Utilization of Social Media in Promoting Tourism in Region I, Philippines

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Abstract— Social media has evolved into a very successful marketing tool for capturing the hearts of people. Social media is a strong platform for publicizing positive aspects of individuals and websites where people generally connect and meet new business prospects. The goal of this study was to assess the usage of social media in promoting tourism in Pangasinan province. In the study, the descriptive research approach was applied. According to the data, the most popular social media platforms used by people in the tourism industry to promote local tourism were Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs, and Websites. Social media applications served as a faster way of spreading information, especially for low-cost tourism firms. According to the study's findings, social media is utilized to promote tourism.

Keywords— **Promotion, Social Media, Tourism**

I. INTRODUCTION

Social media has been a great way of communication. It has brought people a broad idea of interaction through words, pictures, videos, and other forms of art. The use of social media in tourism is heavily influenced by information seeking and decision-making habits. It has a huge impact on people's choices and preferences. It's also been a terrific chance for me to share my experiences with others. (Zeng B (2013). [1]

Social media has two parts, the social, which refers to the need of human interaction with other humans which has been done since the beginning of species. People need to be comfortable and feel at home through socializing, where they will be able to share their thoughts and experiences. On the other hand, media is used as a means of connecting to other people whether is verbal, sounds, or written words (safko, (2013:3)[2]

A lot of countries utilize social media as a great marketing tool. It plays an essential role in holiday planning and results in a higher number of demand. Huang, Basu, and Hsu posited that having travel information is the primary motivation that drives the travelers' use of user-generated content (UCG) and social media. [3]

According to Stepchenkova and Morrison (2006), promoting a country may be difficult without a thorough grasp of how tourists view a tourist location. As a result, people's social media experiences are becoming a foundation for visitors' purchasing choices. [4] The usage of social media as a marketing technique is quickly becoming the preferred method of advertising. It swiftly reaches individuals and provides them with useful information. According to some travel entrepreneurs, the Philippines tourism sector must utilize social media in promoting natural tourist spots which is very common in the country

Tourism is an important part of the Philippine economy. The travel and tourism business generated 12.7 percent of the country's GDP in 2019, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority. The Philippines is an archipelago of 7,641 islands divided into 81 provinces and 17 districts. The nation is well-known for its incredible biodiversity, which is its main tourist draw. Its

beaches, ancient towns and monuments, mountains, jungles, islands, and diving locations are among the country's most popular tourist attractions. The Philippines' rich historical and cultural past, which includes festivals and indigenous customs, is one of the country's main attractions. Popular tourist destinations include Cebu, Boracay, Palawan, and Siargao, among others. Despite this considerable potential, the Philippines' tourism industry has lagged behind those of its Southeast Asian peers, including Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia, due to political and social difficulties.

One of the most popular provincial tourist spots is the Philippines is Pangasinan. Pangasinan is a destination for tourists who wish to explore islands and beaches, waterfalls, and feast on tasty local cuisine.

Although there are some studies on the utilization of social media throughout the world. There are very few studies conducted in the provines particular Pangasinan in the Philippines. Hence, this study aimed to asses the utilization of social media in promoting tourist spots in Pangasinan province

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aimed to assess the utilization of social media in promoting Tourism in Region 1.

1. What is the profile of the hotels/resorts in Region 1 in terms of the following:
   1.1. Department of Tourism Classification
   1.2. Years Established
   1.3. Capitalization
   1.4. No. of Employees
2. To what extent are the common social media applications being used by the respondents?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the two profiles and common social media?
4. Is there significant difference between the two groups of respondents in the use of social media.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATION

This study focused on the marketing plan to improve social media in promoting tourism in the Philippines, particularly tourist spots and the social media used in promoting the spot in Region 1.

The study is also limited to factors that present challenges during the conduct of the study. The first factor in consideration is the geographical area, since some areas may no longer be accessible due to limited public utility vehicles, hence the result may be taken as a general. Second, not all resorts may be aware of business diversity since it is a new concept, and the level of ignorance may be high.

II. RELATED LITERATURES

Consumers can get more broad data from Web clients all over the world by looking for substance on social media. This permits them to not as it were collect travel data from companions and relatives inside their social arrange, but too from companions and relatives exterior of their social arrange. Moreover, concurring to Blackshaw and Nazzaro (2006), UGC made by social media incorporates a number of unused and creative sources of online substance. [5]

Concurring to Thevenot (2007), past consumers' travel encounters and points of view may be shared with others in an assortment of designs, counting content, picture, sound, and video. Given that the data accessible on social media is the collaborative information of individuals from all over the world in different groups, Schmallegger and Carson (2008)[6], as well as Yoo and Gretzel (2011), concluded that social media are more viable than other data sources in giving travelers with more comprehensive information on a tourism item or goal. [7]

The goodness and differences of UGC on social media are moreover critical variables affecting travel customers' utilize of social media within the excursion arranging prepare (Salkhordeh, 2009). [8] Earlier consider has centered on the validity of travel-related UGC on social media. In spite of the truth that UGC or eWOM on social media is nearly indistinguishable to

ordinary WOM, buyers regularly consider eWOM as less dependable than WOM.

As user-generated substance (UGC) has gotten to be an basic source of data for travelers, different inquire about have looked to examine what makes travelers believe UGC on social media. Concurring to Yoo and Gretzel (2010), seen information and reliability of UGC creators were critical determinants of belief in travel-related UGC. Moreover, they found that trip recurrence and the age of UGC creators are associated to believe in travel-related UGC, in spite of the fact that this affiliation isn't solid [9]. Burgess, Sellitto, Cox, and Buultjens (2011) found that when individuals visit a specialized travel site, they have higher beliefs within the community than when they visit a more general social networking location [10]. Since belief may be a noteworthy driver of travel-related UGC utilization and generation, Yoo and Gretzel (2010) prescribed that future considers exploring the impact of numerous fundamental measurements and components that might move forward the dependability of UGC on social media. [8]

In light of the benefits of blogging, Cost and Starkov (2006) found that a few lodging administrators have allured sightseers to create articles or comments on their inn blogs by advertising motivating forces such as rebates and vouchers. This, in any case, postured a moral quandary in terms of the authenticity of the data on commerce blogs. Numerous scholastics have found that blogging is accommodating in improving look motor comes about, expanding guests to a company's site, and, as a result, expanding online deals to the businesses or goals (Schmollgruber, 2007; Wyld, 2008). In any case, since social media is the polar inverse of conventional showcasing media, the fabric on travel blogs ought to be unmistakable from the substance supplied in conventional showcasing data instead of special in nature (Fernando, 2007; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008).

Moreover, a few specialists have contended that blogs must give a few additional esteem to perusers, such as engaging stories, one of a kind insider information, and cost-saving choices, in arrange to lure individuals to come and contribute to the web journal (Akehurst, 2009;

Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Other social media apps that tourism experts routinely utilize incorporate online gatherings or social organizing destinations (SNSs).

A social networking location may be a stage that permits clients to share individual data and connected with individuals who have same interface (Dippelreiter, Grün, Pöttler, Seidel, & Berger, 2008; Huang et al., 2010). Facebook is directly the greatest the internet among all existing SNSs, facilitating 11.5 percent of the world populace (Web World Stats, 2012). Kasavana, Nusair, and Teodosic (2010) recognized Facebook's commercial potential in supporting tourism firms with around the world electronic showcasing. Facebook gives an elective web-based stage for traveler firms to donate data, publicize merchandise and administrations, and reply to customer enquiries by enlisting as a part and establishing a page on the location. Employing a substance examination strategy on 67 Hong Kong lodging websites, Chan and Denizci Guillet (2011) found that lodgings in Hong Kong contribute more intensely in Facebook showcasing than in other social media apps.

In spite of the huge potential of social media in electronic showcasing, Chan and Denizci Guillet (2011) famous a few companies were found to be need of commitment to maintaining social media promoting endeavors. One conceivable clarification for this is often the vulnerability around the return on venture in social media showcasing. Considering that social media are generally unused promoting media, there's constrained prove on their budgetary returns. Consequently, companies may question as to whether their speculations in social media showcasing may turn into a commerce or how much assets they ought to contribute in social media promoting. These questions may give a few clues or bearings for future investigate as well.

II Methodology

A. Research Design

The research is descriptive in nature as it attempts to describe data to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how instruments will be used and the means by which the data collected will be analyzed.

In general, descriptive method of research is a fact-finding study with adequate and accurate interpretation of the findings. It describes what is. It describes with emphasis what actually exists such as current conditions, practices, situations, or any phenomena According to Creswell (2014), the descriptive method of research is to gather information about the present existing condition.

Since the study is to propose a marketing plan to improve social media in promoting tourism, a descriptive method of research is most appropriate to use. Further, the researcher opted to use this kind of research considering the desire to acquire first hand data from the respondents so as to formulate rational and sound conclusions and recommendations for the study.

Specifically, the researcher will make use of the survey type of descriptive research for this study. In this type of method, respondents answer questions administered through interviews or questionnaires. The questionnaire survey type is proper in this study because it enables the researcher to gather data regarding the use of social media as a tool for marketing in hotels and resorts. The respondents were given ample time to assess the respondent's viewpoint.

B. Respondents to the study

Respondents of the study included the managers, hotel and resorts owners, and customers or visitors. These were chosen based on their actual participation in the study.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study reveals that there are 11 (64.7%) respondents classified as 3-star hotel, 4 (23.5%) respondents are classified as 4-star hotel, and 2 (11.77%) respondents are classified as a 5-star hotel. This implies that most of the respondents are classified as a 3-star hotel. It is revealed that there are 11 (61.1%) respondents classified as class "A," 6 (33.3%) respondents classified as class "AA" and 1 (5.56%) respondents are classified as class "AAA." This shows that the majority of the respondents are class "A." The study also revealed that

the three most common social media utilized include, facebook, youtube and Instagram.

In terms of the year establishment of hotels, there are 10 which were established before the year 2000 and 7 which were established after the year 2000. It is also revealed that there are 7 resorts who were established before the year 2000 and 11 after the year 2000. In terms of capitalization for hotels, it is revealed that 5 of them have a capital of 21 to 30 million pesos, 10 have 31 to 40 million pesos and 2 hotels have 41 and above capital. In terms of the number of employees, it is revealed that there are 2 hotels who have 45 and below employees, 3 who have 46 to 60 employees, 7 who have 61-75 employees and 5 who have 76 and more employees.

It is also revealed that in terms of capitalization, there are 5 resorts with the capital of 11 to 20 million, 5 with the capital of 21-30 million and 8 with the capital of 31-40 million. In terms of the number of employees, there are 5 resorts' with 40 to 50 employees, 10 have 51 to 60 employees and 3 with 61 and above employees.

Table 1
Social Media Used by Visitors

Social Media	Average	Descriptive Rating	Rank
1. Facebook	4.70	Always	1
2. Twitter	3.05	Sometimes	4
3. Instagram	3.35	Sometimes	2.5
4. Youtube	3.35	Sometimes	2.5
5. Tumbler	2.25	Rarely	6
6. Snapchat	2.30	Rarely	5

Legends: 1 Never; 2 Rarely; 3 Sometimes 4 Very Often; 5 Always

The data in table 1 reveal that the social media most commonly used by the visitors is Facebook as indicated by the descriptive rating of "Always" with a weighted mean of 4.70. The respondents also uses Instagram, and Youtube as indicated by the descriptive rating of "Sometimes" with a weighted mean of 2.50, as well as Twitter with a weighted mean of 3.05. However, the respondents are "Rarely" using Tumbler, and Snapchat with weighted means of 2.30 and 2.25 respectively.

Table 2
Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient

Table 3: Correlation Between Profile Variables and Social Media Used		Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Youtube	Tumbler	Snapchat
Tourism class	r-value	-0.159	-.398*	-.313*	0.029	-.264*	-0.005
	p-value	0.114	0.000	0.002	0.775	0.008	0.960
Established	r-value	-0.019	.385*	0.154	.235*	.372**	0.183
	p-value	0.854	0.000	0.127	0.019	0.000	0.069
Capitalization	r-value	.254*	0.087	-0.052	-.649	-.338	-.213
	p-value	0.011	0.388	0.609	0.000	0.001	0.033
Number of Employees	r-value	-0.191	.362*	.368*	-0.043	-0.083	-.403*
	p-value	0.058	0.000	0.000	0.668	0.411	0.000

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The study reveals that there is no significant difference in the social media used by the three groups of respondents in terms of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as indicated by the significant value of $p > 0.05$. On the other hand, there is a significant difference in the social media used by the groups of respondents in terms of youtube, tumbler, and snapchat, as indicated by the significant value of $p < 0.05$. The study reveals that there is no significant difference in the impacts of social media on the three groups of respondents, as indicated by the significant value of $p > 0.05$. The study also showed that the respondents "Sometimes" encountered problems in using social media specific to 1) Photos and videos are no longer the same as that of the actual; 2) Incomplete information is provided in social media sites; 3) Sometimes the details are exaggerated; 4) The source is unreliable; and, 5) Directions on how to get to the tourist spots are not included in the information provided in media sites.

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