A study on Impact of Social Media on Travel and Tourism in India

Prof. Partha Pratim Nath

Sinhgad Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Technology, Lonavala

ppnath.sihmct@sinhgad.edu

Abstract

The use of Internet and other information communication technologies leads to a new era of tourism Industry. Social media, as one of most influential online networking tools which has been incorporated into different part of social and economic life in the real world. The importance of social media is rising in the hospitality and tourism industry. In the age of globalization, internet and social media has affected the tourism products and have proved to encourage a good competitiveness in improving not only the quality of the hospitality in future but also the returns from the tourism industry will increase. Social media has made a huge impact on the tourism industry. Customers connect with social networking sites to search trips, make planned decisions about their travels and share their personal experiences of a particular hotel, restaurant or airline with their friends and relatives. The aim of this study is to understand the growing importance of social media in the tourism industry and to understand the impact of social media in the tourism industry. The purpose is to realise the role of social media in the tourism industry so that it benefits the tourism phenomenon globally and it also encourage the use of social media in the businesses related to tourism industry.

Keywords: Social Media, Hotel, Tourism Industry, Internet, Hospitality.

Objective of the study:

1) To study the role of social media in travel and tourism in India.
2) To understand the impact factor of social media on tourism industry.

Research Methodology:

Research type: Descriptive Research Data Base: Secondary Data/Data source. The present study is based on secondary data; information has been derived from various websites.

Introduction:

It has been observed that social media has entered the common man's life in every aspect since last couple of years. The use of social media has seen a substantial growth in human life worldwide, people wants to showcase their daily events and happenings through the social media in the form of Facebook, twitter, Whatsapp. The travel industry and friendliness industry has seen an intriguing advancement since the start albeit in the course of recent years, because of the downturn, individuals have begun eliminating get-aways and deals have diminished, further prompting lower income, lower settlements and diminishing work section. Today, the industry is on the ascent again and has changed drastically with the staggering appearance of web based life stages making new chances to advance and pull in the client through encouraged correspondence and enabled visitor commitment. It must be viewed as something positive for the travel industry and friendliness industry as it has such a great amount to offer. It is still on an ascent and gives an approach to build benefits. By and by, one of the most fundamental issues that specialist co-ops have experienced is the manner by which to participate in online life showcasing and how to approve whether it is gainful for their business to utilize it or not. Subsequently, the absolute most testing viewpoints incorporate the contemplations of how one estimates these outcomes; how one decides the business estimation of web based life, how one understands the significance of online networking to any association, how one utilizes internet based life for a business with the end goal for it to be acknowledged by the network while improving the brand and ultimately how one estimates the estimation of the practiced endeavours. It is ordinarily seen that web based life's arrival on interest in the travel industry and neighbourliness industry can't be estimated, as a result of the transitory and elusive character of the travel industry item, also on the grounds that the arrival on speculation isn't constantly viewed as a solid perspective. For instance, business notoriety or relationship of a brand with explicit qualities are not highlights that can be estimated, however are as yet significant for a partner and can be effectively accomplished with the assistance of internet based life promoting. Obviously money related viewpoints can't be anticipated, however at last "the relationship is evident and critical: Socially connected with organizations are in actuality all the more monetarily fruitful. As online networking is developing at huge development rate, it tends to be use as a promoting device for all enterprises. The travel industry is prepared to exploit internet based life outlets, as the business has since a long time ago depended to a great extent on goal notoriety, customer conclusion, spread of data, and positive verbal publicizing. In numerous occurrences, for example, the instance of the 'Extraordinary India' crusade and 'Bharat Darshan' battle, combination of online life into the showcasing technique of Indian Tourism has demonstrated

surprising, quantifiable outcomes in expanded paces of visits just as guest fulfilment. Thus, different states around the nation are getting increasingly dependent via web-based networking media as a cost-efficient and powerful instrument for the travel industry advertising for their individual state.

Social Media Has Transformed Travel and Tourism in following ways:

1. Travel research transformed
The most profound effect that social media has had on the tourism industry to date is the democratization of online reviews. Today's travelers go online to research their future travel destinations and accommodations. When booking travel, 89% of millennials plan travel activities based on content posted by their peers online.

From social sharing sites such as Instagram to crowd-sourced review sites such as TripAdvisor, people are browsing the Internet for travel inspiration and validation from their peers. There, they can easily find other travelers' photos, check-ins, ratings and more. This easy-to-attain, real guest feedback serves to preview the in-person experience that the destination has to offer from a viewpoint other than that of the brand. As you might assume, this social media content is tremendously accessible and influential, and it can serve to either put off potential guests or inspire them to book.

2. Rise in social sharing

People have always loved sharing photos and videos taken of their travels. What social media has done is to facilitate and expand people's ability to share travel experiences with a wider audience than ever before. Over 97% of millennials share photos and videos of their travels online, building an influential web of peer-to-peer content that serves to inspire potential guests.

This trend hasn't gone unnoticed. Many hotels and resorts have turned to running social contests and campaigns to ensure that they get some credit for their guests' social activity. Kimpton Hotels and Restaurants used guests' wedding photos instead of staged, professional photographs to market their wedding venues. The campaign encouraged guests to take photos, tag them with the hashtag #KimptonWeddings – and ultimately to create user-generated content for the brand that was free, authentic, and repurposed across its marketing channels.

3. Enhanced customer service

Customer service and satisfaction have also been transformed as a result of social media. The vast majority of brands have a <u>social media presence</u> that is being used to become aware of and, when necessary, to provide help to unsatisfied or confused customers. The companies that respond to complaints in a sincere and genuine manner develop a strong reputation among current and potential customers. American Airlines and JetBlue are particularly adept at addressing flight issues and providing a human touch to otherwise frustrating experiences.

When Twitter users contact a brand, more than half expect a response. If they are reaching out with a complaint, that number rises to almost 75%. Responding to complaints and questions helps to humanize your brand and to indicate to current and future customers that they are valued.

Additionally, customer success representatives should be intentional with their company's social media interactions. Social media can serve as a social listening tool to find out information about your guests. Are they visiting for an anniversary or a special occasion? Listening to customers through social media can help your brand create an exceptional experience that is sure to delight your guests.

4. Reshaping travel agencies

Social media has also had a major impact on the travel agency model. The availability of information and ease of self-service booking have forced travel agencies to adapt from a brick-and-mortar model to a more digital one. Travel agencies are not obsolete -- they are still responsible for 55% of all airline bookings, 77% of cruise bookings, and 73% of package bookings. But many agencies have shifted their focus from in-person to online experiences as they adapt to new technology and market trends.

Agents working with <u>millennial</u> travelers should take into account the generation's preference for "experiences over materials." Instead of trying to upsell them on flight upgrades and lodging, consider presenting unique experiences guaranteed to create a lasting memory (and to inspire a great Instagram post.) While travel agencies may struggle to remain relevant as self-booking options increase, their advantage is that many travelers still prefer the personal touch.

5. Changing loyalty programs

As most marketers know, acquiring new customers is far more expensive than retaining existing ones. Loyalty programs have become a core piece of the travel business model, and social media has had a massive impact on how hotel loyalty programs are constructed. Many customers understand that the

opinions that they share with their individual networks have tremendous influence. As a result, these guests feel entitled to compensation for the positive word-of-mouth marketing that they are doing for a brand. More than 25% of millennials that participate in loyalty programs are very likely to post about a brand in exchange for loyalty points.

With the availability of <u>technologies</u> that allow mention and hashtag tracking across social media channels, it is easier than ever for hotels to discover passionate guests and to reward them accordingly. Integrating social media sharing and posting can be worked into existing tier loyalty programs to encourage brand promotion across social media platforms. When loyal guests share the easy the redeem perks and benefits offered by a brand's loyalty programs on social media, other guests see that the benefits are attainable -- and desirable -- and they will be more incentivized to participate.

Social media has altered the landscape of marketing in the leisure and hospitality industry. Most travelers determine their travel plans based on reviews and social media shares, making online customer service a crucial part of building a positive brand reputation. The prevalence of social media has disrupted traditional customer service models -- for hotels and travel agencies alike. By curating positive reviews and encouraging social shares, hospitality brands can leverage social media to build positive brand awareness, increase brand loyalty, and display just how much their accommodations and activities have to offer.

Social Media Tools:

With today's technology, there is an app for almost everything, especially for hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions and museums. A lot of different surveys showed that a significant amount of people use apps for travel information and to have a better knowledge about a certain place. They may ask a friend, a forum, a family member, or look through different travelling and tourism apps. Owing to these different apps and because of social media, more and more people will find out about a different location. They can read some reviews about the place, or read some blog posts.

- **Reviews**

Another thing that is very popular today is writing reviews. A lot of people write reviews about the place they went to. You can find reviews about locations, the hotel, activities, restaurants and a lot more. A study showed that over 74% of travellers write reviews because they want to share with other people the

travelling experience they had. Also 98% find Trip Advisor reviews to be the most accurate and the most helpful. 53% of travellers, will not book a hotel that doesn't have any review. Written reviews are infact very popular and very influential. A lot of people decide where to go simply by reading reviews online. If a person wrote a review about a bad experience, a lot of people will not want to go to that place or they can reconsider that destination. Over 70% of global consumers say that online reviews are the second most trusted form of advertising.

- **Facebook**

Another very influential website on travellers is Facebook. Facebook is particularly great because you can find pages about a destination, or a hotel. There you can find pictures of that destination, people commenting about the destination and pictures of other people at the destination. Another thing that you can find on Facebook is pictures of your friend's vacation. Some people get influential when they see their friends' pictures in a certain location and see how much fun they have. 52% of Facebook users said that their travelling plans were affected by a friend's picture of their trips.

Overall, social media is very influential when it comes to travelling and tourism. It influences in a positive way and is a good thing. Now, people find more information about the destinations they want to go to and have a higher chance of having a good time because they know what to expect!

Travel and Tourism in India:

The Indian Tourism enterprise has acted as one of the crucial catalyst in the socio-financial financial improvement of both rural and urban regions considering the fact that the final two decades, contributing in several approaches and strengthens the inter-related processes. While it is frequently claimed as treatment for plenty evils like underdevelopment, unemployment, poverty eradication, improvement of rural regions, up grading living general and so on; its contribution in growing a global and local socio-political surroundings for non violent co-existence of the cultures and societies has been equally installed at various levels. Perhaps, this realisation took many pupils and planners to position tourism as one of the biggest 'peace industries', a means to strike stability of world peace process though development. If, tourism practiced in accountable and sustainable manner will deliver peace and prosperity of the humans and its stakeholders will share advantages in fair manner, which is a compulsory circumstance for the equilibrium of sharing to sustain. Tourism in India has emerged as one of the vital devices of employment technology, employment technology, earnings and Foreign Exchange income and infrastructure improvement

each in rural and urban areas. It helps within the poverty eradication and up gradation of dwelling popular of   the humans around the tourist sports in   particular in far   off backward regions.   Tourism enterprise has sizeable economic benefits. This enterprise has no longer remained what it turned into in 90's and 2000, nowadays it have no longer remained restricted itself only to Tour operators, hotels, eating places and   sea   beaches, but has   touched each nook of   our economic   system   through diversification   and   innovation   in conventional tourism shape and system in   to   rural   areas (Rural tourism), health sector (Health Tourism) and environment (Eco-tourism) as well. Its importance as an instrument for economic improvement and   employment technology is now identified international over.   The current Tourism   Policy, consequently offers a   framework for improvement of tourism, with the objective of reaping its socio-economic benefit, human beings in rural regions by   using making   sure overall improvement of   the   countryside,   society   and the state altogether.   The   Tourism enterprise of   India   has   immense capacity to   reap   economic blessings,   if   this precious fruitful useful   resource is   utilized efficiently and   efficiently.   It   has a potential to provide employment to professional and unskilled labour pressure of the country. Through its strong backward and forward linkages it generates employment in distinct sectors of the economic system both without   delay and   indirectly.   If those linkages   are reinforced these will   act   as a effective instrument for monetary increase and improvement and   will help in inclusive   increase, which is one of the vital objective of five year plans. These linkages will develop with the passage of time depending up on sort of factors, which include the supply of finance, the range and adulthood of the nearby financial system or the excellent of domestically produced goods.   The tour and   tourism enterprise includes those 4 elements that permit it   to   be   a   dynamic market pressure for   sustainability in   the future.   It   has   the ability to boom exports, bring in   capital investment, raise economies GDP and create employment.

Conclusion:

Social media has grown and has an increasing number of impacts on many social and monetary aspects. Social   media performs a   very essential role inside   the tourism enterprise.   The tourism enterprise deals with capacity travellers, experiences of   travellers   and   those getting   back from a ride and   sharing   their   experiences. They have   a   portray of Social Media   as   a method of growing / increasing awareness of the destination, accomplishing out to masses, encouraging travellers to   plan their   journey,   strengthening   it   with   the   destination photos as a favourite destination, concentrated   on new   / precise market,   spreading   positive phrase of mouth, increasing number of   visitors, developing buzz across   the   destination,   increasing   the

the variety of Facebook / Twitter fan base, converting the attraction of the destination in the thoughts of visitors, developing a brand photograph for the destinations, and more.

So, Social Media has been widely used as a method of promoting travel and tourism locations and products by well-known destination marketing organizations.

References:

- http://www.ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRTICPN042.pdf (Intro)
- http://www.socialsamosa.com/2014/09/social-media-travel-tourism/

- http://www.ijsrp.org/research-paper-1214/ijsrp-p3692.pdf
- https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/286408