

THE RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING TOOL FOR NEW TOURISM PRODUCTS
THE RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING TOOL FOR NEW TOURISM PRODUCTS.

Dr. Amit S. Khare Assistance Professor, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune. Email – amit.khare@tmv.edu.in

Dr. Mahesh R. Randhava Assistance Professor, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune. Email – mahesh.randhava@tmv.edu.in

Abstract

Social media marketing can offer a plethora of benefits for promoting tourism products and destinations. Social media platforms have billions of active users worldwide, providing an enormous audience to reach with your tourism products. This allows for targeted marketing to specific demographics, interests, and geographic locations. It enables direct engagement with potential customers through comments, messages, and interactive content. This engagement helps build relationships, trust, and loyalty with your audience, ultimately increasing the likelihood of conversion. Tourism products are inherently visual, and social media platforms like Instagram, Pinterest, and Facebook prioritize visual content and provide physical evidence which is one of the major components of it. The study looks into the use of social media and its relevance while using social media as a marketing tool to promote and advertise tourism products. With the ever increasing the use of social media and the utility of different social media platforms it becomes imperative to comprehend how these platforms can help tourism products. The data was gathered through a structured questionnaire. It was circulated within Pune city to gather the responses. The sample size for the study of was 152. The statistical tools used to examine the hypothesis created were t-test and linear regression. The results show a strong relationship between physical evidences provided on social media and tourism choices made by the customers. It was also found that Instagram is the most efficient social media platform used as a marketing tool for tourism product. The study was conducted in Pune city and no particular type of tourism product was included.

Keywords:

social media, tourism marketing, tourism choices, physical evidence, tourism products.

• Introduction

Kotler (2004) defines marketing as, “*a societal and managerial process through which individual or groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering and exchanging products of value with others.*” Taking the same concept as a foundation, tourism products are developed and made available to those who are in need to travel to new places, destinations or sites. With the ever increasing popularity and the use of social media, a lot of the tourism products are marketed using different various social media platforms.

Social media marketing can offer a plethora of benefits for promoting tourism products and destinations. Social media platforms have billions of active users worldwide, providing an enormous audience to reach with your tourism products. This allows for targeted marketing to specific demographics, interests, and geographic locations. It enables direct engagement with potential customers through comments, messages, and interactive content. This engagement helps build relationships, trust, and loyalty with your audience, ultimately increasing the likelihood of conversion. Tourism products are inherently visual, and social media platforms like Instagram, Pinterest, and Facebook prioritize visual content and provide physical evidence which is one of the major components of it. High-quality photos and videos can showcase destinations, accommodations, and experiences, enticing potential travelers to learn more and book. Encouraging travelers to share their experiences through UGC can be a powerful marketing tool. When satisfied customers post about their trips on social media, it acts as authentic testimonials, influencing others' travel decisions. Social media allows for immediate updates about promotions, events, and last-minute deals, which can prompt spontaneous travel bookings. It also facilitates real-time communication with customers, addressing inquiries or concerns promptly. Social media platforms offer advanced targeting options based on demographics, interests, behaviors, and location. This enables precise ad campaigns tailored to specific

audience segments, maximizing the return on investment (ROI) for marketing spend. Social media provides valuable insights into customer preferences, behaviors, and sentiments through analytics tools. This data can inform marketing strategies, product development, and customer service improvements. Compared to traditional advertising channels, social media marketing can be more cost-effective, especially for small businesses and startups. With careful planning and execution, it's possible to achieve significant results with a modest budget. Social media has transformed the manner in which tourism enterprises interact with their desired clientele. It offers a convenient avenue for travelers to engage with tourism firms and labels, whether through commenting or starting conversations. This nurtures bonds and confidence between patrons and enterprises. Timely and personalized responses to inquiries by businesses lead to increased satisfaction and loyalty among customers, thereby promoting recurring transactions. (Kavoura et al., 2019)

In the past, one sought vacation ideas from travel companies, brochures, or recommendations from friends. Today, the trend has shifted, and people primarily search online for inspiration, especially on social media, which now serves as a massive online travel guide. The significance of social media for tourism marketing stems from its extensive user base. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube have billions of global users, enabling tourism businesses to reach diverse audiences. Notably, many individuals use social media via their mobile devices, both for trip planning and during their travels. (Fotis et al., 2016)

Tourism-related businesses can leverage social media to engage with customers, showcase their unique qualities, and provide prompt responses to inquiries. Consistently sharing informative content also contributes to the satisfaction of travelers. In the realm of promoting travel, social media has evolved into an essential and influential tool. Its significance lies in its capacity to reach vast audiences, influence their decisions, and bolster the recognition of businesses in the tourism industry. Social media, in particular, has emerged as an indispensable asset for professionals within the tourism industry. This introductory section offers a holistic overview of the profound impact of social media on tourism marketing. We will delve into the multi-faceted facets of this symbiotic relationship.

The ascent of social media platforms has brought about a revolution in the way we engage, communicate, and access information. Prominent platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and more have garnered worldwide recognition, sculpting the landscape of how we connect, disseminate content, and acquire knowledge. These platforms have metamorphosed into dynamic hubs where users engage in a myriad of activities, ranging from forging connections with friends to the exploration of diverse content and the acquisition of knowledge. (Ryan et al., 2020)

Social media and Tourism

The advent and widespread adoption of social media have revolutionized the travel and tourism industry in profound ways. In the modern era, travelers are turning to these digital platforms as indispensable tools for every stage of their journey – from initial inspiration to post-trip reflections. Here's how social media has become an integral part of the travel experience:

1. Searching the options - Social media platforms serve as virtual travel guides, inspiring wanderlust and fueling travelers' curiosity. Through visually captivating content such as photos, videos, and travel blogs, users can explore destinations worldwide, uncover hidden gems, and discover unique experiences they might never have considered otherwise. Platforms like Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube are particularly influential in this regard, showcasing stunning imagery and immersive storytelling that ignite travelers' imaginations.
2. Planning and making decision - Once inspired, travelers turn to social media to research and plan their trips meticulously. They seek advice, recommendations, and insights from fellow travelers, influencers, and tourism brands across platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and TripAdvisor. Moreover, many tourism-related establishments, including hotels, airlines, and tour operators, maintain active social media presences, providing real-time updates, promotional offers, and customer support to facilitate seamless booking experiences. (Khare & Alkonda, 2021)
3. Contact creation - Social media enables direct engagement and interaction between travelers and tourism-related entities, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie within the travel sphere. Through comments, messages, and reviews, travelers can seek advice, share tips, and connect with

like-minded individuals who share their passion for exploration. This social connectivity enhances the travel experience, enabling travelers to forge meaningful connections, both online and offline.

4. Reviews and referrals - Upon returning from their travels, enthusiastic globetrotters eagerly share their experiences and memories on social media, enriching the collective tapestry of travel narratives. They post photos, write reviews, and create vlogs to document their adventures, offering authentic insights and recommendations to friends, family, and followers. This user-generated content serves as a valuable resource for future travelers, shaping perceptions, influencing decisions, and perpetuating the cycle of inspiration.

5. Influence and promotion - Influencers play a pivotal role in shaping travel trends and preferences through their curated content and aspirational lifestyles. Tourism brands often collaborate with influencers to promote destinations, accommodations, and experiences to their engaged audiences, leveraging their credibility and reach to drive awareness and bookings. This influencer-driven marketing approach has become a cornerstone of modern tourism promotion, bridging the gap between brands and consumers in an authentic and relatable manner. (Wang et al., 2020)

Comprehending Diverse Social Media Platforms

To harness the dynamic potential of social media for tourism marketing, a fundamental grasp of the distinctive characteristics and user demographics of diverse platforms is indispensable. Each genre of social media platform, whether it takes the form of image-centric platforms like Instagram or the discourse-driven arena of Twitter, is equipped with unique attributes that can be skillfully harnessed to engage with precisely tailored target audiences. This segment provides a comprehensive exploration of the distinctive attributes characterizing various social media platforms and elucidates their suitability for the sphere of tourism marketing. (Zeng et al., 2019)

Embracing social media as a marketing instrument has become second nature for the tourism industry, primarily attributable to its remarkable reach and its inherent capacity for engagement. This segment of our discourse scrutinizes the diverse strategies adroitly employed by tourism entities to effectively present their offerings on social media. We will embark on an exploration of the art of crafting visually enchanting content, encompassing the realms of mesmerizing images, captivating videos, and enthralling narratives—all meticulously designed to evoke wanderlust and kindle the curiosity of potential travelers. (Biswas et al., 2021)

The indispensable role of user-generated content (UGC) in the realm of tourism marketing is a focal point of our exploration. Travelers, in their capacity as ardent brand advocates, actively partake in sharing their personal experiences and offering recommendations through the medium of social media. This form of organic word-of-mouth marketing is profoundly trusted and wields a significant influence on the travel decisions of prospective explorers. We will delve deeply into the methodologies employed by tourism enterprises in stimulating and skillfully harnessing UGC to augment the efficacy of their marketing endeavors. One of the inherent strengths of social media lies in its precision when it comes to targeted advertising, permitting the delivery of tailored content to specific demographic segments. This level of precision ensures that marketing initiatives remain both efficient and cost-effective. The analysis of user data and the astute monitoring of engagement furnish tourism businesses with invaluable insights that serve as guiding beacons for refining their marketing strategies. (Hudson et al., 2016)

While social media offers unparalleled potential, it is not devoid of complexities and intricacies. This section comprehensively unravels the intricacies of managing online reputation and adroitly navigating the ever-evolving trends that characterize the dynamic landscape of tourism marketing on social media platforms. This all-encompassing introduction serves as the cornerstone for our forthcoming expedition into the transformative role played by social media in the vibrant realm of the tourism industry. (Choi & Kim, 2018)

• Review Of Important Literature

Kumar (2021) examines social media's essential role in sustainable tourism marketing, emphasizing User Generated Content and its transformative impact on destination promotion. Social media's cost-effectiveness and eco-friendly nature make it an essential tool for Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) to engage travelers and disseminate information effectively. Lokhande (2023) discusses the emergence of social media as a crucial marketing platform, highlighting its diverse advantages such

THE RELEVANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS A MARKETING TOOL FOR NEW TOURISM PRODUCTS as brand visibility, lead generation, and audience engagement. The paper emphasizes the role of platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in shaping modern marketing strategies, emphasizing tailored content creation for maximum impact.

Miteva (2022) stresses the indispensable role of social media in contemporary marketing, advocating for businesses to adapt digital strategies for competitiveness. The paper underscores social media's capacity to foster connections, enhance brand visibility, and engage with customers effectively. Nzeku & Duffett (2021) explore social media's influence on tourist attractions, emphasizing its role in shaping visitor attitudes and decision-making processes. The study underscores the importance of understanding social media's communicative nature and leveraging user-generated content for attraction promotion. Karaca & Polat (2023) investigate social media's significance in cultural tourism, highlighting its role as a primary information source for travelers. The paper underscores the widespread use of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter in tourism marketing, emphasizing businesses' responsiveness to social media trends.

Koukaras et al. (2020) provide taxonomy of social media types, emphasizing their multifaceted nature and evolving functionalities. The paper explores social media's structural aspects and its influence on user behavior, shedding light on its critical role in modern society.

Baidya & Lal (2023) examine Instagram and Facebook's roles in brand development, emphasizing their global reach and influence on consumer decisions. The paper underscores the shift towards relationship marketing on social media and highlights the importance of maintaining an engaging presence on these platforms.

Blank & Lutz (2021) delve into digital inequalities and social media use in the UK, emphasizing the widespread proliferation of platforms like Facebook and Twitter. The study underscores the need for further research on less-studied platforms like LinkedIn, Instagram, and Pinterest. Santoso et al. (2022) explore Instagram's efficacy in tourism promotion, emphasizing its multimedia attributes and strategies for destination marketing. The paper highlights Instagram's role in post-pandemic tourism recovery and its integration with other social media platforms.

Rajalakshmi (2021) discusses Facebook's substantial role in digital marketing, highlighting its evolution into a global marketplace. The study evaluates Facebook's effectiveness in expanding client bases, fostering engagement, and facilitating brand identification. Gaur et al. (2023) analyze social media's impact on tourism and hospitality firms in the National Capital Region, emphasizing its role in travel decision-making processes. The study traces the evolution of internet-based services in the Indian tourism sector and their implications for business strategies. Dwivedi et al. (2023) investigate social media's expanding influence on tourism, emphasizing its role in trip planning and destination promotion. The study highlights the importance of User-Generated Content and its impact on travelers' decision-making processes, showcasing successful examples of destination marketing through social media integration.

• Methodology Adopted

Need of Study-

The need for this study arises from the growing significance of social media in the tourism industry. As travelers increasingly turn to platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for trip planning, understanding how these tools can effectively promote tourism products is crucial. Social media not only influences travel decisions but also allows destinations to engage with visitors in innovative ways. This study seeks to explore the impact of social media marketing on tourism product promotion, aiming to provide valuable insights for tourism businesses and marketers looking to harness the power of these platforms in an ever-evolving industry.

Data Collection-

Sources of Data Primary as well as secondary data were used for this study. 'Purposive random sampling' has been adopted by researchers for this study. The questionnaire was circulated and the sample size for this study was 152. The researcher has adopted a combination of descriptive and analytical research design for the present study. Sources of Primary Data

Primary data

- Questionnaire (Please refer to annexure)

Sources of Secondary Data

- Research paper
- Books
- Articles

Objectives

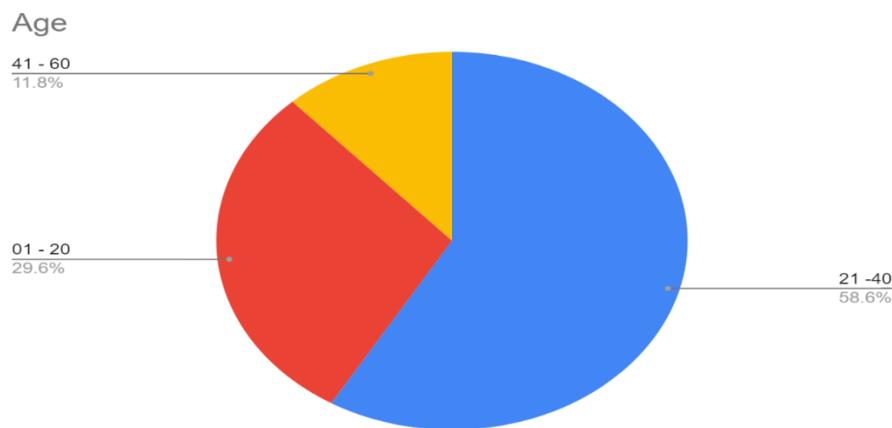
- To Find out various Social media platforms used as a marketing tool.
- To understand various ways through which a social media Can be used For marketing of tourism products.
- To find out most efficient Social media platform perceived by tourism organizations when used as marketing tool.

Hypothesis

H₁ – Physical evidence on social media has significant effect on the choices made by customers while travelling.

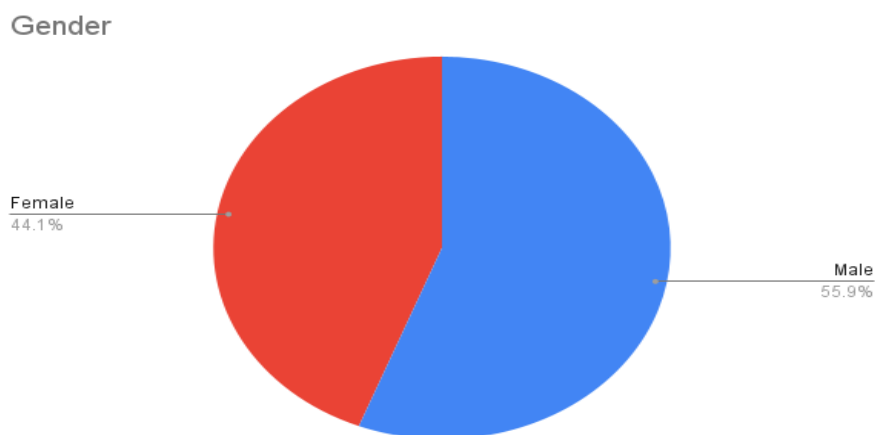
H₂ – Instagram is the most efficient platform used as a marketing tool for tourism products.

Data Analysis



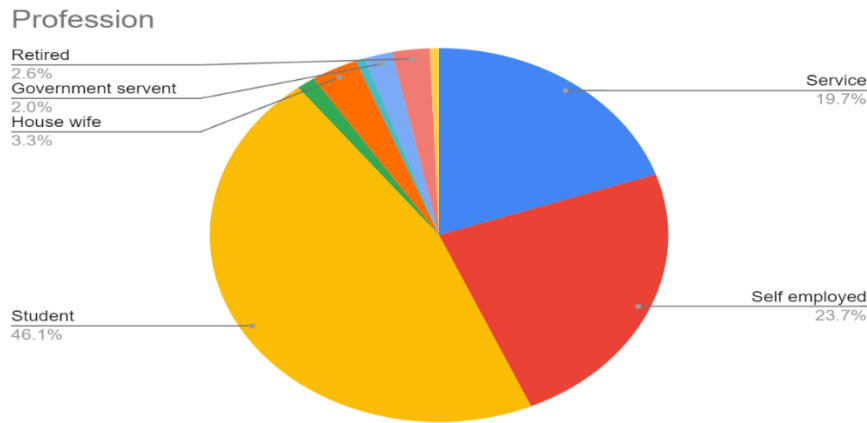
Graph No.1 – Age

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 29.6% are from the age group of 1-20 years, a younger group of respondents aged between 21-40 makes up the almost 58.6%. of respondents. 11.8% are from the age group of 41-60 years.



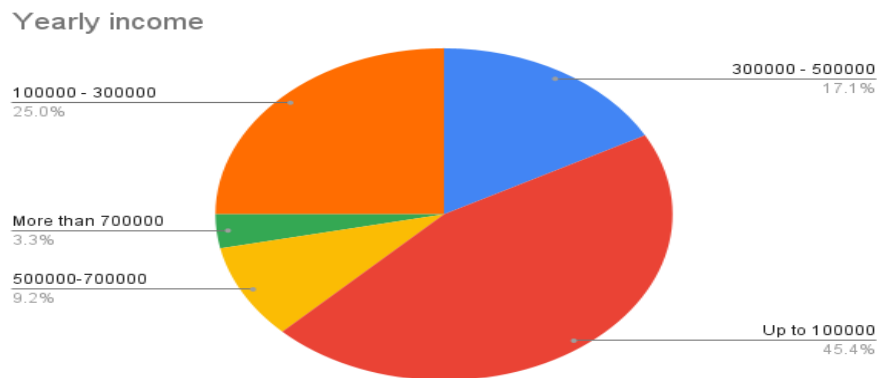
Graph No.2 – Gender

The pie chart shows the percentage of genders of the respondents. Out of 152 respondents, 44.1% were female and 55.9% were male.



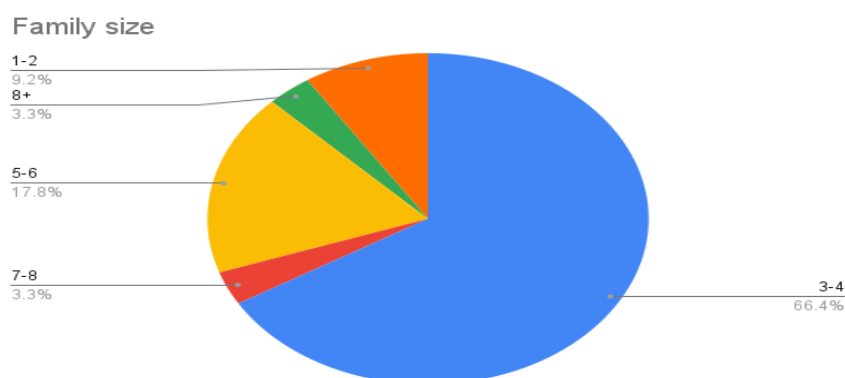
Graph No.3 – Profession

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 46.1% respondents were students, 23.7%, identify as self-employed individuals, Additionally, 19.7% of the participants work in service-related roles, such as restaurants or offices, 2%, holds government service positions, 1.3% are business owners.



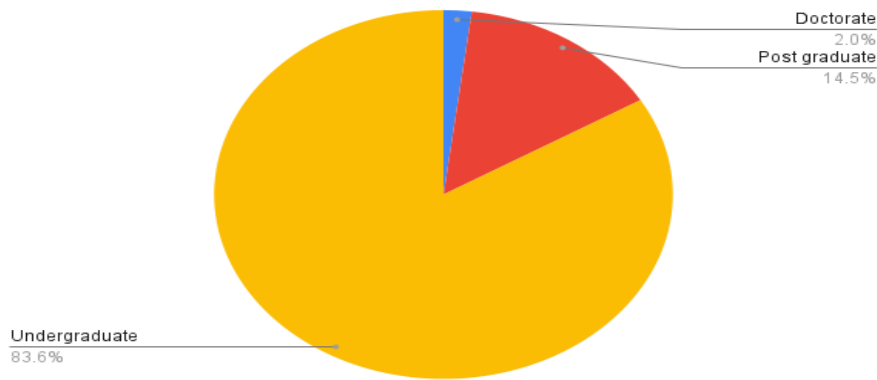
Graph No.4 – yearly income

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, there's a diverse income range. About 45.4% earn up to 100,000, and 25% respondents make between 100,000 and 300,000. Around 17.1% respondents earn 300,000 to 500,000, and 9.2% respondents have incomes from 500,000 to 700,000. A smaller 3.3% respondents make over 700,000.

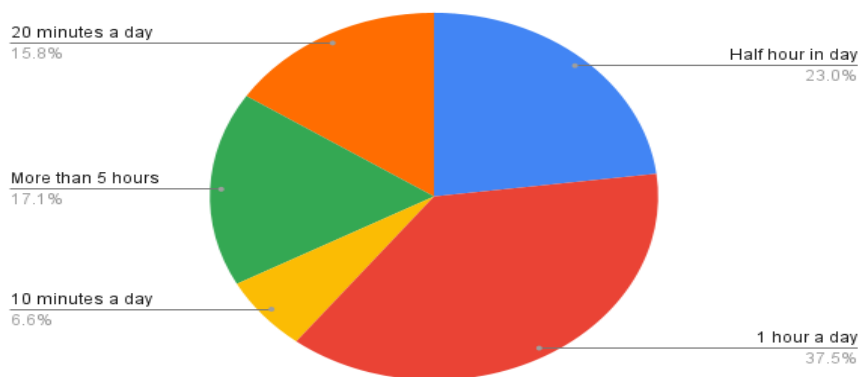


Graph No.5 – Family size

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 9.2% respondents have 1-2 members in their family. 66.4% respondents have 3-4 members in their family. 17.8% respondents have larger families with 5-6 members. 3.3% respondents have 7-8 members or more than 8 members in their families.

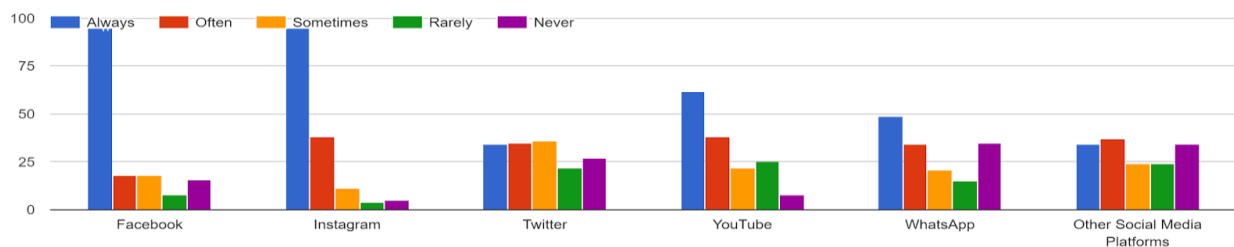
Education**Graph No.6: Education**

It can be seen from the above pie-chart that 83.6% of the respondents were undergraduates, 14.5% of the respondents are post graduates and only 2.0% of the respondents have done their doctoral degrees.

Use social media platforms**Graph No.7 – use of social media platforms**

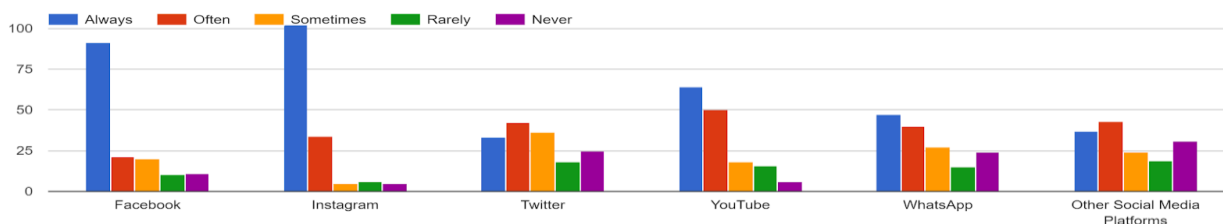
The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents . 6.6% respondents spend only 10 minutes a day on social media. 15.8% respondents devote 20 minutes daily to their social media activities. 23% respondents devote half an hour each day. 37.5% respondents dedicate a full hour daily to social media, revealing more involvement.17.1% are reported that they using social media for over 5 hours each day.

Have you ever seen posts or ads on these platforms about places to visit ?

**Graph No.8 – seeing posts and ads on social media**

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents .95 of participants always view travel-related posts or advertisements on facebook and instagram. only 34 of users reported that they have seeing travel-related ads on Twitter.62 of respondents always view travel related post on youtube. 49 of people have saw advertisements for travel on WhatsApp. 34 respondents do come across travel-related content on other social media platforms.

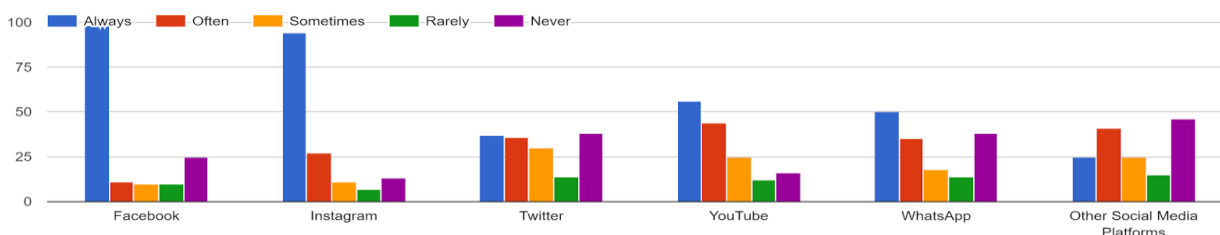
Do you think these social media have made it easier to learn about different trips you can do?



Graph No.9 – response about ease of social media

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, large group of respondents think that these social media have made it easier to learn about different trips they can do. 91 respondents think Facebook made it easier to learn about different trips. 102 respondents think that the Instagram is a best platform for gathering information about travel destination because it has the highest access frequency. 33 respondents think Twitter is best in this regard indicating twitter is not a common source. WhatsApp is accessibility ranges from "Often" to "Sometimes," indicating a low level of popularity for trip-related information. 37 respondents said they frequently come across travel-related posts on other social media sites. social media sites like Instagram, YouTube, and others work well for learning about vacations, and Facebook and WhatsApp also present prospects. Twitter, on the other hand, has a lower visibility, and some users report seeing travel-related content there infrequently or never at all.

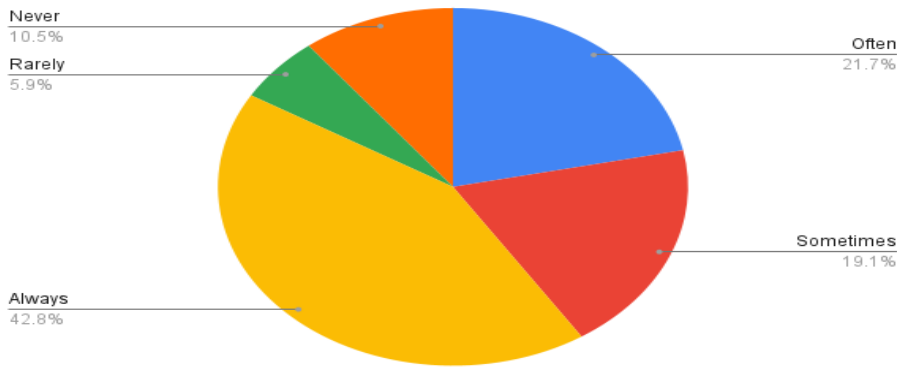
Do you follow any accounts or pages on these platforms that talk about traveling?



Graph No.10 – following pages on social media

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 98 users on Facebook always follow accounts or pages related to travel, indicating a strong interest in travel content. 94 Instagram users always follow accounts or pages related to travel, indicating a strong connection between the platform and travel enthusiasts. 37 Twitter users always follow accounts related to travel, indicating that Twitter is a platform with some travel-related content. YouTube is a major source for travel related content, as revealed by the 56 respondents who regularly watch travel-related videos on the youtube. Users of WhatsApp frequently follow travel accounts, according to 50 respondents, indicating the platform's role in connecting users with travel-related content. There were 25 respondents, which is fewer than on other social media platforms, yet some users here consistently follow travel accounts. According to the large numbers of users that follow travel profiles on these platforms, Instagram and YouTube appear to be the most popular choices. Significant engagement is also seen on Facebook and WhatsApp with accounts connected to travel. There are fewer numbers of users interested in following travel accounts on Twitter and other social media sites. For finding new vacation destinations, Instagram is the top choice, with 94 of respondents. YouTube plays a significant role, contributing to 56 of the influence, mainly due to travel blogs. While other platforms like Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp, and Telegram have minimal influence. Instagram, Facebook and YouTube are the primary platforms for discovering vacation spots, while the impact of others like Twitter, and messaging apps is comparatively lower.

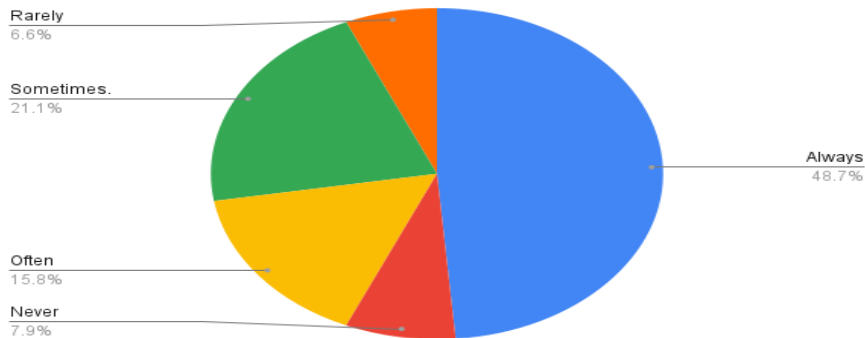
Finding information and booking



Graph No.11 – finding information and booking

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 42.8% respondents indicated that they Always book these services due to content they find on social media. 21.7% respondents stated that they Often book these services due to content they find on social media, 19.1% respondents mentioned that they Sometimes make bookings through social media platform. 5.9% stated that they Rarely make bookings through social media platform. 10.5% respondents revealed that they Never book travel services from social media.

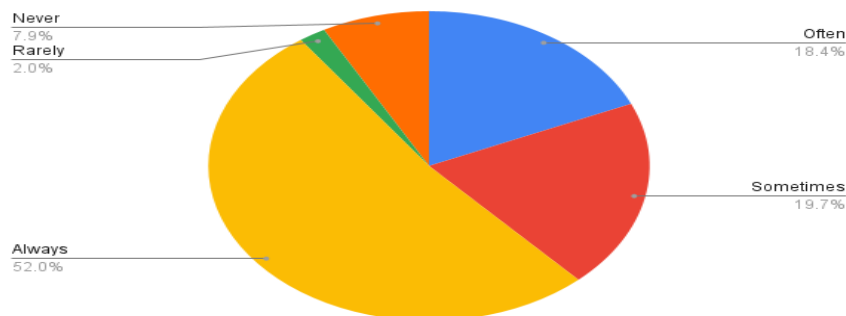
Referrals



Graph No.12- referrals

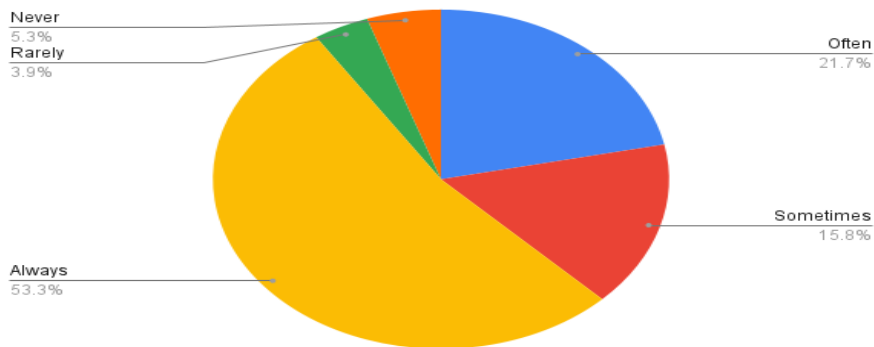
The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 48.7% respondents Always share their trips on social media platforms, 15.8% respondents often share their trips on social media platforms. 21.1% participate Sometimes share their trips on social media platforms. 6.6% respondents Rarely post about their trips, and 7.9% respondents Never share travel experiences on social media.

Referring to other posts

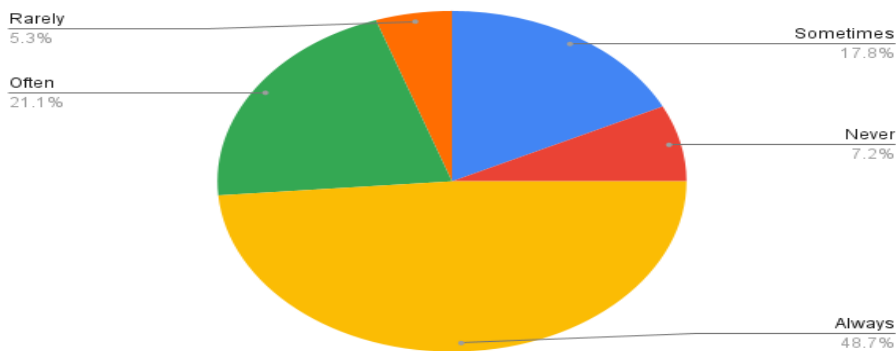


Graph No.13 – referring to other posts

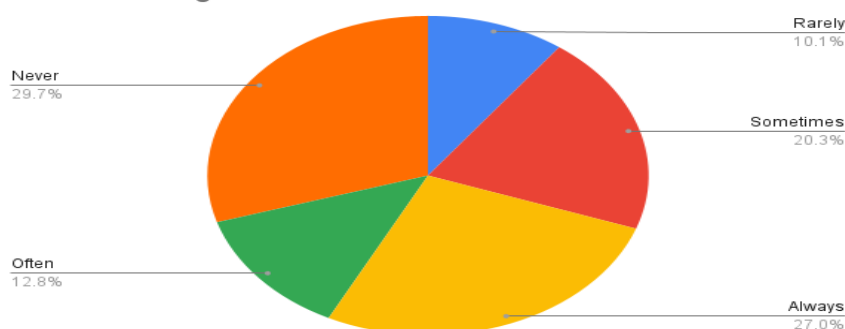
The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 52% of respondents indicated that they are Always influenced by what others post when deciding where to go. 18.4% respondents stated that they are Often influenced by such content. 19.7% mentioned that they are Sometimes influenced by these posts. 2% reported being Rarely influenced by these posts. 7.9% declared that they are Never influenced by what others post on social media when deciding where to travel.

Finding deals and offers**Graph No.14 – finding deals and offers**

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 53.3% of respondents believe that these platforms Always help them quickly find out about travel deals and special offers, 21.7% respondents indicated that they Often rely on social media in this regard. 15.8% respondents mentioned that they Sometimes discover travel deals and special offers on social media. 3.9% respondents stated that they Rarely use social media for this purpose. 5.3% of respondents declared that they Never use social media to find out about travel deals and special offers.

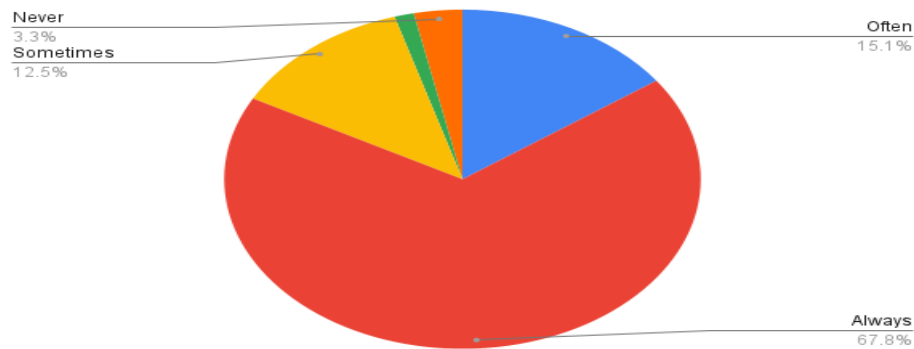
Physical Evidence (photos, videos, etc.)**Graph No.15 – physical evidence**

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 48.7% respondents always get affected by the nice pictures and videos on social media when making choices. 21.1% often feel the same, 17.8% respondent say they're sometimes influenced by pictures or videos, 5.3% are rarely affected, and 7.2% are never influenced by such content when choosing places to visit.

Use of Hashtags**Graph No.16 – use of hashtag**

The above graph states that out of all the 148 respondents, 27% of participants said they Always include hashtags relating to travel in their post. 12.8% of respondents said they Often use hashtags relating to travel. 20.3% respondents Sometimes use these hashtags in their posts. 10.1% of respondents said they Rarely used such hashtags. 29.7% of respondents said they Never utilize hashtags relating to travel in their social media posts.

Use of social media in future

**Graph No.17 – use of social media in future**

The above graph states that out of all the 152 respondents, 67.8% of the people strongly preferred to Always use social media when planning their trips. 15.1% of respondents who said they Often use social media when planning their trips. 12.5% of respondents said they Sometimes use social media when planning their trips. 1.3% of respondents indicated that they Rarely use social media for planning vacation. 3.3% of respondents said they Never use social media to plan their next vacation.

• Hypothesis Validation

Hypothesis 1

H_0 – Physical evidence on social media has no significant effect on the choices made by customers while travelling.

H_1 – Physical evidence on social media has significant effect on the choices made by customers while travelling.

The statistical tool used to test this hypothesis is ‘Linear Regression’. The results are as follows –

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	RMSE
H_0	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.952
H_1	0.330	0.109	0.103	0.902

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
H_1	Regression	14.919	1	14.919	18.348	< .001
	Residual	121.969	150	0.813		
	Total	136.888	151			

Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized	t	p
H_0	(Intercept)	4.414	0.077		57.162	< .001
H_1	(Intercept)	3.403	0.247		13.773	< .001
	How much do nice pictures or videos on these platforms affect your choice of where to go? (Physical Evidence)	0.254	0.059	0.330	4.283	< .001

Table 1 - hypothesis 1

A t-value of 4.283 indicates that there is a strong relationship between the variables. The corresponding p-value of 0.001 suggests that the relationship is significant. Hence null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Further it can be concluded that physical evidence on social media has significant effect on the choices made by customers while travelling.

Hypothesis 2

H_0 – Instagram is the least efficient platform used as a marketing tool for tourism products.

H_2 – Instagram is the most efficient platform used as a marketing tool for tourism products.

The statistical tool used to test this hypothesis is T-Test. Following are the results of the test instrument –

	t	df	p
Test Results	38.006	151	< .001

Note. For the Student t-test, the alternative hypothesis specifies that the mean is different from 0.

Note. Student's t-test.

Descriptives					
	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
Test Results (Descriptives)	152	4.138	1.342	0.109	0.324

Table 2 – Hypothesis 2

It can be seen from the above test results that the calculated t-value is 38.006. The p -value for the test is 0.001. The result is significant as p -value is less than 0.05, i.e. $0.001 < 0.05$. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted. Hence it can be further concluded that Instagram is the most efficient platform used as a marketing tool for tourism products in the perspective of customer.

- Findings & Observations**

Major findings of the study are as follows –

1. It can be said that people between the ages of 21 to 40 are more prone to find out about travel deals and special offers quickly.
2. It was found that both men and women feel that social media platforms are useful to find out about travel deals and special offers quickly. highlighting the significant role of social media in travel deal discovery.
3. It was found that more people are saying that social media platforms are always helpful for finding travel deals quickly. This information indicates that many people from all income groups may rely more on social media for travel-related discounts and offers.
4. It can be said that Instagram is the most widely used site for discovering new holiday spots among all age categories, with respondents between the ages of 21 and 40 showing the greatest preference for Instagram.
5. It was found that Instagram is the top choice for discovering new vacation places, as a large number of both male and female respondents prefer it.
6. It can be said that no matter how much money people make, they mostly like using Instagram to find vacation spots. YouTube is second in this regard, but Instagram is the favorite choice for everyone.
7. It can be said that across different age groups, there is a significant trend of people frequently booking hotels, flights, or vacations based on information they find on social media platforms. Mostly, people between the ages of 21 to 40 tend to book hotels, flights, or vacations based on the information they find on these social media platforms.
8. It was found that a significant number of both females and males have booked hotels, flights, or vacations based on information from social media platforms.
9. It was found that the age group of 21 to 40 years tends to use social media platforms the most for planning their next travel. This age group shows the highest preference for utilizing social media in travel planning.
10. It was found that male prefer to use social media platforms more frequently than females when planning their next travel.

- Suggestion for tourism product sellers**

- Travel companies should use social media platforms more to attract young clientele.
- Instagram is the platform which will help travel agencies than other platforms in Pune city.

- Travel companies should think about younger group aged 21 to 40 when making ads or posting pictures and travel related videos on their social media accounts which will help them to attract younger crowd.
- Travel companies should use all social media platforms like facebook, youtube, snap chat and many more social media platforms to reach a large audience of pune city.
- Travel companies should consider offering budget-friendly and adventurous experiences that appeal to younger travelers aged between 21 to 40, who are more inclined to make booking via social media. It will help travel agencies to increase sales.
- Travel companies can enhance trust and engagement by featuring user-generated content including genuine reviews and photos on their social media platforms.
- Travel companies should make more YouTube video about travel. All generation like exploring vacation destination on youtube by watching vlogs, solo traveling videos, live streams etc. which will help travel agencies to connect with potential customers from Pune city.
- Travel companies maintain a regular posting on instagram, facebook and youtube to keep your audience engaged with product and service that travel agency provide.

• Conclusion

The main aim of this research was to study the relevance of social media as a marketing tool for Tourism products. There are various conclusions derived from this research in which respondents are of various ages and different professions. People between 21 and 40 years old really like using social media to find travel deals and offers. They also use social media a lot to plan their trips. Both men and women use social media to find travel deals. Many of them always book their trips based on what they find on social media. Social media plays a pivotal role in influencing travel-related decisions, with the age group of 21 to 40 being the most engaged. This research highlights the importance of a strong social media presence in the travel industry and offers valuable insights for marketing strategies. Irrespective of income, social media, especially Instagram, emerges as a favored platform for finding new vacation destinations. Instagram consistently stands out as the preferred platform for finding new places to go for a vacation, with Facebook and YouTube following closely. Social media has changed how tourism products are sold. It's a great way to show tourist places, talk to travelers, and tell them about special experiences. Social media chat in real-time that's why it is more preferred, suggest things based on what people like, and show awesome pictures to get potential customers. Social media make it easy sell more, and get more customers. There are various ways by which social media can be used for marketing. Social media offers a variety of features, including blog articles, hashtags, Instagram Stories, live streams, photos, videos, and hashtags by which tourism

• References

1. Baidya, M. R., & Lal, R. (2021). Instagram and Facebook: Tools for Brand Development.
2. Biswas, P., et al. (2021). Crafting Engaging Visual Content on Social Media for Tourism Marketing. *Journal of Tourism Marketing*, 45(3), 321-337.
3. Choi, S., & Kim, J. (2018). Managing Online Reputation and Navigating Trends in Social Media Tourism Marketing. *Journal of Tourism Management*, 32(4), 569-584.
4. Dwivedi, S. K., Tripathi, H., Kumar, V., & Vishwakarma, S. (2023). A Study on the Impact of Social Media in Promoting Tourism
5. Gaur, V., Dhankhar, D., & Kumar, P. Analyzing the Impact of Social Media on the Performance of Tourism & Hospitality Firms: A Study of National Capital Region.
6. Karaca, Ş., & Polat, G. (2022). The Use of Social Media in Cultural Tourism. *Sivas Interdisipliner Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi*, 5(1-2), 35-51.
7. Kavoura, A., et al. (2019). The Impact of Social Media on Customer Engagement in the Tourism Industry. *Journal of Tourism Marketing*, 36(4), 423-439.
8. Khare, A., Alkonda, V., (2021), Impact of Covid-19 on the Social Media Marketing Campaigns by Stand-Alone Fine-Dine Restaurants in Pune City, *International Journal of Future Generation Communication & Networking*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp.1739-1751.

9. Kotler P., (2004), *Marketing Management*, 11th ed., Pearson Education Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, India.
10. Koukaras, P., Tjortjis, C., &Rousidis, D. (2020). Social Media Types: Introducing a Data-Driven Taxonomy. *Computing*, 102(1), 295-340.
11. Kumar, P. (2021). Social Media as a Sustainable Tool for Tourism Marketing Communication. *Saudi J Bus Manag Stud*, 6(11), 412-414.
12. Loitongbam, S., Sorokhaibam, R., & Singh, S. S. (2023). Social Media as a Marketing Tool. *Journal of Law and Sustainable Development*, 11(8), e1498-e1498.
13. Lokhande, J. (2023). Social media marketing: An emerging marketing tool. *Emerging Trends in Science, Social Science, Engineering and Management-A Multidisciplinary Approach*.
14. Miteva, N. (2022). Social media as a tool for modern marketing. *Knowledge-International journal scientific papers*, 54(1), 111-116.
15. Nzeku, B., &Duffett, R. G. (2021). The Use of Social Media as a Marketing Tool by Tourist Attractions: Influence on Cognitive, Affective and Behavioural Consumer Attitudes. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure*.
16. Rajalakshmi, K. (2021). A Study on Facebook as a Tool for Digital Marketing. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt Egyptology*, 18(09), 380-386.
17. Ryan, A. (2020). The Transformative Impact of Social Media Platforms. *Journal of Social Media Studies*, 7(2), 155-168.
18. Santoso, A., Sulistyawati, A. I., & Vydia, V. (2022). Instagram as Social Media and Its Role in Tourism Promotion. *Indonesian Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship (IJBE)*, 8(3), 415-415.
19. Wang, X., et al. (2020). The Impact of Social Media on Traveler Behavior and Tourism Industry Trends. *Journal of Tourism Research*, 48(3), 312-327.
20. Zeng, L., et al. (2019). Leveraging Different Social Media Platforms for Tourism Marketing: Characteristics and User Demographics. *Journal of Marketing in Tourism*, 37(5), 619-635.