourism which is promoting the city's culture, diversity and authenticity while emphasising on the experiences of varied aspects.

Marketing Strategies and Engagement

Utilization of social media: The campaign's extensive participation on Facebook and Instagram suggests a planned strategy to reach a large audience. The campaign is made more appealing by the use of visually appealing content and compelling storytelling.

Engagement Techniques: To encourage a sense of community and interaction among followers, the campaign probably uses a variety of engagement methods, including interactive postings, hashtags (like #AmazingThailand), and user-generated material. Examining the engagement metrics (likes, shares, and comments) could reveal information about how successful the campaign was.

Partnerships and Influencer Collaborations: Using travel bloggers' and influencers' followers to increase visibility and credibility can be a crucial component of any strategy.



Figure 11. Instagram post (bank__worawut,2023)

Figure 10. is a screenshot of a post of a travel influencer on Instagram in which hashtag ‘#amazingthailand’ is used that helps in depicting the interactive posting on social media to enhance the reach of the post. Also, other hashtags have been used in the post which helps the researcher understand the user engagement tactics.

Trends and Innovations in Tourism Marketing

Embracing Digital Trends: The campaign shows an awareness of the changing digital landscape and the significance of remaining relevant by utilizing contemporary digital marketing trends, such as short-form videos on TikTok or Instagram Stories.

Adjusting to Travel Preferences Following the Pandemic: Following the epidemic, there might be a focus on safety and health precautions, outdoor and less crowded locations, or unusual, off-the-beaten-path experiences, which would represent shifting traveller tastes.



Figure 12. Website post (GoWithGuide., 2023)

Figure 11 gives a comprehensive data regarding Thailand's tourism industry, with a focus on 2023. It contains statistics and insights regarding the various elements, growth, and trends of tourism in Thailand.

4.4.2 Incredible India! Visit India Year 2023

The Government of India launched the "Incredible India! Visit India Year 2023" campaign as a calculated move to boost travel after the pandemic. With the help of the well-known "Incredible India" brand, this campaign aims to draw attention to India's many cultural, historical, and scenic features. With an emphasis on digital outreach and worldwide engagement—particularly in light of India's 2023 G20 presidency—it combines old and modern marketing techniques. The campaign's goal is to highlight India's rich history and kind hospitality while enticing visitors from abroad to discover the wide range of activities available there. The campaign's beneficial impacts became evident as foreign visitor arrivals began to rise in 2004.

Cultural Representation and Authenticity

Extensive Cultural Exhibition: India is a country rich in cultural diversity, with many distinct customs, dialects, celebrations, and culinary traditions found in each area. The marketing

purposefully draws attention to this diversity in order to reach a worldwide audience. For example, it features colourful festivals such as Diwali and Holi, folk and classical dances from different states, and a wide variety of delectable foods from different parts of the country.

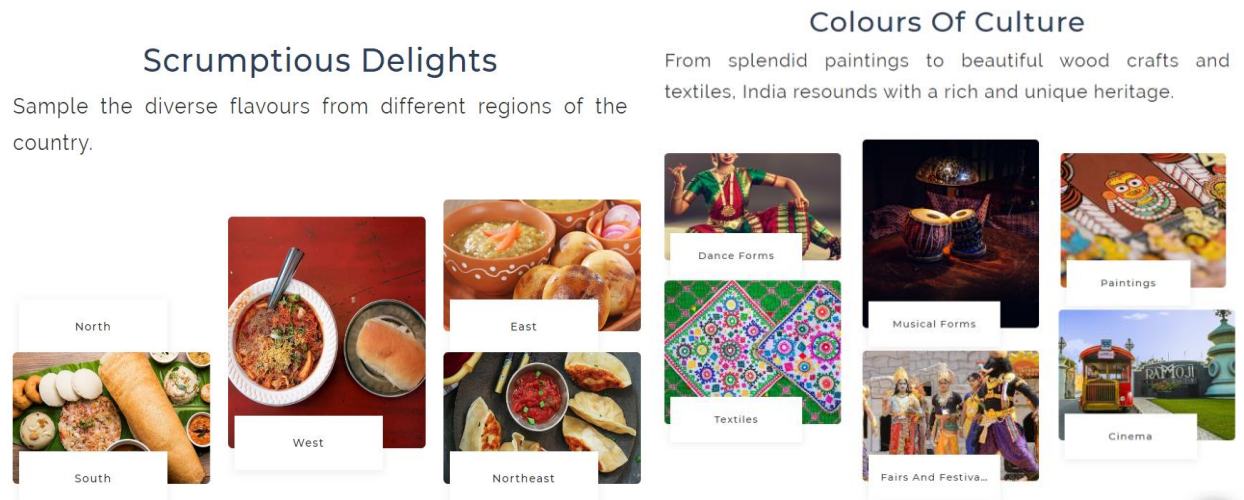


Figure 13. Post on website (India, 2023)

Figure 12 is featuring the culinary traditions found in each area and the varied art forms in India. Historical and Heritage Sites: India's many UNESCO World Heritage sites, as well as its historic temples, forts, and palaces, are testimony to the country's rich past. The campaign highlights India's architectural magnificence and historical relevance by focusing on these iconic sites, such as the Taj Mahal, Qutub Minar, and the temples of Khajuraho. (UNESCO, 2024)

Rural and Community-based Tourism: The campaign highlights the genuine experiences that India's rural areas have to offer and encourages travel there. This entails exhibiting handicrafts, rural scenery, and traditional ways of life. It also emphasizes how crucial it is to preserve traditional crafts and arts, many of which are exclusive to certain towns or villages.

Spiritual & wellbeing Tourism: Thanks to its reputation for yoga and meditation retreats, India is frequently linked to spirituality and wellbeing. Using this image to its advantage, the campaign promotes locations such as Varanasi and Rishikesh, which are noteworthy due to their spiritual and cultural significance.

Retreat, Recharge, Rejuvenate

From yoga ashrams to spas and wellness centres, India offers a host of sites.

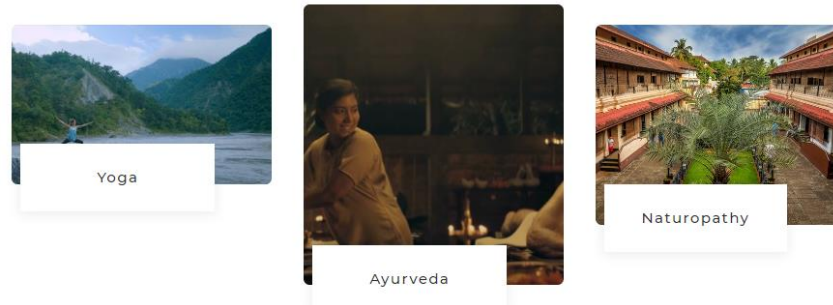


Figure 14. Post on website (Incredible India, 2024)

Figure 13 is a screenshot from the Incredible India website showcasing the yoga ashrams and wellness centers in India.

Storytelling & Narratives: The campaign makes use of storytelling to illustrate the diverse range of Indian cultural experiences. This comprises folktales from various areas, legends connected to historical landmarks, and narratives that showcase the nation's diverse cultural heritage.

Leveraging Traditional Hospitality: The core of Indian hospitality is the idea that "guests are gods," or "Atithi Devo Bhava." The effort to showcase India as a friendly and hospitable travel destination incorporates this mentality.

Inclusivity and diversity: The campaign tries to depict the wide range of cultural identities present in India, acknowledging the variety of the country's population, which includes several ethnic groups and indigenous cultures.

Marketing Strategies and Engagement

Reimagined Website: Part of the campaign's plan is the introduction of a brand-new, cutting-edge website. This platform is made to offer travellers from around the world unique and customized experiences while engagingly displaying India's diverse attractions.

Global Social Media Outreach: Social media marketing is given a lot of attention. In order to reach more people, the Ministry intends to make use of social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter (X). This entails presenting attractive images, captivating narratives, and interactive information that showcase India's travel offerings.



Figure 15. X handle of Incredible India (Twitter X, 2024)

Figure 15 is a screenshot of the Incredible India page on Twitter also known as X.

Encouraging Local Ambassadors: One of the main goals of the campaign is to motivate Indian nationals to represent their nation as ambassadors. This entails encouraging residents to share their tales and experiences in order to provide the world community a more genuine and approachable impression of India.

Leveraging National Pride: Against the backdrop of momentous occasions like the G20 presidency, the campaign capitalizes on Indian citizens' sense of national pride. The purpose of this calculated action is to encourage public involvement in tourism promotion.



Figure 16. Logo of G20 summit, India (G20 2023 INDIA, 2023)

Figure 16, the G20 Presidency is responsible for bringing together the G20 agenda in consultation with other members and in response to developments in the global economy which was conducted in New Delhi, India on 9-10 September 2023.

Collaborations with Global Influencers, Opinion Leaders, and Industry Experts: Part of the approach involves working with these groups. These collaborations are meant to broaden the campaign's appeal and give the marketing initiatives more legitimacy. (THANI, 2020)

Content Diversification: To provide interesting and varied tales about India, the Ministry intends to introduce a signature newsletter as well as various content formats. The goal of this approach is to maintain information that is engaging, pertinent, and appealing to a worldwide audience.

Emphasis on Diverse Tourism Categories: In addition to classic tourist destinations, the campaign highlights other travel-related categories such as MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions), sustainable tourism, and rural tourism.

Analytics-driven approach: This makes use of web analytics and social media to gain insight into the preferences, actions, and levels of involvement of an audience. Optimizing marketing tactics and content for maximum impact is made easier with the support of this data-driven strategy.

Trends and Innovations in Tourism Marketing

Digital and Tech-Driven Engagement: Using immersive technology advancements and a redesigned website, the campaign exemplifies a developing trend in travel marketing. Using

interactive web platforms, augmented reality experiences, and virtual tours, this strategy gives prospective travellers a preview of locations before they travel there. (Incredible India, 2018).

Personalized Marketing: The shift to more individualized marketing initiatives is another big trend. Tourism campaigns like as "Incredible India" can provide travellers with personalized recommendations and itineraries by utilizing AI and data analytics. These recommendations are based on visitor behaviour patterns, past travel history, and preferences (Barten, 2023).

Leveraging Influencer and social media: The campaign's emphasis on influencer partnerships and worldwide social media outreach is in line with the current trend of using social media platforms for destination marketing. Influencer collaborations can significantly increase the marketing message's reach and credibility, especially with individuals who have a sizable following in important areas (Seda Yetimoğlu, 2020).

Sustainability & Responsible Tourism: A movement in travel preferences worldwide is reflected in the focus on sustainable and rural tourism. More and more tourists are looking for experiences that are not just rewarding but also socially and environmentally conscious. Promoting ecotourism, community-based tourism, and travel experiences that protect a destination's natural and cultural integrity are some of the aspects of this trend.

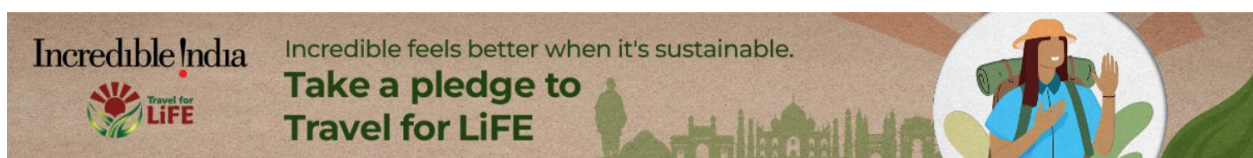


Figure 17. Post on website (India, 2023)

Figure 17 represents a global initiative towards sustainable tourism inspired by Mission Life by Incredible India campaign.

Utilizing Content Marketing and Storytelling: The campaign's use of newsletters and other content that highlights India's stories is in line with the trend of using storytelling as a powerful tool in tourism marketing. Compared to traditional advertising, compelling, narrative-driven

material that highlights a destination's history, culture, and experiences can be more successful in drawing tourists.

Integration with Global Events: This creative approach to tourism promotion is the strategic use of India's G20 leadership. When a tourism promotion coincides with major international events, it becomes more visible and presents India's tourism potential to a worldwide audience.



Figure 18. Post on website (*India, 2023*)

Figure 18 represents the theme of India's G20 Presidency 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' - the very foundation of ancient Indian heritage symbolises 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

4.5 Summary

The examination of interviews through thematic analysis and content analysis of tourism campaigns, such as India's "Incredible India! Visit India Year 2023" and Thailand's "Amazing Thailand" offers a perceptive look at modern tourism marketing. These methods demonstrate an advanced understanding of cultural authenticity and representation. Interviews with various stakeholders from tourism and social media industry highlight the significance of respectful and truthful cultural representation, and the campaign's utilization of traditional symbols such as the 'Namaste' gesture demonstrates its dedication to genuine cultural portrayal.

The analysis also clarifies efficient engagement and marketing strategies. The "Incredible India" campaign demonstrates how strategies like influencer partnerships, internet outreach, and capitalizing on international events like India's G20 leadership combine appeal to a global audience with a sense of national pride. In addition, new developments in tourism marketing are emphasized, emphasizing a shift toward digitalization, sustainability, and customized experiences. These trends are supported by the campaigns' use of immersive digital storytelling and focus on eco-friendly travel. The industry's shift toward strategies that strike a balance between cultural integrity and global appeal is reflected in both the campaign analyses and the interviews, which highlight the importance of cultural sensitivity and adjusting to the changing tourism scene. This thorough examination demonstrates how tourist marketing is changing and emphasizes the value of creativity, cultural awareness, and strategic involvement in connecting with a wide range of audiences around the world.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The research paper aims to improve social media analytics for the promotion of tourism in Asia by combining insightful findings from a thematic analysis of industry expert interviews with critical reviews from a comprehensive literature review. The study sheds light on how social media's introduction and other digital developments have completely changed the way that travel is marketed in Asia. However, it also reveals a significant underuse of social media analytics in this industry.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

Enhancing Social Media Analytics for Tourism Promotion in Asia:

To answer the main research questions, the research explores the difficulty of accurately representing and respecting the complex cultural variety of Asian travel destinations in marketing techniques. To answer the sub-questions, the thematic analysis identifies important barriers, including a lack of technological expertise and cultural sensitivity, that prevent social media analytics from being used effectively. It also highlights the unrealized potential of social media data in creating cross-culturally relevant marketing strategies.

After integrating these insights, the discussion will go into combining these many points of view to suggest useful, data-driven, and culturally sensitive marketing strategies. By doing this, the research aims to support Asia's tourist industry's more robust and sustainable growth trajectory, where cultural diversity is not only recognized but also appreciated. This strategy aims to guarantee the sustainability and competitiveness of the Asian tourism sector in a world that is swiftly digitizing, in addition to increasing the allure of Asian travel destinations.

5.3 Comparison with Existing literature

5.3.1 Digital Transformation in Tourism:

The digital transformation in tourism, which signifies a paradigm shift in the way vacation destinations, especially in Asia, are advertised and experienced by tourists. The main force

behind this change is the widespread use of social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and local platforms like WeChat (Benxiang Zeng, 2017). These platforms have not only increased the reach of tourism promotion but have also brought in new methods of interacting with prospective tourists through interactive experiences and personalized information. Social media's capacity to deliver user-generated material in real-time has given places a never-before-seen chance to highlight their distinctive qualities and draw in a worldwide audience. Nevertheless, the tourism industry noticeably underuses social media analytics in spite of its potential. These platforms provide huge volumes of data, much of which is still underutilized and could offer priceless insights into the tastes, trends, and behaviours of travellers. This discrepancy points to a critical area for improvement since using this data could result in more efficient, focused, and culturally aware marketing campaigns (Stephanie Hays, 2012). In addition, the digital revolution has brought up new difficulties, such as the requirement for genuineness in advertising and the difficulty of maintaining an online reputation. The efficient use of digital technology and social media analytics is essential to maintaining and expanding the tourism industry, which is still a major economic engine in Asia (Nexhbi Selimi, 2017). Accepting this digital revolution presents a chance to improve the worldwide exposure and cultural portrayal of various Asian places in addition to financial gains (Tugcu, 2014).

5.3.2 Barriers in Social Media Utilization:

As observed in the thematic analysis which answers the research question, from the impediments to social media utilization for tourist promotion in Asia are multifaceted and provide significant barriers to the efficient use of this potent marketing strategy. First and foremost are technical difficulties. Many Asian travel agencies lack the technological aspects and funding needed to fully utilize social media analytics. Due to a lack of proficiency with digital tools, it is difficult to properly evaluate and make use of the massive volume of data produced by social media platforms, which results in the loss of important insights into the preferences and behaviour of users (Figure 18).

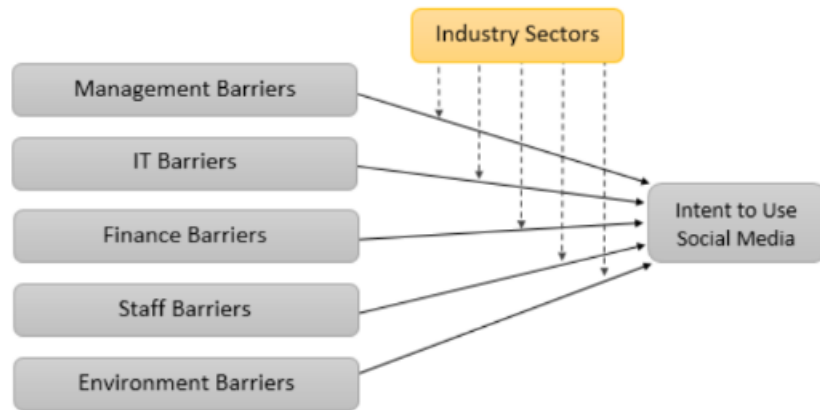


Figure 19. Barriers to SME Adaptation of social media analytics (Dr. Levent ÇALLI, 2016)

Furthermore, current social media methods exhibit a severe lack of cultural sensitivity. Digital marketing strategies frequently misrepresent or misinterpret Asia's vast cultural variety. This mismatch puts potential visitors at danger of being misled about the depth of culture found in Asian travel locations, in addition to failing to properly engage them (Tavakoli, 2016). This problem is further compounded by the fractured understanding of various audiences. Social media efforts frequently provide generic and ineffective marketing messaging because they fail to take into consideration the many cultural quirks, linguistic preferences, and cultural contexts of various demographic groups.

Moreover, the findings indicate a notable discrepancy between the material produced by travellers and the marketing tactics utilized by tourism providers. This discrepancy shows how user-generated material, a major factor in contemporary travel marketing, was overlooked. In the view of prospective travellers, official marketing methods that fail to incorporate genuine experiences shared by tourists become less credible and relatable (Buffa, 2018).

Overall, these barriers—which range from technological difficulties and a lack of cultural sensitivity to a disconnected comprehension of varied audiences and an underutilization of user-generated content—create a complex environment in which social media's full potential for Asian tourism marketing remains untapped. In order to create more inclusive, culturally sensitive, and successful marketing strategies that can accurately convey the distinctive qualities of each Asian destination, it is imperative that these issues be addressed.

5.3.3 Leveraging Social Media Data for Culturally Diverse Marketing:

The utilization of social media data for culturally varied marketing is an essential component of improving tourism promotion in Asia, as indicated by the literature review in and the thematic analysis. The application of social media analytics can greatly increase the appeal and relevancy of marketing strategies in an area as culturally rich and diverse as Asia. With their abundance of user-generated material, social media platforms offer a plethora of data that may be studied to comprehend the varied interests, behaviours, and trends of traveller's. When properly utilized, this data can help create marketing strategies that are highly sensitive to the distinctive qualities and cultural quirks of each place, in addition to being data-driven (Gretzel, 2006).

For example, travel and tourism marketers can determine which facets of their culture and history appeal most to particular audience segments by examining social media interactions and content preferences (Seda Yetimoğlu, 2020). This knowledge enables the development of focused, culturally sensitive campaigns like Amazing Thailand (Thailand, 2023) and Incredible India (Incredible India, 2024), that not only draw tourists but also promote a greater awareness and appreciation of the destination's unique cultural identity. Furthermore, the creation of captivating stories that respect cultural diversity can be aided by the integration of analytics with storytelling and real content. These kinds of strategies are crucial in a time when tourists are looking for more genuine, culturally immersive experiences. The tourism industry in Asia can ensure sustainable and respectful promotion while also improving its appeal to a global audience by adopting a data-driven, culturally aware approach.

5.3.4 Establishing Best Practices for Cultural Diversity Promotion:

The thematic analysis highlights the importance of establishing best practices for promoting cultural diversity in Asian tourism. These practices are not only advantageous but also necessary for the genuine representation and promotion of diverse destinations in the context of Asia's rich and varied cultural landscape. The aim is to develop marketing strategies that not only attract tourists but also respect and celebrate the unique cultural identities of each Asian region.

The integration of culturally sensitive content that authentically captures the traditions, values, and experiences of local people is essential to these best practices. This calls for a thorough

comprehension of the subtle cultural differences found in each location, which can be attained by interacting with local stakeholders, such as local tour companies to (Tripadvisor, 2016) and government representatives. Social media analytics should also be utilized to track and comprehend the preferences and viewpoints of various audience segments. This will help marketers create content that appeals to a range of cultural backgrounds (Emanuele Mele, 2021). Making sure that marketing materials are ethically represented is another essential component. Prejudice must be avoided, and promotional material must be inclusive while also showing respect for cultural norms and legacy. Utilizing user-generated content can give promotional efforts more authenticity and credibility, especially when it comes from locals or tourists who have visited the locations personally.

Additionally, marketing teams must get ongoing training and development if they are to be prepared to handle the challenges posed by ethnic diversity in their campaigns. This entails being aware of ethical and cultural sensitivity as well as how to strategically employ data analytics to guide culturally sensitive marketing decisions.

5.3.5 Emerging Trends in Tourism and Social Media Use

The analysis of new tourism trends and the impact of social media, as presented in literature review, indicates a dynamic and changing environment in which online conversations are increasingly influencing tourist preferences. Key trends are identified throughout the literature, including the growth of niche tourist industries like adventure, wellness, and cultural tourism as well as the increasing significance of user-generated content in influencing perceptions of destinations. Expanding upon this, the thematic analysis enhances our comprehension by showcasing the strategic application of social media analytics to leverage these patterns. It offers real-world instances of how analytics have been applied to understand the preferences, expectations, and behaviours of travellers, underscoring the possibility for more focused and successful marketing campaigns (Winter, 2009).

In this regard, the analysis highlights how social media platform analytics may be used to understand the driving forces behind emerging travel trends such as culinary tourism (India, 2023) and eco-tourism (India, 2023). This is consistent with the theoretical ideas presented in the

literature and provides a concrete framework that travel industry marketers can use to adjust to and impact these changing patterns. Tourism marketers may better anticipate and adapt to the changing traveller's paradigms by utilizing social media analytics. This keeps their marketing tactics current, interesting, and successful in the ever-evolving digital landscape (Barten, 2023). This enlarged view of social media usage and new trends highlights how important digital technology will be to the development of Asian travel marketing in the future.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this chapter is to provide useful, practical recommendations based on the themes and findings throughout the research. The goal is to offer research-based methods that are both practical and significant for the Asian tourism industry.

The study has revealed important new information about the state of social media analytics in Asian travel, emphasizing the challenges as well as the opportunities. It has explored the region's diverse cultural landscape, the changing digital perspective, and the unrealized potential for leveraging social media data more efficiently. The recommendations made in this chapter are based on these findings.

Each recommendation has been proposed to address specific challenges found in the research, while emphasizing feasibility and coherence with the overall objectives of augmenting travel advertising in Asia. The objective is to offer practical ways that customers, the government, and tourists' marketers may use to harness social media analytics for more successful, profitable, and culturally sensitive tourism marketing campaigns.

This section provides the way for upcoming projects and advancements in the field of Asian tourism marketing. The recommendations aim to stimulate and direct practical adjustments, opening the door for a more vibrant, inclusive, and prosperous tourism sector in the area.

6.1 Strategic Perspective

6.1.1 Comprehensive Culturally Sensitive Analytics Framework

Recommendation: A culturally sensitive analytics framework should be developed and integrated into tourism and tourist marketing strategies for Asia. This framework should be able to interpret social media data by using various Asian languages and cultures as a lens.

Implementation:

- **Selecting and Customizing Tools:** Select advanced analytics tools capable of processing data in several Asian languages. Tailor these resources to identify and decipher slang, regional dialects, and culturally particular phrases.

- Collaboration with Cultural Experts: To incorporate cultural sensitivity into the analytics process, collaborate with regional linguists and cultural specialists. This partnership guarantees culturally appropriate and pertinent data interpretation in addition to accuracy.
- Data Privacy Considerations: Make sure local data privacy laws and ethical standards are followed; this is especially crucial in places with strict rules.

Outcome: This framework will lead to a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the target audience. These insights can help build more culturally sensitive and relevant marketing strategies, which will increase their effectiveness (Bennett, 1986). For example, a campaign in Thailand can highlight regional celebrations and customs to draw in visitors from abroad and domestic travellers seeking genuine cultural immersion. Using a sentiment analysis tool to precisely determine how the Indonesian public feels about a marketing effort is another example. To make sure the advertisement is understood by both locals and visitors, the technology should be able to translate regional dialects and Indonesian slang.

The "Tourism Analytics: Social Media Analytics Framework" (Kajla, 2018) document focuses on creating a big data analytics (BDA) framework using R and Hadoop to analyse social media data, particularly from Twitter. The framework's objectives are to assess the level of popularity of tourist destinations and apply several text analytics techniques for comprehensive comprehension. This study is particularly pertinent to the research because it offers an acceptable framework for gathering, storing, processing, and displaying social media data—all of which are crucial for efficiently promoting Asian travel destinations. The strategy provides a defined methodology for data-driven insights and decision-making in the tourist sector, which is consistent with the dissertation's focus on leveraging social media analytics for tourism promotion. The dissertation's recommendations would be strengthened if this framework were adopted.

The conceptual difference (Bennett, 1986) makes between experiences of difference that he refers to as ethnocentric and ethnorelative is the foundation of his framework. The foundation of the ethnorelative stage is openness to diversity, whereas the ethnocentric realm represents essentializing difference. A person can progress through a total of six different developmental

steps, as both ethnocentric and ethnorelative experiences of difference are characterized by three stages, as shown in Figure 19.

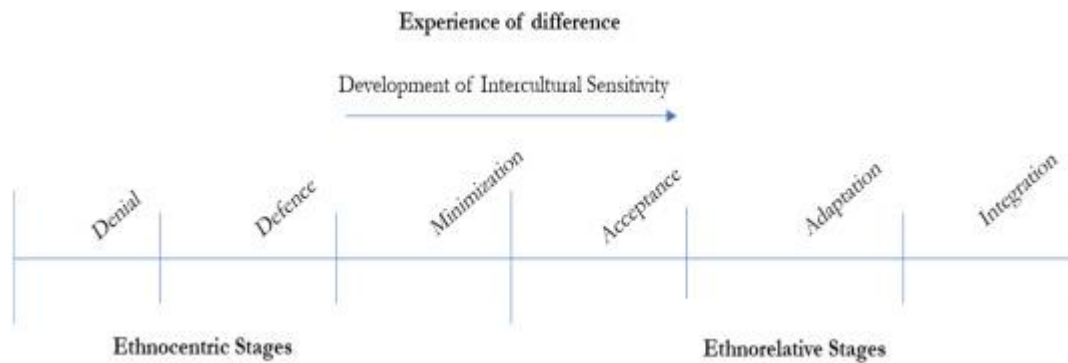


Figure 20. Development model of intercultural sensitivity. (Bennett, 1986, p. 182).

6.1.2 Long-Term Vision for Sustainable Tourism Growth

Recommendation: Develop a long-term strategy that centres on the expansion of sustainable tourism and leverages social media analytics to strike a balance between the financial gains and the sustainability of the environment and cultural preservation.

Implementation:

- **Defining Sustainability Goals:** Clearly state the economic, environmental, and cultural aspects of sustainable tourism in various Asian locations.
- **Decision-Making Based on Data:** Use social media analytics to guide your decisions in a way that supports sustainability objectives. As an illustration, one could use data to identify over-visited locations and then focus marketing efforts on less-travelled regions.
- **Engagement with Customers:** Make sure the strategic vision is in line with the requirements and expectations of the local community, governments, and tourism-related enterprises. This cooperative strategy guarantees that the expansion of tourism is advantageous to all parties involved.

Outcome: This strategic plan aims to ensure that tourist growth is not only economically advantageous but also environmentally sustainable and culturally enriching. Asia's tourism industry may expand in a way that is both profitable and responsible by striking a balance between these factors.

An illustration of this would be utilizing social media analytics to spot a spike in interest in eco-tourism in Vietnam. Next, using the strategic vision as a guide, marketing campaigns promoting eco-friendly hotels and tours would be developed, drawing tourists and aiding in environmental conservation efforts.

6.2 Tactical Perspective

6.2.1 Targeted Marketing Campaigns Based on Analytics Insights

Recommendation: Leverage social media analytics to develop highly focused marketing campaigns that speak to travellers' particular interests, habits, and cultural backgrounds. This entails dividing up the audience into segments according to insights obtained from analytics, then adjusting marketing methods and content accordingly.

Implementation:

- **Data Segmentation:** Based on online behaviours, interests, and demographics, divide up travellers into groups using analytics. Identifying a market niche interested in heritage tourism, for instance.
- **Content Customization:** Create content that is relevant to each segment specifically. This could entail producing content that showcases historical and cultural locations for the legacy tourism market.
- **Channel Optimization:** Select the social media platforms that work well for each market niche. While Facebook or travel blogs may be a more effective means of reaching older audiences, younger groups may find greater success on sites like Instagram or TikTok.

Outcome:

- **Enhanced Engagement:** Higher engagement rates are anticipated as a result of providing targeted material to particular segments, which will raise interest in and interaction with the marketed destinations.
- **Improved Conversion Rates:** Since the promotions used in tailored campaigns are more closely aligned with the interests and preferences of the target audience, greater conversion rates are probably to be expected.

6.2.2 Real-Time Social Media Monitoring for Dynamic Campaign Adjustments

Recommendation: Develop a real-time social media monitoring system so that advertising strategies can be modified on the go. This entails monitoring social media content performance continually and promptly altering it in response to user input and new trends (Jhamb, 2023).

Implementation:

- Real-Time Analytics technologies: Make use of technologies like sentiment analysis, trend detection, and engagement analytics that offer real-time insights into how social media material is performing.
- Rapid Response Team: Assemble a focused group of individuals who can react rapidly to the information acquired and make necessary changes to the strategy, messaging, or content.
- Feedback Integration: To keep the content interesting and current, incorporate user feedback and new trends into the marketing plan on a regular basis.

Outcome:

- Agile Marketing: More successful and flexible marketing will result from the capacity to swiftly modify plans in response to real-time data.
- Increased Relevance: Marketing initiatives will stay relevant and successful over time if they are updated regularly in response to feedback and current trends.

A social media campaign that advertises Thai beach resorts, real-time analytics can be used to capitalize on developing trends by immediately adjusting the campaign to showcase off-the-beaten-path beach areas if they show an increase in interest in isolated, less crowded destinations.

6.2 Operational Perspective

6.2.1 Staff training in utilizing tools and data interpretation

Recommendation: Enhance marketing and analytics teams' ability to use social media analytics tools and analyse data in light of cultural context (Figure 20).

Implementation:

- **Develop a Tailored Training Program:** Create a curriculum for social media analytics training that is specifically focused on the tools and emphasizes how to use them in the context of Asian cultural diversity. Add real-world case studies that are tailored to Asian travel.
- **Continuous Skills Development:** Update the training materials frequently to stay up to date with the newest methods and tools for analytics. To promote continued learning, encourage participation in webinars and workshops.
- **Encourage Teamwork:** To successfully integrate data insights with marketing plans, encourage teamwork within the marketing, analytics, and cultural research teams.
- **Practical Application of Analytics Tools and Mentorship:** Launch a mentorship program and offer real-world project experience.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Provide a way for team members to communicate about their experiences and difficulties. The training and analytics strategy can be improved with the help of this feedback.

Outcome:

- **Improved Data Utilization:** Teams get more skilled at gleaning pertinent insights from social media data, which results in better-informed choices.
- **Enhanced Marketing Effectiveness:** More culturally relevant and successful marketing programs can be created with enhanced data interpretation abilities.
- **Marketing strategies:** Adaptive and adaptable to changing trends and cultural shifts are those that are updated on a regular basis.

Barriers	Management	IT	Financial	Staff	Environmental
Overcoming SME Barriers	Training Programmes				
	Overcome lack of understanding or bias against Social Media in business		Business students with Social Media skills to work with SMEs		Opinion leaders, innovators and early adopters of Social Media within the sector would raise awareness and drive adoption by other SMEs
		Using Mobile Equipment and Applications			Promotional Activities or Consumer Educations on Social Media
		Open-source applications or cloud service			

Figure 21. Recommendation to overcome operational barrier. (Dr. Levent ÇALLI, 2016)

6.3 Summary

To sum up, the recommendations mentioned provide an extensive plan for utilizing social media analytics to revolutionize travel advertising in Asia. This strategy tackles the industry's many potentials and challenges by including a culturally sensitive analytics framework, customizing marketing campaigns to target audiences, and improving team proficiency with analytics technologies. It guarantees that marketing tactics are culturally sensitive and data-driven, connecting strongly with a range of Asian audiences. In the end, these suggestions seek to promote tourism's sustainable growth by utilizing digital technology in a way that honours and reflects Asia's diverse cultural heritage. This tactic, which is based on a thorough comprehension of culture and technology, opens the door for a more integrated, inclusive, and dynamic tourism industry in the region.

6.5 Limitations of the Research

6.5.1 Generalization of Findings:

The research relies on interviews and secondary data collection which limits the extent to which the findings may be implemented. Although these approaches offer insightful

information, they are biased by nature and might not accurately reflect the wide variety of experiences and viewpoints found in the Asian travel industry. Interviews are restricted to the viewpoints of the chosen participants, and secondary data might not appropriately reflect the most recent developments or distinctive local conditions. As a result, this methodological technique limits the depth and breadth of data, which may have an effect on how broadly applicable the research findings and suggestions are. It's crucial to take these restrictions into account when extrapolating the study's conclusions to larger settings (He-in Cheong, 2023).

Limitation	Impact on secondary data	Impact on Interviews
Relevance	Leads to potential inaccuracies	Limiting the scope
Timeliness	Outdated data, missing recent trends in the market	Reflect current but rapidly changing perspectives
Bias	Affects the objectivity of the data	Personal biases, influenced information provided
Depth	Limited depth, lack of detailed insights	May not delve deeply into technical or complex topics
Data Quality	Accuracy and reliability cannot always be verified	Depends on the participants knowledge and honesty

Table 9. Summary of limitations of secondary data and interviews. Source: Self-created

6.5.2 Scope of Data and Geographic Limitation:

One important factor to take into account is the research's geographic restrictions and data breadth. The study's concentration on Asia means its findings are particularly applicable to this region's distinct cultural, economic, and digital environments. In contrast to other regions such as Europe or North America, where social media behaviours and contexts of culture vary significantly, the use and influence of social media in promoting tourism in Asia might differ dramatically. The European Commission's study on digital trends in tourism is a great example (The European Commission, n.d.). Furthermore, there is a great deal of diversity within Asia. With their sophisticated internet infrastructure, nations like Japan might use social media in different ways than emerging travel destinations like

Cambodia. The research findings may not be as applicable to other areas or even to other Asian contexts due to their regional peculiarity. Therefore, even though the study provides insightful information about using social media analytics to promote tourism in Asia, its application outside of this geographic scope should be treated cautiously, taking into account regional variations in the adoption of digital technologies and cultural traditions.

6.5.3 Rapidly Changing Digital Landscape:

In the context of this research, the limitation presented by the constantly shifting digital landscape is crucial. The field of digital marketing—especially social media—evolves quickly, with new user behaviours, platforms, and technology appearing on a regular basis. This dynamic environment may affect the practicality and effectiveness of the study's conclusions and suggestions. The emergence of new social media platforms or modifications to algorithms may modify the way in which people engage with material, hence reducing the efficiency of existing analytics tools and approaches. Additionally, changes in user preferences and behaviours on social media can occur quickly and are frequently brought about by breakthroughs in technology, social crises, or world events. As a result, even while the study offers a glimpse of the state of social media analytics in travel promotion at the moment, its applicability may eventually diminish, requiring ongoing updates and modifications to remain current. This emphasizes how crucial flexibility and agility are when putting social media ideas into practice in the travel industry (Etemad, 2023).

6.5.4 Dependence on Accurate Data Interpretation:

A major shortcoming of this study is its reliance on precise data interpretation. The success of marketing campaigns depends critically on the accurate interpretation of social media data. However, because of linguistic variations, cultural quirks, and changing settings, social media analytics can be difficult. The optimistic mindset presented in one culture could, for example, be regarded differently in another. Misunderstandings may result in tactics that are at odds with the values or preferences of the target market, which could damage the campaign's efficacy or the reputation of the brand. Examples of real-world allusions are when companies have interpreted cultural quirks in their advertising campaigns, which has

backfired or not been well received by consumers. This emphasizes how crucial it is to assemble linguistically and culturally diverse teams in order to guarantee accurate data interpretation, especially in an area with as diverse a culture as Asia (Meyer, 2019).

6.5.5 Resource and Technical Constraints:

The research presented acknowledges the significant resource and technical constraints associated with establishing an advanced social media analytics platform. In this regard, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the tourism sector might not have the funds to purchase advanced analytics software or the expertise essential for operating it. Furthermore, specific skills and experience are needed to evaluate culturally diverse data efficiently due to its technological complexity, which may not be readily available in all businesses. Some tourism entities may find it difficult to completely implement and experience the benefits of the suggested analytics solutions due to these limitations. Because of this, even though the research offers a thorough framework, businesses dealing with similar limitations may find that its practical applicability is limited. This constraint highlights the requirement for flexible and scalable solutions that can accommodate different resource capacities in the tourism sector (Dr. Levent ÇALLI, 2015).

6.4 Future Research Directions

Emerging Social Media Platforms in Asia: Further research needs to delve deeply into the emergence and consequences of new social media platforms within Asian online marketplaces. Understanding distinctive user preferences, habits, and engagement trends on these platforms should be the main goals of this investigation. Through analysing the unique features of these developing platforms, scholars can learn about creative advertising tactics and how travel companies might interact with these dynamic online communities. Staying ahead in the quickly evolving world of digital marketing and tourism requires conducting such research.

Cultural Impact on Analytics: It is crucial to conduct in-depth research on how Asia's cultural variety affects social media analytics. This field of research intends to look at how regional social media usage patterns, language quirks, and cultural nuances impact data

gathering, analysis, and marketing strategy efficacy as a whole. It is essential to comprehend these cultural aspects in order to create more complex and successful tourism marketing efforts that appeal to a wide range of Asian customers. The tourism industry might benefit from more successful and culturally aware marketing strategies thanks to this research.

Advanced Technology Integration: Future research has a great deal of potential to examine how advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning, can be integrated with social media analytics. Research needs to concentrate on the ways in which these technologies might enhance real-time data processing, boost predictive analytics, and produce more individualized marketing campaigns. By offering deeper insights, improving decision-making processes, and enabling more dynamic and responsive marketing strategies, this type of research has the potential to completely change the landscape of digital marketing in the travel industry.

6.5 Conclusion

This research makes a substantial contribution to the area by providing a thorough synthesis of improving social media analytics for the promotion of tourism in Asia. It highlights the underutilized potential of social media analytics and thoroughly examines the integration of digital technology in Asian tourism marketing. The report offers useful, culturally aware methods for utilizing social media data through a thorough analysis of cultural diversity in marketing and barriers to efficient analytics utilization. These suggestions provide a comprehensive approach to digital marketing in the travel industry by being addressed from strategic, tactical, and operational perspectives.

The topic of research of improving social media analytics for promoting tourism in Asia is effectively addressed by the study, which highlights the necessity of utilizing data-driven and culturally diverse marketing techniques. It highlights important topics including the importance of newly popular social media platforms, how differences in culture impact analytics, and how cutting-edge technology like AI and machine learning should be integrated. The study has several drawbacks, such as its limited reach, rapidly evolving digital environments, the difficulties in interpreting the data, and the lack of resources.

In conclusion, this research highlights how critical it is to adapt to both the distinctive cultural landscape of Asia and the constantly evolving digital environment. It makes a significant contribution to the fields of social media and tourism by highlighting the importance of continuous innovation and adaptation in travel-related marketing techniques and providing direction for future research.

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Appendix A – Participants information sheet



Qualitative Interview Request

December 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

I hope this email finds you well. My name is Madiha, and I am currently conducting research for my dissertation on "Tourism Analytics: Promoting Asian Tourism Using Social Media Analytics" at Aston University, Birmingham, UK. Your expertise and insights in the role are related to tourism and social media. It would be incredibly valuable to my study, and I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview.

The interview would take approximately 15 minutes and can be scheduled at your convenience. We can conduct it via [preferred communication platform, e.g., Zoom, Skype, telephone]. The discussion will focus on tourism marketing, social media analytics and trends in social media and Asian tourism.

Your participation in this interview would be entirely voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time without any consequences. All information you provide will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will only be used for the purpose of this research. Your responses will be anonymized in the final dissertation to ensure your privacy.

If you agree to participate, please let me know your availability so we can arrange a suitable time for the interview. Additionally, I am happy to provide more information about my research and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you very much for considering this request. Your contribution would be immensely valuable to my research and the broader understanding of social media's role in promoting

tourism in Asia.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best regards,

Madiha Mudassir,

Aston University.

APPENDIX B – Consent form



Tourism Analytics: Promoting Asian tourism using social media analytics.

Consent Form for Interview

- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves answering a list of questions from the interview schedule provided.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis dissertation.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in an encrypted hard drive until April 2024.
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for April 2024.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Names, degrees, affiliations, and contact details of researchers (and academic supervisors when

relevant).

Signature of research participant

Date: 26/01/2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nader', with a stylized flourish above the 'n'.

APPENDIX C – Interview 1

1. Researcher: Before we begin, I want to ensure that you are comfortable participating in this interview. Your responses will be used solely for academic research, and your identity will remain confidential. Do I have your consent to record and proceed with this interview and to use the information you provide for my dissertation?

Interviewee: Yes, I'm happy to participate in this interview. You can proceed

2. Researcher: May I know your Qualifications and Specialization in the field of social media?

Interviewee: I hold a degree in Journalism have an experience of over 5 years.

3. Researcher: What social media marketing strategies do you think work best for promoting tourism in Asia?

Interviewee: In my approach to social media marketing, I emphasize creating visually striking content. I believe that eye-catching images and videos of breathtaking landscapes, vibrant street scenes, and luxurious resorts capture the essence of Asian tourism. I also collaborate with local tourism boards and businesses to showcase exclusive experiences, which seems to resonate well with my audience.

4. Researcher: How do social media analytics influence the choice of tourist destinations in Asia?

Interviewee: I believe, analytics shape my content strategy significantly. I constantly monitor what destinations are trending and which posts get the most engagement. This helps me decide which places to visit and feature next. However, I also try to balance popular trends with lesser-known destinations that I personally find intriguing and think deserve more attention.

5. Researcher: How important is it to show Asian culture in social media posts about tourism?

Interviewee: I think cultural aspects are integral to my content, but I try to present them in a

modern and relatable way. While I love showcasing traditional aspects of Asian cultures, I also highlight the contemporary lifestyle and advancements in these regions, to break down stereotypes and show the diversity of Asia.

6. Researcher: What kind of social media content gets the most attention from people interested in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: To be honest, my audience particularly enjoy content that offers a mix of luxury and adventure. I understood high-quality imagery of luxury resorts, exclusive experiences, and adventure activities like trekking or diving tend to attract a lot of engagement. People love seeing the blend of natural beauty and modern amenities available in Asian destinations.

7. Researcher: In your experience, how effective is social media in promoting Asian tourist destinations?

Interviewee: I believe, social media is an incredibly effective tool for destination promotion, but not to forget it's also a crowded space. Standing out requires not just beautiful content, but also storytelling that can emotionally connect with the audience. I believe, the challenge is to keep evolving with the changing algorithms and preferences of social media users.

8. Researcher: What new trends do you see emerging in the use of social media for tourism promotion?

Interviewee: As far as I see, there is a growing trend is the increased focus on health and wellness tourism, with content centered around wellness retreats and nature-based experiences becoming more popular.

9. Researcher: Do you have any final thoughts or anything else to add about social media in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: I think social media has opened up new frontiers in tourism promotion. It's a powerful tool that, if used wisely, can bring positive attention and growth to Asian destinations. The future lies in innovative content creation that can adapt to the evolving digital landscape and the diverse tastes of the global travel community.

Interview 2

1. Researcher: Before we begin, I want to ensure that you are comfortable participating in this interview. Your responses will be used solely for academic research, and your identity will remain confidential. Do I have your consent to record and proceed with this interview and to use the information you provide for my dissertation?

Interviewee: Absolutely, I consent to this interview. I'm aware that my insights will contribute to your academic research and that my privacy and confidentiality will be respected. It's a pleasure to share my perspective.

2. Researcher: May I know your Qualifications and Specialization in the field of Tourism?

Interviewee: I hold a Master's degree in Marketing with a specialization in Digital Marketing. My expertise lies in leveraging digital platforms, particularly social media, for brand building and customer engagement in the tourism sector.

3. Researcher: What social media marketing strategies do you think work best for promoting tourism in Asia in today's world?

Interviewee: In our strategy, we've shifted towards an experiential marketing approach. We create immersive campaigns that not only showcase the beauty of Asian destinations but also allow potential tourists to virtually experience them. For instance, using 360-degree videos and interactive storytelling helps us bring the vibrancy and diversity of Asian cultures to life. We've also been leveraging user-generated content more actively, as it creates a sense of authenticity and trust that polished marketing materials sometimes lack.

4. Researcher: How do social media analytics influence the choice of tourist destinations particularly in Asia?

Interviewee: Social media analytics have become integral to our destination selection process. By analyzing trends, we can predict rising hotspots and tailor our campaigns across Asia to these emerging preferences. It's not just about the popularity of Asia; we also analyze its engagement levels, sentiment analysis, and demographic data to ensure we're targeting the right audiences. This data-driven approach helps us stay agile and relevant in a highly

competitive market of Asia.

5. Researcher: How important is it to show Asian culture in social media posts about tourism?

Interviewee: We believe in a balanced representation of Asian destinations. While it's crucial to showcase the rich cultural heritage and traditions, we also emphasize the modern and dynamic aspects of each destination. Our goal is to break stereotypes and present a holistic view of Asia that appeals to a diverse range of travelers. It's about creating a narrative that is both authentic and inclusive.

6. Researcher: What kind of social media content gets the most attention from people interested in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: Our most engaging content typically involves interactive and visually stunning posts. We focus on high-quality imagery and videos that capture the essence of a destination. But beyond that, we find that content which tells a story or offers unique insights into local life resonates deeply with our audience. For example, posts featuring local artisans, behind-the-scenes looks at popular tourist spots, or guides by local residents tend to get higher engagement.

7. Researcher: In your experience, how effective is social media in promoting Asian tourist destinations?

Interviewee: According to me, social media has been a game-changer for us, especially in reaching younger demographics. However, it's not without its challenges. The digital landscape is continuously evolving, and keeping up with the latest trends and algorithm changes can be daunting and pressurizing. Moreover, the oversaturation of content on social media means that standing out requires not just creativity but also strategic planning and execution, which I believe is the hardest to achieve in this time.

8. Researcher: What new trends do you see emerging in the use of social media for tourism promotion?

Interviewee: I foresee a greater emphasis on sustainable and responsible tourism in Asia.

There's a growing awareness among travelers about their impact on the environment and local communities. So, content that highlights eco-friendly practices, supports local economies, and promotes ethical travel is becoming increasingly important.

9. Researcher: Do you have any final thoughts or anything else to add about social media in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: I think, social media continues to evolve, and its role in tourism promotion is more significant than ever. However, I believe, it's crucial to maintain a balance between digital and traditional marketing methods. While social media allows for wider and more targeted reach, traditional methods offer depth and authenticity. I would say, the future of Asian tourism marketing lies in integrating these approaches to create holistic and impactful campaigns.

Interview 3

1. Researcher: Before we begin, I want to ensure that you are comfortable participating in this interview. Your responses will be used solely for academic research, and your identity will remain confidential. Do I have your consent to record and proceed with this interview and to use the information you provide for my dissertation?

Interviewee: Sure, I'm comfortable participating in this interview. It's great to share my experiences.

2. Researcher: What social media marketing strategies do you think work best for promoting tourism in Asia?

Interviewee: I've noticed that influencers and tourism boards that blend stunning visuals with engaging, authentic storytelling really capture my attention. When they highlight off-the-beaten-path destinations or hidden cultural gems, it draws my interest in visiting those places. Also, posts that include practical tips, like the best local eateries or lesser-known attractions, are particularly helpful and make a destination more appealing to me.

3. Researcher: How do social media analytics influence the choice of tourist destinations in Asia?

Interviewee: I think my destination choices are heavily influenced by what I see on social media. If I notice certain places popping up frequently on my feed, with lots of likes and positive comments, it naturally draws my interest. It feels like these places are vetted by a large community, which gives me a sense of confidence in choosing them for my travels.

4. Researcher: How important is it to show Asian culture in social media posts about tourism?

Interviewee: I believe it's essential to showcase the real culture of a place. When social media posts delve into local traditions, festivals, and daily life, it gives me a sense of the authentic experiences I could have. This cultural exposure is a big part of what makes travel so enriching for me.

5. Researcher: What kind of social media content gets the most attention from people interested in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: I'm most attracted to content that feels personal and relatable. Posts where people share their genuine experiences, the challenges they faced, and how they overcame them – these stories resonate with me. Also, visually appealing content, like beautiful landscapes or unique architectural features, always catches my eye.

6. Researcher: In your experience, how effective is social media in promoting Asian tourist destinations?

Interviewee: I believe, social media is a powerful tool for promoting destinations, but there's a fine line between promotion and over-commercialization. I prefer content that doesn't feel too scripted or sales oriented. It should feel like a friend recommending a place, not a company selling a package.

7. Researcher: What new trends do you see emerging in the use of social media for tourism promotion?

Interviewee: Lately, I've noticed a trend towards sustainable and eco-friendly travel options being promoted on social media. Also, there's a growing interest in wellness and retreat-type vacations. These trends align with a more conscious approach to travel, which I find

appealing.

8. Researcher: Do you have any final thoughts or anything else to add about social media in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: I think, social media has definitely changed the way I plan and perceive travel. It's a great tool for discovering new places and learning about different cultures. However, I also try to cross-reference and research beyond social media to get a more balanced view of a destination.

Interview 4

1. Researcher: Before we begin, I want to ensure that you are comfortable participating in this interview. Your responses will be used solely for academic research, and your identity will remain confidential. Do I have your consent to record and proceed with this interview and to use the information you provide for my dissertation?

Interviewee: Absolutely, I'm happy to participate and share my insights. It's great to contribute your academic research in this field. Please go ahead."

2. Researcher: What social media marketing strategies do you think work best for promoting tourism in Asia?

Interviewee: In my experience, authenticity is the key. My followers engage most with content that offers a genuine and attractive portrayal of destinations. Be it the bustling street markets in Bangkok or serene landscapes in rural Japan or the historic beauty of India. I always focus on creating content that tells a story, often incorporating local folklore or personal experiences. I think this approach not only attracts viewers but also helps preserve and showcase the rich cultural heritage of Asia.

3. Researcher: How do social media analytics influence the choice of tourist destinations in Asia?

Interviewee: I believe Analytics play a huge role in what I showcase. I try to analyze trends to see what destinations my audience is curious about and then tailor my content accordingly. This often leads me to explore hidden gems, like my last trip to a village in the capital of Sri

Lanka, moving beyond typical tourist spots. By showcasing diverse locations, I aim to expand my audience's perspective on what Asia has to offer.

4. Researcher: How important is it to show Asian culture in social media posts about tourism?

Interviewee: I feel I have a responsibility to represent Asian culture accurately and respectfully. I try to educate my audience about the cultural significance of places I visit. It's not just about beautiful spots; it's about understanding the stories behind them, the local customs, and traditions. This cultural portrayal fosters a deeper appreciation and respect among my followers.

5. Researcher: What kind of social media content gets the most attention from people interested in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: I've found that interactive content, like live Q&A sessions from iconic locations or user-driven storytelling, where followers suggest what they want to see or know about a destination, generates a lot of engagement. Also, posts that portray modernity with tradition in Asian cities often spark interest and conversation.

6. Researcher: In your experience, how effective is social media in promoting Asian tourist destinations?

Interviewee: According to me social media is a powerful tool, especially for showcasing less-known aspects of Asian destinations. However, it requires a balance between staying true to the style and adapting to what engages the audiences. There's also the challenge of ensuring that the portrayal does not become stereotypical or overly commercialized.

7. Researcher: What new trends do you see emerging in the use of social media for tourism promotion?

Interviewee: I see a shift towards more sustainable and eco-conscious travel content. Audiences are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of tourism, and they appreciate content that highlights sustainable practices. Another trend is the use of augmented reality to provide virtual travel experiences, which I believe will become more popular.

8. Researcher: Do you have any final thoughts or anything else to add about social media in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: According to my knowledge, social media has the power to influence perceptions of Asian destinations significantly. With the kind of work I do, we have the responsibility to promote responsible tourism and cultural sensitivity. For me, the future lies in creating content that is not only visually appealing but also informative and respectful of the diverse cultures across Asia."

Interview 5

1. Researcher: Before we begin, I want to ensure that you are comfortable participating in this interview. Your responses will be used solely for academic research, and your identity will remain confidential. Do I have your consent to record and proceed with this interview and to use the information you provide for my dissertation?

Interviewee: Absolutely, I am comfortable with this interview. Please feel free to use my responses for your study.

2. Researcher: Researcher: May I know your Qualifications and Specialization in the field of Tourism?

Interviewee: I hold an MBA and experience in marketing.

3. Researcher: What social media marketing strategies do you think work best for promoting tourism in Asia?

Interviewee: In my opinion, social media marketing in the tourism industry is all about creating a connection with potential tourists. We've found that storytelling, where we highlight unique cultural experiences and showcase the beauty and diversity of Asian destinations, is incredibly effective. I think, it's not just about posting beautiful pictures; it's about telling a story that makes someone want to be part of it. We also focus on influencer collaborations and interactive posts that engage potential visitors and create a buzz around a destination.

4. Researcher: How do social media analytics influence the choice of tourist destinations in Asia?

Interviewee: I believe social media analytics play a crucial role in understanding what today's travelers are looking for. By analyzing data on popular trends, hashtags, and the types of posts that receive the most engagement, we can tailor our offerings and marketing strategies. This data helps us identify emerging hotspots and understand which aspects of a destination appeal the most to travelers, allowing us to promote them more effectively.

5. Researcher: How important is it to show Asian culture in social media posts about tourism?

Interviewee: I strongly believe representing Asian culture authentically in our social media campaigns is paramount. Travelers nowadays are looking for authentic experiences, something that differentiates a destination from others. By showcasing local festivals, cuisine, traditions, and everyday life, we offer a glimpse into what makes each place unique. Surely, this approach not only attracts tourists but also promotes cultural understanding and appreciation.

6. Researcher: What kind of social media content gets the most attention from people interested in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: We've noticed that content that resonates most with our audience is that which reflects real, relatable experiences. This mostly include user-generated content like travel blogs, reviews, and personal stories. These narratives provide a genuine insight into what it's like to visit a place, making it more enticing for potential tourists. Also, interactive content such as polls, quizzes, and live Q&A sessions have been successful in increasing engagement.

7. Researcher: In your experience, how effective is social media in promoting Asian tourist destinations?

Interviewee: I believe social media is a powerhouse for tourism promotion. It's not just about reaching a wide audience, but about targeted and strategic engagement. Platforms like

Instagram and Facebook allow us to create visually appealing content and reach specific demographics. We also use social media to gather feedback and engage with our audience, creating a two-way conversation that's invaluable for brand loyalty and customer satisfaction.

8. Researcher: What new trends do you see emerging in the use of social media for tourism promotion?

Interviewee: Looking forward, I see a shift towards more immersive and interactive content on social media to promote tourism. This includes the use of virtual and augmented reality to give potential tourists a 'try before you buy' experience. Another trend is the growing emphasis on sustainable tourism. We're seeing more content that highlights eco-friendly practices and responsible travel, resonating with the increasing number of environmentally conscious travelers.

9. Researcher: Do you have any final thoughts or anything else to add about social media in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: I would like to say that social media has fundamentally changed how we approach tourism promotion. It's not just about advertising; it's about creating an immersive experience. I believe the key is to use these platforms to tell a story that is not only visually appealing but also emotionally resonant. As we move forward, the challenge will be to stay ahead of the rapidly changing digital landscape, continuously adapting our strategies to ensure that we capture the true essence of Asian tourism.

Interview 6

1. Researcher: Before we begin, I want to ensure you're comfortable participating in this interview. Your responses will be used for academic research, and your identity will remain confidential. Do you consent to proceed?

Interviewee: Yes, I'm comfortable, and I give my consent. Happy to contribute to your research.

2. Researcher: May I know your qualifications and specialization in the field of tourism?

Interviewee: I hold a Master's degree in Digital Marketing with a focus on social media analytics. I've specialized in leveraging social media for tourism promotion, particularly in

the Asian market.

3. Researcher: What social media marketing strategies work best for promoting tourism in Asia today?"

Interviewee: I believe storytelling and visually engaging content are key. We use a lot of video and user-generated content to showcase authentic experiences. I think highlighting unique cultural aspects and local experiences is also very effective.

4. Researcher: How do social media analytics influence the choice of tourist destinations in Asia?

Interviewee: I would say analytics provide insights into what potential tourists are interested in. Like for example, if we see a trend in people searching for beaches or cultural festivals, we focus on promoting destinations that offer these experiences. So I think, analytics is important aspect in influencing the choices and which helps us in promotion of destinations.

5. Researcher: How important is it to show Asian culture in social media posts about tourism?

Interviewee: So, I say it is very crucial. So, showcasing Asian culture authentically helps in creating a genuine connection with the audience and distinguishes our destinations from others, which i would say is a very crucial aspect in social media posts.

6. Researcher: What kind of social media content gets the most attention for Asian tourism?.

Interviewee: I think, content that is visually attractive and informative will perform well. Say for example, posts that offer a glimpse into the local lifestyle, cuisine, and traditions attract a lot of engagement.

7. Researcher: In your experience, how effective is social media in promoting Asian tourist destinations?

Interviewee: It's extremely effective. It's a powerful tool to reach a global audience and can significantly influence travel decisions.

8. Researcher: What new trends do you see emerging in social media for tourism promotion?

Interviewee: I believe, virtual reality experiences and sustainable travel are becoming popular. Mostly, people are also looking for more personalized travel experiences through social media and I think the day is very near where we can view a place through the virtual reality very easily.

9. Researcher: Any final thoughts on social media in Asian tourism?

Interviewee: So, social media is reshaping how we perceive and experience travel. It's an exciting time with endless possibilities for innovation in tourism promotion.