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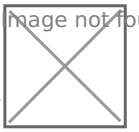

Social Media Platforms as Destination Information Agents

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Abstract

With the rise in social media popularity travelers are keen on posting travel experiences through their social media profiles. Typically, the traditional platforms such as TripAdvisor and Expedia serve as reliable online travel review platforms for travelers to share their opinions, trip activities and overall experience at a destination. Textual reviews have helped future travelers to become informed about the destination and facilitated researchers to determine the travelers' perception and satisfaction. However, the video travel reviews bring a whole new dynamic in online travel reviews. Furthermore, social media platforms provide travelers with opportunities to both review and create reliable and useful travel related content. The results of our study show the discrepancies and similarities between three social media platforms: YouTube, Instagram, TikTok. The total of 120 videos were analyzed in a mixed comparative content analysis method in determining the differences and commonalities between the selected platforms. The qualitative results indicate the identified attribute categories in 120 analyzed videos across platforms, meanwhile the results with statistical differences and similarities are discussed.

Keywords: social media platforms, destination information agents, travel reviews, travel information sources

Introduction

Travel enthusiasts like to share their travel experiences on their online public profiles in form of a video or post. Subconsciously, consumers of such content are forming some shape or form of a destination image. Typically, travel reviewers share their travel experiences over traditional online travel platforms like TripAdvisor. However, the ease, convenience and constant use of social media platforms facilitate the process of providing customer's point of

view, preferences, pros and cons, and overall customer experience in a form of digitalized video content.

This paper aims to explore the level of similarities and discrepancies between different video review platforms, namely YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. In conducting this research, we will utilize content analysis method. Specifically, we will extract the destination image of Dubrovnik video travel reviews from the aforementioned video platforms. By contrasting and comparing video content we will be able to evaluate what are the commonalities or differences between these video platforms related to Dubrovnik's destination image. Our research method will be based on the research approach done by Guo et al. (2021).

When we observe travel preferences and prevalent trends one can't ignore their relationship with the rise of travel reviews popularity. This is why we believe that our research is relevant and timely. Overall, video content platforms are a solid source of data. This will enable us to analyze and consequently have a better understanding related to travelers' destination image descriptions. Each platform has its own default operating format in terms of sharing content. Using a comparative content analysis method on three main socials media platforms will result in variety of content gathered, categories of interest, quality information for hotels' business endeavors etc. Translating "big data" from a video format to data source is valuable and as such, video platforms can be considered solid information agents. Comparing said platforms will provide insight into the world of social media and content creation. Whether each of the platforms mentioned different or similar, destination image through the eyes of a customer, may serve as a growth opportunity for hospitality establishments by capitalizing on understanding specific travel developments.

Literature Review

Social Media Platforms as Destination Information Agents

In this paper the primary aim is to comparatively analyze traveler posted content on three major social media platforms. Using three platforms as an ideal sample size will help reduce the platform specific bias in terms of sharing content, plus avoid using only one platform as a data source, rather multiple, most popular ones, either similar or different in information type, categories of interest etc.

"Travelers' use of social media content has played a key role in the formation of the overall destination image through the mediating effect and affective destination images." (Sultan et al., 2021, pg. 1).

Social media can greatly influence travelers' choice in terms of trip destination selection. Additionally, social media as such is a steppingstone from old-fashioned sources of travel information: ranging from physical word of mouth and recommendations and DMOs to the digitalized, more convenient combination of WoM (eWoM), including personal experience, tips, trends, popular locations among the destination combining into overall destination image impression (Sultan et al., 2021).

Travel Content as Information Agent

Nowadays, social media has an abundance of information across all platforms. From images of a travelers' experience to proficiently edited videos of a perceived destination's image. Social media users like to reference their travel highlights on their profiles, in form of an edited video showcasing their travel trips, journey, and overall experience at a certain destination.

Image Formation Agents

Gartner (1993) clarifies image formation agents from the definition of "agent as a force producing a specific result." (Gartner, 1993, pg. 197). Moreover, the intended choice of a particular image formation agent, among the rest, turns out to be significantly influential in forming a specific image formation result (Gartner, 1993).

By eliminating the undesirable destinations, the wanted destinations remain as those that are relevant and important for an individual's destination selection decision making. Moreover, the image of a tourist destination can be considered as attracting factors. Meaning, conceding the image formation process is crucial for scaling the factors' impact on a destination (Gartner, 1993).

According to Gartner (1993) there are three types of information source about tourism which he categorized as follows: induced, autonomous, organic. Induced sources are explained as sources originating from the destination supporters, meanwhile organic sources are the ones that are shared among individuals whereas autonomous are made, generated separately from other two (Estela, 2019).

Organic sources predominantly include traveler's experience that is translated and communicated by in - person word-of-mouth, through personal interactions. Through the rising popularity in user-generated content spread across social media platforms, there is a shift from traditional word-of-mouth (WoM) marketing to electronic version of word-of-mouth (eWoM). Both word-of-mouth and electronic word-of-mouth are considered to be key secondhand information sources for business initiatives (Estela, 2019). Induced information agents are related to traditional forms of promotion. Such as printed media, brochures and billboards, radio, TV etc. They are considered to be focused attempt of destination image promotion to influence potential visitors. On the other hand, autonomous information agents

include individual source of information, for example, documentary or a news report (Gartner, 1993).

User/Traveler Generated Content (UGC) as Online Co-Creating Experience

In today's age, tourists use all three information sources to acquire necessary knowledge about a destination. Within a single source, there are different ways to disseminate important information. On the other hand, travel enthusiasts are both the creator and the end consumer of the same information simultaneously. This type of informational content is referred to as "user-generated content" or (UGC) that hold significant informational value and a certain degree of traveler credibility in the travel community (Riera et al., 2015). User generated content serves as a credible informational source of data for other travelers and the travel community because the goal of the shared content is not related to making profit, rather co-creating experience (Riera et al. 2015).

Social media platforms as data source

The present research on travel review platforms as data source for measuring destination's image have a couple of things in common. Firstly, their measurement model relies on only one source of data, meaning focusing their measurement efforts on a single platform. Secondly, the overall validity of data is vastly relative, based on opinion rather than facts which leads to limited takeaways (Xiang et al., 2017). Social media platforms guide travelers to share their trip experience review and personal opinions, which can offer informative content material for travelers. For example, the quality of a hotel service cannot be known without having consumed it prior. That is why the customer reviews are becoming even more important and reliable (Litvin et al., 2008, as cited in Kim & Park, 2017). Social media promotion has been rapidly rising in popularity, more precisely, social media reviews concept.

Therefore, it appears that the emerging impact of social media reviews does not influence the decision-making of hospitality companies in terms of managing rating on social media platforms. Meanwhile, most of the hotel companies remained focused on measuring current customer satisfaction ratings as critical performance indicator (Kim & Park, 2017).

On the other hand, this paper will include measurements taken on three main social media platforms. Namely, YouTube with a focus on a longer video review format, such as traveler vlogs, where the overall traveler experience is diversified across different subcategories of travelers' interest. Instagram Reels, "TikTok's" as a shorter but arguably more generally acceptable video format that showcases all-inclusive image of a destination through traveler generated content.

According to Sultan et al., (2021), the content on social media platforms can significantly impact a traveler's overall impression, image of a destination. The concept of social media platforms provides information for organizations and other consumers, by creating interactive opportunities through content sharing, in effort to form a destination image (Sultan et al., 2021). Dina & Sabou, (2012) argue that on-site travel agencies had been the most popular source of information about service providers prior travelling to a destination. Because of the shift in consumer's travel research preferences, the Internet became a mainstream search engine and communication strategies between travelers, which led to decrease in use of traditional sources of travel information (Dina & Sabou, 2012).

Information Credibility

Social media relies on modern web-based technology that facilitates consumer engaging platforms where they can post, share, interact and update user-generated content (Li & Suh, 2015). There is a discrepancy between social media platforms and traditional media, where users of social media platforms can, not only review, but create content (Li & Suh, 2015).

Information credibility is defined as the degree to which a person can evaluate the truthfulness of certain information (McKnight & Kacmar, 2007, as cited in Li, Suh, 2015) Furthermore, it is a key determinator of the consumer's next step in action-taking (McKnight & Kacmar, 2006, as cited in Li, Suh, 2015). On the contrary, the information found on social media platforms is not monitored. It is expected for a reviewer to come across false data, information while browsing the platforms. In those cases, consumers of such content are persuaded to look elsewhere for reliable information (Li & Suh, 2015).

Translating "big data" into valuable information

The qualitative analysis of the "big data" from the traveler content collection will provide us with an insight as to what do travelers find critical in their destination image impression and overall assessment.

The evaluation of the destination image structure supported by the data gathered from online travel review platforms is becoming prevalent. Successful research interpretation of various posted content on particular online travel reviews can help guide in an overall assessment of potential differences among the selected information agents (Guo et al., 2021).

Beerli, Martin, (2004) offers an integrated model that connects three concepts: information sources, motivations, and destination image (Riera et al., 2015). The model is differentiating between organic, induced, autonomous sources. Those sources include the Internet as a global information agent, but it is also a channel with various types of data sources for travelers, in different forms: social media platforms, websites, search engines (Riera et al., 2015).

Traveler Perceived Destination Image

According to Kim & Chen, (2016), destination image related to tourism industry can be expressed as a constant psychological effort of one's overall impressions, philosophies about a destination that is acquired across various channel sources (Kim & Chen, 2016). Whereas, Garner (2003) stated that tourism image is made up of different elements, including: natural resource related to most popular activities within a destination, second, the socio-cultural system in charge of providing services in tourism, lastly the environment that fulfills the destination requirements of tourists and is attractive in itself. (Garner, 2003).

Traveler Destination Image Attributes

In a previous study by Echtner and Ritchie (1991) they had come up with specific attributes to be applied in destination image formation. Namely, resident friendliness, city's esthetic appeal, quality of service and food, in addition to infrastructure and entertainment. (Echtner & Ritchie, 1991 as cited in Riera et al., 2015). Moreover, those attributes have been further specified into two components: cognitive in terms of knowledge, and affective relating to feelings. (Qu et al., 2011, as cited in Riera et al., 2015).

Destination Image Concepts

A couple of studies on destination image formation based its concept on two or three components. Namely, cognitive, affective, conative, overall image (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999). Moreover, image is predominantly constructed by two factors: "personal factors" and "stimulus factors". Personal factors include both psychological and social personal attributes. Stimulus factors originate from the outside influence, either in physical form or from experience (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999).

The cognitive component of the destination image represents the accumulated information that is known about a destination, in other words, organic or induced image that impacts the one's impression about a destination in three possible ways: like, dislike or indifferent (Kim & Chen, 2016). Furthermore, Gartner (1993) explains the cognitive subcomponent of a destination image as "the sum of beliefs and attitudes of an object leading to some internally accepted picture of its attributes." (Gartner, 1993, pg. 192-193). The affective component of the destination image is associated to the choice motives a traveler has for destination selection (Gartner, 1993). Lastly, the conative component of the destination image is associated with the probability of visit within a certain time frame that is influenced by both cognitive and affective images (Kim & Chen, 2016). On the other hand, Gartner (1993) argues that the conative image component of an overall destination image is "analogous", in other words, appropriately comparable with the behavior because of its action-taking element. Therefore, the conative image has a direct correlation to the development of cognitive image and assessment of the affective image (Gartner, 1993).

As a group, the main components of destination image formation are interconnected. Cognition being perceived as information that one knows and associates with the destination, paired with the level of affection or feelings that one has about a destination, and lastly the behavior that is correlated to the other two components of a destination image, cognitive, affective (Kim & Chen, 2016).

Method

Content Analysis

Most content analysis data originate from a textual or written form of communication (Woodrum, 1984). This paper will utilize qualitative video content analysis with a focus on

video travel reviews. Content analysis as a research technique is predominantly focused on pattern recognition in a message communication between senders and receivers (Woodrum, 1984).

However, neither analyses are directly correlated to a particular area of science, rather the conceptualization and principles are common to all (Bengtsson, 2016). Meaning, the concept of applying the content analysis research approach is universal, and practical for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. Content analysis is a research method for producing replicable and valid conclusions derived from data and correlated to its context (Krippendorf, 1989). In order to draw conclusions with the quantitative results, the qualitative content analysis must contain data sample reasoning correlated to identifying patterns, keywords in the analyzed content. The key guideline in conducting an appropriate content analysis is the use frequency of key words in a particular context that are tied to an area of interest (Stemler, 2001). Content analysis ensures that all elements of an analysis get equal recognition, regardless the process positioning: beginning or end. In other words, it guarantees an objective research approach (Krippendorf, 1989). What makes content analysis a useful tool in collecting research data is the reliability of categorizing the data (Stemler, 2001). Categorization of our qualitative data, keywords, helps to appropriately disseminate the collective raw data into meaningful, representative attribute categories for identified patterns. As any other research method, content analysis has both advantages and limitations. Content analysis requires a predetermined sample size to reliably conduct the analysis.

Statistically relevant results of a study need substantial sample size of analysis; therefore, the proper search process requires results to be considered quantitative. Another limitation originates from the fact that constant and reviewer-independent attributes require systematization excluding the parties involved in the analysis (Krippendorf, 1989).

Measurement Tool

The mixed comparative content analysis was conducted in an Excel Spreadsheet. The purpose of the tool used in this paper was to comparatively analyze the traveler generated content on three selected social media travel review platforms: YouTube, Instagram and TikTok. In reference to the research approach done by Guo et al. (2021), the study included random textual review selection with the assistance of computer software directed by the appropriate use of relevant keywords. Therefore, the reasoning behind our video selection process will be random but performed manually by entering keywords "Dubrovnik travel review" or "Dubrovnik Vlog" in the search bar of the platforms.

The sample size was distributed 20/50/50 across platforms because of the predetermined "Video Duration" attribute which refers to the quantity of information shared in a video. YouTube platform sample size is 20 Vlogs because of the measured average video duration of 18.25 minutes with a larger information quantity, whereas Instagram Reels and TikTok sample size is larger, 50 videos with measured average video duration of 21.54 and 20.14 seconds containing less information quantity. For each attribute shown in a video, either verbally or textually stated, the raw textual data will be translated. The value "+" was assigned and reflect the positive textual comments. Value "-"will reflect negative textual comments, moreover, the same principle of information distribution will be applied. Unmentioned attributes will remain blank or N/A. Furthermore, the accumulated values ("+", "-") will represent statistically proven discrepancies and similarities in traveler generated content. In other words, recognizing content patterns that will serve as a foundation in developing appropriate attributes specifically correlated to each platform.

The qualitative analysis is conducted by classifying and identifying travel review attributes of a destination: "Video Duration", "Positive Keywords / Raw Data", "Negative Keywords /

Raw Data", "F&B Quality/Recommendation", "Accessibility/Location", "Pricing", "Activities".

The other part of the mixed content analysis, quantitative content analysis will be based on the qualitative analysis of travel review attributes translated into numerical values, percentages, that statistically represent the information shared in each attribute as well as overall content on each platform. The main takeaways from those data sets are intended to be of use for both future travelers and local hospitality establishments.

Results

The qualitative analysis of social media travel reviews was conducted based on identifying the patterns in traveler generated content on all three platforms which we used to create relevant attribute categories containing keywords extracted from the videos. The most frequent attribute category mentioned across all platforms is "Activities". New "Service" destination attribute was identified in the data sample collected from the YouTube platform; however, the "Service" attribute did not appear in the data samples from the rest of the platforms, Instagram and TikTok.

The quantitative analysis was based on the results of the qualitative analysis, meaning translating the keywords from the attribute categories to statistical results. In the analyzed traveler generated content on selected social media platforms, the "Activities" attribute had the highest number of keywords "319", making up for 42.14% of the total. The second highest attribute category is "F&B Quality/Recommendations", making up for 24.57% of the total. The third highest is the "Accessibility/Location" attribute making up for 21.93% of the total. The three highest attribute categories account for over 88% of the total number of keywords across platforms. Furthermore, the two remaining attribute categories "Service" and

“Pricing” were 6.47% and 4.89% across platforms, adding up to 11.36% of the total. The percentages of the last two attribute categories are much lower than the first, more dominant attribute categories.

Tables 1 and 2 show the discrepancies and similarities between the platforms. Table 1 shows the five types of identified discrepancies according to our results. The most apparent discrepancy is the “Sample Size” distribution YouTube (20), Instagram (50), TikTok (50) because of the information quantity shared through analyzed traveler generated content. Secondly, the “Information Quantity” resulting in 450 identified keywords in 20 analyzed YouTube Vlogs, 165 keywords in 50 analyzed Reels, lastly 146 keywords in 50 analyzed TikTok videos. Thirdly, the average video duration among the top three most important discrepancies representing the average duration of an analyzed traveler generated video posted on each platform. Our results show that the average video duration in 20 analyzed YouTube Vlogs is 18.25 minutes, whereas the average video duration in 50 analyzed Reels is 21.54 seconds, and 20.14 seconds for 50 analyzed TikTok videos.

The rest of the platform discrepancies are related to the identified attribute categories among the selected platforms. In the fourth place, the “Service” attribute category was recognized during the analysis of 20 YouTube Vlogs, however the attribute was not shown or mentioned on the rest of the platforms, Instagram and TikTok. Consequently, the number of identified attributes across the platforms is 5/4/4, showing the “Service” attribute presence on only one platform, YouTube. Lastly, with the previous “Information Quantity “discrepancy in mind, there is a formation of the “Keyword intensity” discrepancy between attribute categories. According to the structure of attribute categories in the measurement tool spreadsheet, the chronological formation of the attributes is as follows: “(Service)”, “F&B Qual. Rec”., “Activities”, “Accessibility/Location”, “Pricing”.

Following the attribute structure formation, the results of our research show the numerical discrepancy among the intensity of keywords across attribute categories. For YouTube, 49 keywords were identified in the "Service" attribute, 109 keywords for "F&B Qual./Rec.", 106 keywords for "Activities", 158 keywords for "Acc./Loc.", and 24 keywords for "Pricing" category. For Instagram Reels, 39 keywords for "F&B Qual./Rec." attribute, 85 keywords for "Activities", 17 keywords for "Acc./Loc.", and 5 for "Pricing" category. For TikTok, 38 keywords for" F&B Qual./Rec." attribute, 76 keywords for "Acc./Loc.", and 8 keywords for "Pricing" category.

Table 1- Discrepancies among SM Platforms

Discrepancies	**YouTube Vlogs**	**Instagram Reels**	**TikTok**
Sample Size	20 videos	50 videos	50 videos
Information Quantity	450 keywords	165 keywords	146 keywords
Avg. Video Duration	18.25 min.	21.54 sec.	20.14 sec.
"Service" Attribute	+	N/A	N/A
No. of Attributes identified	5	4	4
Keyword intensity among att. Categories: (Service)/F&B/Act./Acc./Pricing	49/109/106/158/24	39/85/17/5	38/76/43/8

Source: Author

Table 2- Similarities among SM Platforms

Similarities	**YouTube Vlogs**	**Instagram Reels**	**TikTok**
Dominant Attribute: "Act."	35%	58%	45%
Information Quantity	N/A	146 keywords	165 keywords
Avg. Video Duration	N/A	21.54 sec.	20.14 sec.
" Pricing" attribute mentioned specific est.	+	+	+
Keyword intensity among att. Categories: F&B/Act./Acc./Pricing	N/A	39/85/17/5	38/76/43/8

Source: Author

Table 2 shows the similarities among the social media platforms. The most important similarity between the platforms is the dominant attribute “Activities” in the sample size distribution 20/50/50. Secondly, the “Information Quantity” is similar between the two of three total platforms. Instagram Reels with the 146 total keywords and TikTok with the 165 keywords, representing the small difference between the keywords quantity as opposed to YouTube with much larger discrepancy in the information quantity. Thirdly, the average video duration shows the similarity between the same two out of three social media platforms, Instagram with 21.54 seconds duration in 50 analyzed videos, TikTok with 20.14 seconds duration in 50 analyzed videos. Lastly, the common similarity between the platforms is the “Pricing” attribute naming the specific establishment, meaning, for each information regarding the price of a service-based establishment was named on all platforms.

Tables 3 and 4 are made in reference to the structure of the results done by Guo et al., (2021). Applying the same approach, these two tables show the analyzed video sample size, or data set, across the three selected social media platforms with the number of recognized keywords within each data sample set with the numerical representation in form of percentages. The highest number of keywords of the three platforms was identified in YouTube Vlogs (450) keywords in 20 analyzed videos, followed by Instagram Reels (169) keywords in 50 analyzed videos, lastly TikTok (146) keywords in 50 analyzed videos. YouTube had a larger number of attribute keywords than the other two platforms in all attribute categories, “Activities” (158), F&B Recommendations (109), “Accessibility/Location” (106), “Service” (39), “Pricing” (24). The remaining two platforms, Instagram and TikTok did not have the largest number of keywords in any of the attribute categories.

Table 3 Data set - Videos

Social Media Platforms	# of OTRs / # of Keywords	Percentage of total (%)
YouTube Vlogs	20 Vlogs / 450 keywords	16,67 % / 58.82%
Instagram Reels	50 Reels / 165 keywords	41,67 % / 22.9%
TikTok	50 Videos/ 146 keywords	41.67% / 19,8%
Total	**120 videos/ 761 keywords**	**100%**

Source: Author

Table 4 - The number of keywords across platforms

All Platforms		YT Vlogs	IG Reels	TikTok
Activities	319 42.14%	158 35.11%	85 58.22%	76 44.97%
F&B Rec.	186 24.57%	109 24.89%	39 26.71%	38 22.49%
Acc./Loc.	166 21.93%	106 23.33%	17 11.64%	43 25.44%
Service	49 6.47%	49 10.89%		
Pricing	37 4.89%	24 5.33%	5 3.42%	8 4.73%
Total	**761** **100%**	**450** **100%**	**146** **100%**	**165** **100%**

Source: Author

Discussion

Travelers are eager and willing to share their travel experiences through their generated web-based content. This approach was intended to research and discover the perceived image of Dubrovnik as a popular, attractive, prominent tourist destination through travelers' lens. Dubrovnik being a prestigious destination showcases a lot of historical features, which provides visitors with opportunities to immerse their interests, curiosity and acknowledge the local culture. After such memorable experience, travel enthusiasts are keen on translating those impressions into potentially valuable information for both future travelers and local hospitality establishments.

The destination image formation through the social media users' perception will be influenced through the posted content, which may lead to altering, impacting their future travel decisions. After all, hospitality is all about providing travelers an impeccable and expected service in accordance with the standard level of the establishment, supported by the comfortable, memorable stay which leads to the formation of a destination image. Meaning, all factors that contribute and influence travelers' stay at the destination will ultimately lead to their perceived destination image. Consequently, those informative travel experiences shared on social media platforms hold a certain value that can be utilized as solid data source, in other words, information agents.

The qualitative analysis of the "big data" from the traveler content collection provides us with an insight as to what do travelers find critical in their destination image impression and overall assessment. It also plays a key role in determining what are the main discrepancies and similarities in traveler shared content across popular social media platforms. The quantitative results help us answer our main research questions about the differences and commonalities among selected platforms as well as understand how to interpret and translate the "big data" into meaningful, valuable information for future travel developments.

RQ1: What are the key discrepancies and similarities among selected platforms?

Our qualitative research approach was based on the main research question about the potential differences and commonalities among the selected social media platforms in traveler generated content. In reference to the qualitative results by Guo et al., (2021), during our qualitative content analysis we identified and formed the total of five attribute categories that are common to all selected platforms. However, the fifth, "Service" attribute category did not appear in the sample size of fifty videos for Instagram and TikTok, rather it was only specific to the YouTube platform in twenty analyzed videos, forming a key discrepancy in analyzing the attribute categories across platforms.

Moreover, the second discrepancy involves the identified keywords in the analyzed video samples size. Tallying our recognized keywords across platforms, we had formed an "Information Quantity" discrepancy which represents the contrast between the total number of useful information that was shared in the analyzed traveler generated content. Our results show the significant difference between the total number of keywords on YouTube platform (450) versus Instagram (146), and TikTok (165).

Complementing the information quantity, the "Average Video Duration" discrepancy was statistically measured by adding up the total duration of the 120 analyzed videos and dividing it by initial platform specific sample size. The results have shown that the average video duration of traveler posted content on YouTube is 18.25 minutes, whereas Instagram resulted in 21.54 seconds and TikTok in 20.14 seconds. Finalizing the discrepancy list, the "Keyword intensity among attribute categories" summarizes the keyword distribution where the YouTube keyword distribution is the highest. Meanwhile, Instagram and TikTok have significantly lesser keyword distribution.

The similarities across the selected platforms resulted in a similar list pattern as for the discrepancy list with a pair of different similarity categories. The most dominant attribute

category was “Activities” for all platforms. Meaning, the highest percentage of keyword mentions is attributed to the “Activities” category, YouTube (35%), Instagram (58%), TikTok (45%). The video duration is similar for two out of three platforms, showing the close similarity between Instagram (21.54 seconds), TikTok (20.14 seconds) in 100 analyzed videos, whereas YouTube’s video duration is not applicable. The information quantity and keyword intensity among attribute categories were also similar to the contrast between Instagram and TikTok meanwhile YouTube had significant discrepancy range in all of these similarity categories. In 50 analyzed videos Instagram resulted in 146 identified keywords with a distribution of 39/85/17/5 across attribute categories. In 50 analyzed videos TikTok resulted in 165 identified keywords with a distribution of 38/76/43/8 across attribute categories. Lastly, on all platforms including YouTube, the “Pricing” attribute category contained pricing information of named restaurants within Dubrovnik, giving the category significant relevance for travelers looking for the affordable establishment as well as giving insight for hospitality establishments with direct feedback from their customers.

RQ2: Can social media platforms serve as reliable information agents?

According to Litvin et al., (2008), social media platforms can help travelers in sharing their travel experience for future travelers. Therefore, the posted traveler generated content has the potential on influencing other travelers’ travel intentions and preferences. Moreover, the TGC includes useful travel information that can be utilized for destination selection for potential travelers. On the contrary, Li & Suh (2015) argue that the information on social media is not monitored, which means that there is speculation about finding reliable, trustworthy travel related informative sources. Interestingly, our findings have a significant number of identified keywords across platforms resulting in 761 keywords in 120 analyzed videos. Furthermore, in comparison to the traditional online travel review platforms such as TripAdvisor, Expedia or

Yelp, the contrast between randomly selected 120 textual reviews would not be able to amount the number of relevant keywords in 120 video travel reviews. Social media platforms can be considered as solid destination information agents because all platforms include travel related information that can be subcategorized into platform specific attribute categories. In our research, the ratio of positive versus negative reviews indicates that travel reviews in traveler generated content is predominantly positive (98%), which contradicts the relevancy aspect with objectivity of social media travel reviews. In order for social media platforms to be considered reliable, both the relevancy and objectivity factors need to be established. Our sample size reasoning was based on convenience and other variables such as keyword quantity and video duration. However, our assumption is that the objectivity aspect of social media travel reviews might be answered in future research that includes significantly higher sample size of analyzed videos.

RQ3: Can future travelers and local hospitality establishments use them as solid information sources for travel developments?

Future travelers as well as local hospitality businesses can use all three platforms for their research purposes. According to the results from our sample size distribution 20/50/50 of analyzed videos, travelers seeking out places to eat, things to do, how to get around a destination and pricing information contribute to the range of attribute categories containing travel related information. For convenience, travelers can watch a few videos on platforms like Instagram and TikTok where the travel video duration is up to 20 seconds and including the same attribute categories as YouTube. If they are enticed by the convenient and attractive nature of the short video format and keen on doing more research, they can focus their research efforts in analyzed YouTube Vlogs where the quantity of information is significantly higher than Instagram and TikTok. The video duration is longer and contains the “Service”

attribute category that is of utmost importance for those looking for the memorable experience at a hospitality establishment. On the other hand, local hospitality establishments can get a closer, reliable look at their customers' perspective and feedback. The same convenience factor can be applied for customer satisfaction research in terms of analyzing traveler generated content for an upgrade of a product or service at an establishment.

Conclusion and limitations

In conducting our research, we were facing certain limitations. Firstly, according to our search on the Internet, we have found no appropriate video content analysis that could have assisted us in collecting the data samples from the three platforms with better time efficiency. Moreover, our sample size for YouTube vlogs is significantly lesser than the one from other two platforms for three reasons. According to our results, the sample size of 20 Vlogs resulted in a higher number of keywords identified. In other words, the quantity of information is larger, therefore the sample size is smaller. Also, because of the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry, our sample size is based on the most recent vlogs published up to one year. Meaning, there is a time gap in between the most recent, relevant traveler vlogs, and the ones prior pandemic being outdated and less relevant for our research. The lack of additional filters in the search bar across the three selected platforms limited our research to enter keywords and select among abundance of videos as opposed to having other beneficial search options to optimize our research efficiency and accuracy. In conclusion, using social media platforms is an attractive and popular way of sharing travel experiences. In this study, our findings from the sample of 120 analyzed videos have helped us answer our research questions, moreover, gain useful insight of traveler generated content and its useful potential for future travel developments.

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