# THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON ENTITY PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF TOURIST ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS IN VHEMBE DISTRICT

BY

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## DECLARATION

I, **Rampedi Ulendah,** declare that this is my own researched work. It is submitted for BCOM Masters in Tourism Management under the School Of Management Sciences at the University of Venda. The study has not been submitted in any other institution and the sources in the research project have been acknowledged and included in reference list.

……

Student signature

……..

Date



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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my parents, sisters and brothers for supporting me and all the participants who made it possible for me to undertake and successfully complete this study. May GOD bless them.



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The completion of this study would not have been possible without:

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## ABSTRACT



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Social media plays a key role in tourism and hospitality, transforming the way tourists search, find and co-create information about travel-related products, and changing the way they make hotel-related decisions online. The use of social media as part of the travel information search activity is becoming the norm. This study aims to find out how the accommodation sector markets its services on social media and how that impacts their performance, as measured by online booking generations.The primary objective is to investigate the impact of social media use on entity performance, focusing on tourism accommodation providers in Vhembe District Municipality. The study followed a quantitative research methodology to attain the set objectives of the study. Probability sampling technique was adopted, and the targeted population was tourist accommodation establishments in the Vhembe District Municipality. A sum of 107 was the targeted sample size of the study, where the establishments sampled were active on social media. The established sample was the accommodations that are operating and have active social media platforms. To analyse the data, simple linear regression analysis was performed for inferential statistics while descriptive statistics was performed to identify the accommodation's ideal guests, their demographics, interests, and preferences. This process helps accommodation tailor their content to make it appealing. This study concluded that the accommodation industry finds social media more effective, and businesses use it more often to communicate and engage with their followers and customers.

Keywords: social media, accommodation, marketing, and tourism marketers, brand awareness, customer bookings

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# CHAPTER 1:

# INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

In a public ruled by information, online correspondence between individuals, organisations, and groups is a simple, typical, regular arrangement. The stupendous improvement of social media applications, describing these days' online communication frameworks, causes an ever-increasing number of individuals and businesses to utilize social media to secure and give information and promote or criticize products and services. Even though social media applications seem efficient, cheap, and easy to use for promoting a company's products or services, there is a high risk of failure.

Information technologies have transformed tourism globally by radically changing how businesses are conducted in the marketplaces and how tourists interact with organizations. The emergence of social media (SM) has implied drastic changes by turning the internet into an immersive space of social networking and collaboration of users, and recent studies describe the adoption and potential of social media. In the last decade, SM has emerged as a game changer, putting the customer at the organization's center. Accommodation establishments worldwide realize their potential and use tools (such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and TripAdvisor) to engage customers in active conversation and reinvent customer experience. SM use can provide multiple benefits for non-hotel companies. These include improved brand perception, increased e-word-of-mouth, customer knowledge, and valuable feedback for new product development (Matikiti et al., 2016).

## 1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Since the 1960s, technology has been instrumental in transforming the travel and tourism industry. In particular, the increasing accessibility of tourism consumers to technologies



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such as the internet and social media allows suppliers and consumers of tourism products and services to connect at various levels before the tourists arrive at their destination. Despite the increasing role of technology in promoting tourism activities in different destinations across the globe, some research has been conducted to establish whether it adds any value to tourism growth by enabling entities involved to generate more bookings that result in improved performance. The research problem is summarized as the need for more understanding of the value of social media in promoting the accommodation sector (non-hotels) in Vhembe District.

## 1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

### 1.3.1 Aim of the study

Primarily, this study investigates the impact of social media use on entity performance, focusing on tourist accommodation providers in the Vhembe district.

### 1.3.2 Research objectives

- Explore the different social media platforms tourism accommodation owners use to promote businesses.
- Assess accommodation owners' selection of social media platforms compared to traditional marketing channels.
- Examine the value of social media in promoting tourism accommodation businesses.
- Investigate whether social media use predicts generations of bookings resulting in entity performance.



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### 1.3.3 Research Questions

1.3.3.1 Primary research question

How does social media use impact entity performance among tourist accommodation providers in the Vhembe district?

1.3.2.2 Secondary Research Questions

- What social media platforms are tourism accommodation owners using to promote their businesses?
- What factors do tourism accommodation owners consider when selecting social media platforms and traditional marketing channels?
- What is the value of social media platforms in promoting tourism accommodation to tourists?
- How does social media use impact generations of bookings, resulting in entity performance?
- How does social media use impact brand awareness?

### 1.3.4 Research hypotheses

H0: Social media use is not positive and significantly related to the generation of bookings.
H1: Social media use is positive and significantly related to the generation of bookings.

## 1.4. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The delimitation of a study refers to the explicit identification and setting of boundaries or constraints on the scope of research, defining what aspects are included and excluded. Delimitation helps researchers establish the parameters within their study, ensuring a focused and manageable investigation (Johnson, 2014). The research is limited to accommodations operating in the Vhembe district.



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## 1.5 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

### 1.5.1 Tourism industry

Statistics South Africa (2011, p. 3) defines tourism as all the activities undertaken by individuals traveling to places away from their usual environment and staying there for business, leisure, and other purposes. Tourism is a diverse and dynamic phenomenon that involves people traveling, exploring, and spending short periods in places different from their regular surroundings for various goals such as business or leisure. Recent research (Smith et al., 2022) shows that tourism involves a complex interplay of economic, cultural, and environmental factors influencing travelers and host communities.

### 1.5.2 Accommodation sector

The accommodation sector comprises different hospitality facilities, conveniently categorized as service (where catering is included) or self-catering establishments. Service accommodation may include hotels, bed and breakfasts (B&B), and travel inns.

### 1.5.3 Social media

Social media refers to practices, behaviors, and activities among networks of individuals who gather online to share information, opinions, and data utilizing conversational media (Hays et al., 2013, p. 212). Social media is a platform for building networks and sharing information and sentiments (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

### 1.5.4 Marketing

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines marketing as developing, promoting, providing, and trading valuable offerings to partners, consumers, clients, and society (AMA, 2022). This multidimensional discipline aims to discover, please, and keep consumers through strategic planning, product creation, pricing, advertising, and distribution (Kotler et al., 2021).

Marketing has changed to incorporate digital technology, social media platforms, and data analytics in today's dynamic business environment. These changes have shaped market



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trends and influenced customer behavior (Smith, 2020). For businesses looking to build a solid brand and interact with a range of customer groups, it is now essential to integrate their online and offline channels (Jones & Brown, 2019).

## 1.6. OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH

This research thesis consists of five chapters, and Chapter One provides a general overview of the study. This includes the introduction and background of the study, the research problem, the research questions, and the study's objectives. Chapter Two presents a literature review of the current research on the topic. The review provides a detailed theoretical overview of the use of social media marketing by accommodation establishments in Vhembe District Municipality. Chapter Three is the methodology chapter, which discusses the research design and methodology used for the study. The chapter also discusses the sample frame, data collection, and analysis methods. Chapter Four is all about results and analysis, and this chapter will provide the results and a summary of the key findings obtained from the data collected. Chapter Five will conclude the study and provide appropriate recommendations for improving social media usage as a marketing and promotional tool for accommodation establishments.

## 1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This introductory chapter gave an outline of the topic. Definitions of the exploration were made, and hypotheses were stated. The research methodology, which comes later in this thesis, is introduced. The next chapter provides a review of literature related to the usage of social media by tourist accommodation establishments.



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# CHAPTER 2:

# TOURISTS ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The intensity of social media has expanded in recent years. Social media is another approach that can be utilized in hotel promotion to shape customers' buying conduct. It can use more advantages and points of interest for non-hotels that cannot be accomplished using traditional marketing tools. Hoffman and Fodor (2010) stated that the introduction of social networks, for example, Facebook or Twitter, in the hotel and travel industry organizations is not, at this point, a matter of decision but instead a matter of need. Social media has become crucial in influencing consumer behavior, including recognition of needs, information acquisition, opinions and attitudes, purchase behavior, post-purchase communication, and, most importantly, evaluating alternatives (Mangold & Faulds, 2009).

## 2.2 EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Businesses must modify their strategies to accommodate social media due to the growing influence of new technologies and social media in people's lives (Blackshaw & Nazzaro, 2006). Over the past 20 years, researchers have been forced to investigate the problem due to the increasing requirement for standardization. Poon (1993) and Sheldon (1997) found that internet technology and tourism had been expanding simultaneously in the late 20th century. When blogging was first developed in 1999, it allowed travellers to communicate with other travellers about their experiences, advice, and thoughts (Burbano, 2012). Online travel information is now acknowledged as a valuable resource for the travel and tourism sector (Gruter et al., 2013). According to van Dijck's book *The Culture of Connectivity: A critical history of social media*, the social media phenomenon is a response to people's demand to experience social interaction. van Dijck asserts that activities such as watching home films, visiting vacation photos, and discussing trip experiences with friends have progressively moved from real life onto social media



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platforms (Van Dijck, 2013). In addition to social connections, Wang and Fesenmaier (2004) noted the benefits of social media from a business's point of view in managing client relations. To engage potential customers, the writers suggested creating customer-oriented material.

The subject matter experts had conducted a great deal of research but needed help finding effective plans that would enable companies to continually meet the needs (Chung & Buhalis, 2008; Leung et al., 2013). Concurrently, there was an increase in the use of related apps (Chung & Buhalis, 2008). Travelers' decision-making processes were shown to be significantly impacted by social media (Gretzel, 2010). There were many chances for customers and tourism operators to communicate (Pantelidis, 2010; Schmallegger & Carson, 2008). Additionally, Pantelidis (2010) offered factual support for the significance of closely observing and controlling these Social Media exchanges.

Researchers then issued a warning, stating that the internet has changed how travel information is disseminated and gathered (Buhalis & Law 2008). It was projected that future travellers would use social media more frequently to plan trips and share their experiences, forcing businesses to develop tools and implement plans that would allow them to capitalize on user-generated content (Miguens et al., 2008). Several applications have addressed the shifts in traveller behaviour and have started to be successfully adopted (Porter, 2011). According to Conrady and Buck (2012), Facebook and TripAdvisor are the two most popular social media platforms for finding pre-travel information. Additionally, specialists and significant distributors of travel-related information are beginning to emerge on LinkedIn and Twitter (Conrady & Buck, 2012).
Hotels that were present and actively involved on social media platforms saw benefits, especially in terms of identifying the requirements and expectations of their patrons, disseminating hotel information, and connecting with prospective customers (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004). Sigala (2011) tried to identify the precise results of a well-executed social media strategy in a related study. The author outlined several benefits of the growing social media authority in the hotel and tourism industry, including the following: understanding the customer profile, monitoring and maintaining online reputation,



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attracting new customers, increasing online presence, delivering information, increasing the perceived reliability of hotels' products and services thanks to first-hand knowledge, responding to customer inquiries, feeding real-time information, starting businesses through word-of-mouth, and allowing customers to express themselves.

Early social media initiatives implemented at various hotels and hotel chains were examined in research by Lanz et al. (2010). The report claims that Starwood Hotels and Resorts was the first hotel company to launch a social media campaign on a networking website. The promotion launched in 2006 urged travellers to share their travelogues with a worldwide audience. Additionally, in 2008, the Aloft Hotel Chain, a division of Starwood Hotels and Resorts, effectively integrated its properties onto the popular online platform Second Life, allowing prospective customers to view Aloft Hotel venues in a computer-generated environment prior to deciding (Lanz et al., 2010).

In 2006, Hyatt Hotels and Resorts established a community website exclusively serving Gold Passport Loyalty Club members (Lanz et al., 2010). Furthermore, Hyatt Careers was established on Facebook to help the corporation reach prospective clientele: future employees (Hyatt Hotels and Resorts 2019). By 2009, Sheraton was using blogging platforms, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and direct emailing to entice consumers to share their travel experiences on social media in exchange for a chance to win a complimentary vacation at one of Sheraton's opulent locations (Sheraton, 2019). Following suit, Marriott Hotels and Resorts started social media campaigns on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter to commemorate 50 years of Hawaiian sovereignty and offer free vacation days on the island.

According to Lanz et al.,(2010); Marriott, (2019). Within the industry, Facebook fan pages were popularised by Holiday Inn, Intercontinental Hotels and Resorts, Hotel Indigo, and Wyndham Hotels and Resorts; on the other hand, Twitter campaigns proved beneficial for Hilton Hotels, Tiara Hotels in Portugal, and McDonald Hotels in the United Kingdom (Minazzi & Lagrosen, 2013; Lanz et al., 2010). However, as Sigala (2011) notes, only a few businesses managed to prosper, and the others could not implement strategies that



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produced favourable outcomes in the Social Media space. Chan and Guillet (2011) suggest that the primary causes of the inability to adapt were inadequate corporate communication and restricted access to the company's Social Media platforms.

## 2.3 SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

When social media first emerged, most research studies focused on the general features of these platforms in connection to human needs and behaviours (van Dijck, 2013). Numerous studies that focused on each impacted industry were conducted due to Social Media's expansion into new markets and the necessity for its efficient management (Garrido-Moreno et al., 2018). The authors claim that the relationship between social media and the hotel and tourism industry has been extensively studied, with a recent emphasis on applications that changed how these businesses interacted with customers. TripAdvisor, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter were shown to lead the industry among an increasing number of these applications (Masic & Nikolina, 2016; Sanliöz et al., 2015; Hsu, 2012; Martínez-Villa, 2012; Smith, 2018).

### 2.3.1 TripAdvisor

According to Sanlioz Ozgen and Kozak's (2015) evaluation, TripAdvisor is the most popular travel website worldwide, operating in more than 45 countries. In 2018, there were eight million registered tourist businesses (hotels, airlines, restaurants, and attractions) on TripAdvisor, with over 702 million reviews, and the platform was available in 49 countries (TripAdvisor, 2019a). According to Conrady and Bucks (2012), TripAdvisor was the first pre-travel planning tool used by the growing number of internet-dependent travellers, which opened the door for social media to penetrate the tourism industry. Law (2006) characterized TripAdvisor as a social media platform that offers objective suggestions for hotels and other tourism-related enterprises. Jeacle and Carter (2011) classified it as a traveller’s forum for experience sharing.

On the other hand, TripAdvisor was acknowledged by Leung et al. (2013) as a tool that hotel companies have started to use to attract new customers and obtain a competitive edge. These days, this platform hosts content created by clients and business-related



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data and allows users to compare data from 200 booking engines (TripAdvisor, 2019a). This expands the services related to social media and shows how quickly social media is becoming the dominant force in the travel industry. Researchers found that Facebook and Twitter quickly became viable social media leaders in the travel industry despite TripAdvisor's increasing prominence over time (Minazzi & Lagrosen, 2013). These assertions were corroborated by Bulencea and Egger (2013), who ranked Facebook and Twitter as the top travel information websites.

### 2.3.2 Facebook

In addition to promoting and hosting user-generated material, Facebook evolved as an alternative web-based platform that businesses used to answer customer inquiries, advertise items, and provide information (Chan & Guillet, 2011; Pempek et al., 2009). The company eventually became a global trend by entering Spanish, German, and French markets by 2007 (Martinez-Villa, 2012). Hsu (2012) claims that, in just five years, Facebook rose to the top of the social networking scene, making it possible for hotels to cater to a sizable global clientele through a single platform. Furthermore, the platform demonstrated the ability to convert many contented clients into devoted ones (Capatina et al., 2018). According to Noone et al. (2011), posting customized links on Facebook helped bring prospective customers to the hotel's website or booking engine, resulting in a rise in direct bookings, decreased need for intermediaries, and financial gains for the company.

### 2.3.3 Twitter

As barriers to contact between individuals and organizations began to dissolve, Twitter emerged as a medium that increased the effectiveness of this open connection (Atadil et al., 2010). Brief and direct messages enabled businesses to disseminate any significant event in real time, keeping customers and the public updated (Bigne et al., 2018). Martinez-Villa (2012) noted that this rapid communication led to the emergence of microblogging, an additional subset of blogging, as a crucial instrument in strategic Social Media marketing. According to Twitter data from 2019, Starwood Hotels and Resorts



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(@StarwoodBuzz), Hilton Hotels (@HiltonHotels), and Melia Hotels International (@MeliaHotelsInt) have all run extremely effective Twitter campaigns.

### 2.3.4 Instagram

Instagram evolved as a mobile phone tool with a substantial competitive edge over similar platforms, whereas TripAdvisor steadily lost its top position among many social media applications (Martinez-Villa, 2012; Smith, 2018; Wozniak et al., 2017). According to Smith's 2018 book "Instagram Abroad: Performance, Consumption and Colonial Narrative in Tourism," Instagram is one of the most widely used and rapidly expanding social media platforms worldwide. Smith notes that Instagram gives travel journals an additional layer that appeals to many senses in addition to travel writing. This includes capturing images, videos and sounds while visiting a site. Twenty percent of the foreign travellers the author spoke with said they used social media as a window into life. Instagram is a helpful tool for destination marketing since it allows travellers to share and photograph moments on the fly, which builds up specific feelings connected to a place (Sumarjan et al., 2013). As a result, rather than relying solely on spoken or written descriptions, the compound system of hashtags allows users to access images and associated feelings when perusing the application's archives in search of information (Smith, 2018; Sumarjan et al., 2013). This helps users form a more comprehensive mental image of the destination of choice.

## 2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA AND TOOLS

Looking at social media from a conceptual standpoint, it is a communication medium in which content on websites, including social networks, is shared (Elley & Tilley, 2009, p. 79). On these sites, other users contribute their connections and opinions. Similarly, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) described social media as a collection of Internet-based apps developed by Web 2.0 applications that allow users to create and share content. According to Sigala and Chalkiti (2014), Web 2.0 apps enable users to receive and transmit information online. In this way, he claims that it enables individuals to access online social contexts using social media. According to Akar (2011, p. 20), social media is a universally accessible communication tool that allows individuals to influence groups.



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Social media tools are communication tools that enable users to examine one another's profiles and address books, build links with fresh information, and make online relationships with others (Stone & Jacobs, 2008, p. 345). Businesses now carry their marketing tactics to social media due to the widespread usage of internet-based social media technologies. Individuals or customers have begun to manage their advertising and promotional efforts using social media rather than traditional communication and advertising techniques. They specifically contact their target audience more comfortably by utilizing primary social media tools like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, which allow quick access to enormous audiences. (Sisman, 2020, p. 1). According to data provided by 'We Are Social', a global social media consultancy, the following are the top social media tools used throughout the world in the first months of 2021, in order of importance: Facebook (16%), YouTube (14%), WhatsApp (12%), Facebook Messenger (8%), Instagram (7%), WeChat (7%), TikTok (4%), Telegram (3%), Snapchat (3%), Pinterest (2.6%), Twitter (2%), and other (21.4%). The fact that these platforms appeal to vast audiences and that increasing user numbers will undoubtedly continue to attract Internet and social media marketing efforts in this way.

## 2.5 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

According to Gunelius (2011), social media marketing is used to raise awareness against rivals in goods and services, ensuring that vast masses know the firm and its products; it is defined as any marketing activity conducted through social media. According to Yadav and Rahman (2017), social media marketing is a process in which businesses convey their marketing propositions to individuals using social media platforms. Many audiences, from corporate executives to consultants, publishers, journalists, and media members, alter their ideas because of social media marketing (Akar, 2006, p. 14). It provides continual engagement since it is a style of communication centered on sharing and debate with no place or time constraints (Cross & Parker, 2004, p. 33). Businesses can benefit from social media by increasing brand awareness and understanding, identifying and recruiting talented personnel, measuring customer satisfaction and increasing loyalty, and soliciting customer feedback during the product development and innovation



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stages (Gorgulu & Gorgulu, 2010, p. 37). Businesses that utilize social media to contact customers may do their marketing tasks in less time, more efficiently, and at a lesser cost. Through two-way communication, consumers may readily acquire information such as brand, price, product, discount, and customer opinions (Demir& Kozak, 2013, p. 124).

## 2.6 SOCIAL MEDIA AS A PROMOTIONAL TOOL FOR ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS

### 2.6.1 Evolution of social media

Social media has influenced how people communicate and make purchasing decisions. Before the Internet age and the rise of social media, people would communicate their thoughts on products and services to friends and family members. This way, they could learn about new offerings and make better-informed decisions when dealing with several alternatives. Nevertheless, word-of-mouth communication [WOM] is no longer limited to the offline world or acquaintances. Most of today's word-of-mouth communication happens online among people without social ties. Although most consumers find the traditional form of WOM more trustworthy, peer reviews are still believed to be more credible than information generated by companies (Slivar & Bayer, 2017).

Digital WOM is sometimes called free advertising if it happens outside the company's control and without monetary incentives (Oz, 2015). Today's consumers tend to spend more time in digital environments. They utilize different social media to review their purchases and share their opinions with others. The real-time nature of social media makes it possible to post instant feedback, which might reach thousands of other potential buyers (Russell, 2010).

Consequently, people use social media platforms to look up consumer reviews based on which they evaluate different goods and services. With millions of active users and global reach, social media has gained more attention from businesses worldwide. Social media platforms have often transformed companies' business, especially in hospitality and tourism. More and more businesses across different industries have been actively



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integrating social networks into their marketing toolkits (Qualman,2012). Nevertheless, 21st-century consumers have evolved as well, from passive targets of marketing strategies to active content creators with enormous potential to influence the choices of others (Russell, 2010).

Social media is a site where users create content by giving conclusions and statuses, Denis (2014). Social media is where communication advances, and content and social interaction intersect. Social media benefits the advertiser by empowering the promoter to accumulate buyer understanding while building the brand and creating a competitive advantage. Currently, social media systems are progressively utilized by organizations to promote their image, items, or administrations and to build relationships with buyers (Cant & Van Rooyen, 2017).

Hays et al. (2013, p.212) indicate that social media refers to practices, behaviors, and activities among networks of individuals who gather online to share information, opinions, and data utilizing conversational media. Conversational media refers to Web-based applications that make it easy to create and transmit content in various forms, such as videos, words, audio, and pictures.

Back on the Internet 1.0. era, which was the older generation of Web 2.0. the content on the World Wide Web was created and uploaded solely by the website owners. Even though website page guests could access and view the information introduced to them, they could not engage in the content creation. In such a manner, Web 2.0 implied a significant shift from personal, statistical, "read-only" webpages to blogs, wikis, and other collaborative projects. Since then, content creation has no longer been reserved for a selected group; every user might have engaged with the process.

On the contrary, user-generated content refers to how people employ social media. Three conditions should be met for a piece of work to be user-generated. First, it must be put either on a publicly accessible website or it can be available to specific individuals only.



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The user-generated content also needs to be produced by a non-professional, and it needs to show signs of creativity (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

There are a variety of social media platforms on which people interact and communicate for various reasons. These include writing blogs (e.g., WordPress or BlogSpot), social networks (e.g., Facebook), sharing videos or pictures (e.g., YouTube or Twitter), contributing to online forums and reviews (e.g., Tripadvisor and Amazon), posting news articles (e.g., Digg), accessing information provided by numerous contributors (e.g., Wikipedia), or micro-blogging (e.g., Twitter). There are diverse types of Social Media tools, such as instant messaging, blogs, microblogs, social networking sites, wikis, photos and video sharing sites, review sites, tagging, and news feeds (Hansen et al., 2011; Berthon et al., 2012; Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). In 2008, social media was the most popular activity on the web, a position that a search engine had never held until that year (Qualman, 2009: 1). In 2009, four of the top ten visited websites were social media websites, compared to zero in 2004 (Schetzina, 2010b).

Social media platforms started around ten years ago. It began with LinkedIn, which was impelled in 2003, followed by MySpace (2003) and Facebook in 2004, YouTube in 2005, and Twitter in 2006. Facebook is the most visited online social network, with more than 2.6 billion customers worldwide; Twitter has about 238 million users; LinkedIn has more than 424 million users; and MySpace has 57 million users (Lua, 2023). Social network sites are viral among young users (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). They have permitted customers to become more active parties in the marketing process. Simultaneously, these platforms act as a database for marketers and create an abundant source of customer preferences, behavior, and characteristics (Radwan & Radwan, 2014).

Businesses use web-based technology to disseminate information and details to many customers quickly. They permit the improvement and return of user-generated material. Facebook or FB, Tweets, Hi5, Orkut, and other social media websites are collectively called "social media." Social media represents minimal expense assets that are used to combine technology and social connections with the use of terms. These power resources



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are generally online or portable and focus on Tweets, Facebook, FB, Myspace, and YouTube.

## 2.7. ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS MARKETING USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Accommodation establishments are businesses with tourist attractions that suit their tourists' demands for an overnight stay, food, beverage, and limited entertainment. In a survey of hotel and restaurant managers, they were asked which technological innovations they would use in the future. As many as 45% of participants said they would pay attention to advances connected to social networking sites. In comparison, 18% said they would pay attention to advancements linked to mobile phones and mobile applications (Atadil, 2011, p. 58).

Ercan and Olakolu (2017: 619) stated that, In another study in which they reviewed accommodation establishments, guests were asked to follow the hotel's official Facebook page, and the guests said that they usually followed the page to acquire up-to-date information on the hotel. Following that, the goals of learning about other people's thoughts and experiences with the hotel, being informed about campaigns and announcements, and expressing their ideas on the establishment with others are listed. According to a Four Pillars Hotels survey, 76% of participants shared relevant social media experiences. 52% of respondents said that vacation photographs posted by their Facebook friends influenced their hotel selection. 46% of those who took part stayed in hotels, and 40% remarked about restaurants on social media. 33% of interviewees said they could modify their hotel choices, 7% their travel location preferences, and 5% their airline preferences using social media (Eryilmaz & Zengin, 2014).

TripAdvisor performed another research on social media usage as a marketing tool in lodging businesses in 2012. According to this survey, which comprised over 1,700 participants, 76% share their holiday experiences on social media. 42% of participants use social media to plan a vacation, and 64% use website comments to make selections. While on vacation, 91% of respondents exchange images (Civelek & Dalgn, 2013). In



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their investigation, Yoo et al. (2009) looked at user-generated content rather than well-known official agency websites. According to the study, using brand names in forums, travel blogs, and social networking sites where people comment boosts the credibility of those businesses (Akehurst, 2009, p. 51).

Furthermore, it has been indicated that using brand names in word-of-mouth (WOM) communication, which considerably influences user preferences, would result in comparable findings (Litvin et al., 2008, p. 458). Another study found that graphics posted on Facebook capture the audience's attention and become a part of their holiday preparations (White, 2010, pp. 116-130). According to the research, hotels, and visitors utilize social media regularly and will continue to do so. It is also acknowledged that social media considerably impacts visitor choices.

The accommodation sector comprises different hospitality facilities, conveniently categorized as service (where catering is included) or self-catering establishments. Service accommodation may include hotels, bed and breakfasts (B&B), travel inns, etc. In contrast, self-catering accommodation may include campsites, caravans, and holiday rentals of villas, apartments, and chalets. Half-board accommodation will incorporate breakfast and supper, while the full-board administration will include lunch arrangements, too. Hotels are the most significant and widely recognized service providers of overnight accommodation for tourists and business travelers. They may also form one of the critical elements of package holidays (Camilleri, 2018).

Fundamentally, hospitality comprises two administrations: the arrangement of overnight settlements for individuals traveling away from home and choices for individuals eating outside their homes. Wilson (2012) refers to the accommodation and food-beverage services and hospitality industries. Consistently, Internet use turns out to be expected, and the popularity of online g (e.g., Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter) has been developing for some time; firms see web-based life as a significant specialized instrument for their promoting and critical choices to improve customers' commitment (Lee et al., 2015).



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The relationships that organizations can manifest between customers and their brands have become essential in marketing. The successful win of shopper-brand connections is that buyers infer fulfillment through more noteworthy connections to brands. Organizations that better comprehend and react to customers must create more brand reliability and profitability. Accomplishing these objectives requires more associations and collaborations among purchasers and brands to cultivate significant connections between them.

Social media is far-reaching, and organizations in many industries are coordinating social media in their communication strategies. More marketing research must be done to uncover the impacts of social media connections on buyer perspectives, practices, and basic procedures. Most of the current research is concerned with the arrangements with the qualities of social media and how the distinctions from traditional media are challenging marketing strategies. Social Bakers (2014) shows that the number of social media communications prompts more visits to the brand's site, while others propose that social media commitment is inadequate in stimulating brand loyalty and sales.

To leverage social media's interactive and engagement dimensions, an increased number of marketers have changed their marketing objectives, focusing on building/maintaining a desirable consumer–brand relationship via social media interaction. Regardless of the significance of branding and relationship building in the computerized world, little is thought about how social media identifies with buyers' relationship with brands and whether social media-based brand connections are related to desired results, for example, consumer satisfaction and recommendations (Traphagen, 2015).

## 2.8 HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The empirical literature was reviewed on the impact of social media usage on customer booking as well as on the impact of social media usage on brand awareness.



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### 2.8.1 The impact of social media on customer bookings

The rise of social media presents opportunities for organizations to leverage it as a powerful instrument for advertising. Customers can use social media to discover other people's perspectives and improve their comprehension of goods or services (Dedeoglu et al., 2020). CorporateCorporate jargon defines purchasing intent as deciding to acquire specific items or services. However, intentions are not the same as buying intentions, which come from behavioral research (Oosthuizen et al., 2015). A consumer's interest and propensity to buy determines their purchasing intentions.

According to Manzoor et al. (2020), the results show that social media influence and trust significantly impact consumers' purchase intentions. Data analysis shows that social media marketing has a more significant impact on purchase intentions through social networking sites than trust. Consequently, improving websites' general quality boosts user confidence. Thus, trust directly influences users' purchasing intentions, which significantly affects e-commerce.

The two main topics of interest for Anderson (2012), a researcher at the Ivey School of Business in London, were revenue management and service pricing. His research indicates that customers are reading more reviews than ever before selecting a hotel, and a growing number of customers check TripAdvisor reviews before booking a hotel. Furthermore, a study conducted in Indonesia by Alfarisyi and Ferdian (2023) found that hotels should recognize and accommodate guests' needs and preferences when making reservations. By emphasizing aspects considered advantageous and considering the guests' intended booking intents, hotels can increase the likelihood that customers will book a stay and reduce resistance. Therefore, it is critical to evaluate social media promotions, especially from the hotel's point of view. Furthermore, improving hotel performance, especially in the social media domain, is imperative to empower visitors to make informed selections regarding which hotel to book.



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Online information regarding service offerings, such as accommodations, currency exchange, local attractions, and other helpful information, will attract potential customers. Travelers can be satisfied in many ways, but information mainly affects internet users' pleasure. One of the advantages of conducting business online is the rapid and straightforward lines of contact that are created between the traveler and the accommodation industry. According to Ranyard, Fildes, and Hu (2015), social media and online advertising are valuable tools businesses may utilize to surpass their rivals and achieve their performance goals. Business analytics approaches that are innovative and diverse can help businesses extend their operations by efficiently utilizing the data they have at their disposal.

E-Safety and e-trust are regarded to be the most important aspects of customer satisfaction, according to research by Ramanathan et al. (2020). Their findings provide a new perspective on the use of e-commerce in the service sector. This result sends a strong message to higher management about the importance of keeping the safety promise made to online buyers. Service providers need to ensure that their clients are accessing online information and cash payment options in a secure environment because of the persistent problems that social media poses. Nevertheless, according to Casando-Diaz et al. (2020), guests' opinions of the hotel have significantly dropped after reading several negative reviews online. They plan to make very few reservations as well. The ramifications are straightforward: complaints will be less frequent if the main product and services meet fundamental quality standards.

### 2.8.2 The impact of social media usage on brand awareness

Brand awareness is the extent to which a customer can be identified, confirmed, and recalled under any condition (Perreault et al., 2013). According to Akbar and Ozgul (2018), brand awareness refers to a consumer's ability to remember, identify, or recognize a brand in various situations. He continued by saying that the two main elements affecting brand awareness are brand recall and recognition. The capacity to accurately recall a brand's name when looking at a product category is called "brand recall." On the other



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hand, brand awareness refers to a customer's ability to identify a brand after being given certain information.

Hutter et al. (2013) investigated how social media participation on the side of participants and brand activity affected consumers' buying decisions. Their findings demonstrate that consumer interaction with a brand's Facebook fan page enhances brand recognition. They also concluded that social media is an effective means of spreading word-of-mouth advertising. The study by Akbar and Ozgul (2018) addresses the research issues and suggests similar results by showing a positive correlation between social media participation and brand awareness. The more a consumer engages with a brand on social media, the more they discover about it. Social media marketing can aid in brand recall for consumers after purchasing. Thanks to social media, customers may distribute their content more quickly and easily.

Bilgin (2020) found that brand awareness was the attribute on which social media marketing had the most significant impact among young adult consumers. The outcomes corroborated Bilgin's (2018) findings. The study found that brand awareness on social media had a more significant impact on young adult consumers' purchase intentions than brand image and trust. It was discovered that social media messages directly affected young adult customers' intent to purchase.

Ritanjali Majhi (2019) found that social media is known to have a significant role in raising brand awareness among users and that brand awareness is known to have a significant influence on the development of purchase intention among users. Numerous factors, such as creative material created by companies, pre- and post-purchase assistance from brand administrators, purchase decision-making, brand offerings, brand impression, user responsiveness, and brand attitude, all encourage users to engage with brands.

## 2.9 SOCIAL MEDIA AS AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR TOURISM

Social media is a significant device for the investigation of tourists' mentalities, and the increased purchases and recommendations to different clients affirm this. Building a



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successful service-based brand in the tourism industry implies that each deal ought to be a remarkable offer considering the customer's experience. Tourists need to know that following dependable sources tends to lessen their vulnerability and gives them an idea of what they will find at a location. Due to the vulnerability of traveler benefits, a voyager should get the fundamental information to make the right decision concerning travel. Modern tourists trust other travelers' opinions using social media more than official marketing advice. As social media becomes increasingly expressive, consumers can increasingly influence other consumers with their own opinions and experiences. Since social media is low-cost and bias-free, it represents an advantage for marketing communications. According to Fotis, Buhalis, and Rossides (2011), in the academic literature, there is a disagreement on the classification of the social media types according to their level of social presence/media richness.

The critical role of social media is to encourage users and travelers to post and share their travel experiences, comments, and opinions by having them serve as a source of information for other users.



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| | Study | Application | Main findings |
|---|---|---|---|
| T Nkosana (2022) | Adoption of social media for effective marketing by micro Hospitality businesses | Social media | Small lodging companies in KwaZulu Natal province have embraced social media marketing to a great extent. However, the efficacy of this marketing tactic varies across them and cannot be generalized. Further empirical findings showed that these businesses were not systematically using social media marketing, that alternative marketing approaches may occasionally be just as successful, and that some needed to make the most of the available chances |
| (Li, 2010) | The effects of social media networks in the hospitality industry | Social media networks | Currently, social media is widely used in the hotel industry. In the virtual world, previous hotel guests and prospective future visitors influence and are impacted by one another, mainly when using online evaluations. Daily site monitoring is essential to the success of any social media campaign. The business must leave comments on pertinent blog entries and maintain personal contact with the internet influencers. It is advised that the marketing department allocate 25% of its effort to social media campaigns in order for them to yield the desired outcomes. |
| R Matikiti, M Kruger & M Saayman (2016) | The usage of social media as a marketing tool in two Southern African countries | Social media as a marketing tool | The study's initial finding was that the sample of South African and Zimbabwean lodging businesses used different social media marketing strategies. An establishment's kind, character, and location affect how it uses social media and how important it is to use it. This suggests that a customized social marketing plan should be created based on each establishment's degree of experience and familiarity with social media. |
| L.D Mosweunyane (2016). | Free state tourism smmes' utilization of social Media technologies for business Competitiveness: A stakeholders' perspective | SMME's | The results show that social media technologies are used by the majority (69.9%) of tourist SMMEs in the research region to brand their goods and services. The empirical results showed that SMTs are frequently the point of contact between consumers and potential customers; they are crucial for branding the goods and services offered by tourist SMMEs. |



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| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Moyo<br><br>(2018) | The role of social media marketing in the small business environment in eMkhondo | Small business | Participants in the interviews acknowledged the advantages of social media marketing for their companies. The primary study results are consistent with previous research since the participants mentioned that social media marketing had comparable advantages and benefits for their businesses to those mentioned in previous studies. |

*Table 2.1: Previous studies on social media as a marketing tool*

The primary emphasis of the study was how well social media works for small hotel businesses in terms of marketing. According to Nkosana (2022), there is a dearth of industry-specific research on the adoption and use of social media for marketing, despite previous studies showing that social media, particularly travel review sites like TripAdvisor, is now considered one of the primary sources of trustworthy travel information for travelers and influences their decision-making processes. The results of the literature research demonstrate that social media platforms are presently driving the hospitality business, even if traditional marketing formats, including information pamphlets, travel exhibits, and Expos, are still essential and frequently used.

According to Moyo's (2018) research, most business owners claim that social media marketing interactions could be higher. This may be attributed to a need for more experience and time to implement social media marketing. Additionally, participants admitted that while social media marketing might help their companies, the difficulties they encounter hinder their ability to succeed. The same author further said that participants thought platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and Twitter needed more straightforward since they required technical expertise.

The present study aims to provide a descriptive overview of social media usage in the hospitality sector. Additionally, the study sought to determine whether social media is useful and advised, and if so, to offer advice and a proposal for using social media as a platform for marketing. It also sought to ascertain the relationship between service



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providers and the way in which information is communicated to customers through social media. The study by Mosweunyane (2016) states that the major goal was to investigate the status/level of social media technology utilization and its influence on Free State tourist SMMEs' competitiveness.

Social media platforms can also enhance communication between the business and its stakeholders (Wamba & Carter, 2014). According to Jagongo and Kinyua (2013), social media technologies are becoming increasingly popular among businesses as a valuable tool for communication. With proper application, these technologies greatly enhance a company's online visibility through efficient advertising. According to Mandal (2011), companies utilize social media platforms to facilitate targeted connections with individuals with similar commercial objectives. Additionally, social media interactions might draw in those with dissimilar interests.

### 2.9.1 The contribution or influence of social media in the hospitality Industry

Regarding tourism and hospitality, social media has prompted a power shift from accommodation brands to customers. Before social media, consumer decision-making would be limited to information given by travel agents and brochures. This has changed with the arrival of social media and how individuals choose and purchase tourism services (Varkaris & Neuhofer, 2017).

Given that individuals are bound to believe the opinions of friends and role models instead of official product descriptions, social media plays a key part in selecting a vacation, arranging an outing, and choosing a place to stay. As such, social media fills in as an augmentation of word-of-mouth communication since it facilitates information exchange among consumers. Travelers frequently rely on digital WOM as the travel industry is characterized by intangibility. Fundamentally, it is not easy to have a free preliminary before really paying for products or services (Oz, 2015).



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Academics agree that tourists discover that peer reviews published across social media sites are valuable and accommodating (Stephen & Galak, 2009). Moreover, they utilize social media to share their travel experience and to review the places they stayed in (Mrozkova, 2018). In contrast to the customary word-of-mouth, the eWOM takes place. Given this reality, a negative accommodation review may impact hundreds or thousands of potential customers. Social media addresses both challenges and enormous business opportunities. For example, accommodation establishments can upgrade their services using visitor feedback or construct a positive reputation by motivating their visitors to speak well about their stay. Then again, to prevail in a crowded social media space, establishments need to foster an appropriate social media technique, look out for the most recent social media trends, and be ready to face changes in consumer behavior (Quach, 2017).

## 2.10 THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN THE ACCOMMODATION SECTOR

Social media is progressively becoming part of political strategies, national defense methods, public policy, advertising, item management, and intra-organization interaction. Since the significant assignment of promoting as a device is used to inform customers about the company's items, who they are, and what they provide, social promotion plays a natural role in the promotion.

- Social media makes organizations "genuine" to customers. Assuming they need individuals to follow them, they need not just talk about the newest information item but also discuss the character of the information with them.
- Social media can affiliate people with colleagues who may be serving a similar concentration on industry.
- Social media can be used to connect and give relevant information that consumers search for.

## 2.11 SELECTING APPROPRIATE MARKETING CHANNELS

There are many ways to begin an online conversation with a customer. The main steps of doing social media marketing include choosing the most reasonable social media. There are many social media platforms, and their number is still growing. As such,



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companies must be accessible to all of them and deliver a steady flow of content to their followers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). There are a couple of procedures for breaking down and browsing a staggering amount of accessible social media tools.

Nevertheless, keeping up with social media presence on Facebook alone is out of the question since being active on several platforms increases the company's chances of reaching its target customers (Funk, 2013). Nga Ling and Guillet suggest that establishments should observe which social media their rivals use and consider embracing similar platforms. Subsequently, an establishment could get an equivalent opportunity to connect with forthcoming customers (2011).

The proper selection of social media channels to market tourist accommodation through social media depends on several factors, such as the target audience, budget, marketing goals, and brand image. Below are some steps that helps in choosing the proper social media channels:

- Identify primary target audience: Understanding the ideal interest group is pivotal in choosing social media channels. Ability to know which web-based entertainment stages are ideal for the interest group.
- Set marketing goals: Before choosing social media channels, distinguish promoting objectives. One should like to increment brand mindfulness, drive site traffic, or increment appointments. Different virtual entertainment stages have various qualities, so select the ones that align with one's advertising objectives.
- Analyse budget and resources: One's financial plan and resources will likewise be essential in choosing social media channels. One must decide on the amount spent via social media advertising and the assets accessible to make and oversee content.
- Evaluate social media channels: Once a target audience has been identified, marketing goals, and budget, then evaluate the different social media channels based on their demographics, features, and advertising options. For example, Facebook reaches a broad audience through its comprehensive advertising options. Instagram is visually driven and effective for engaging with younger



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audiences. LinkedIn is effective for business-to-business marketing, and YouTube is great for video content.

- Monitor and adjust: Whenever social media channels are chosen; one needs to make screen exhibitions and change the methodology accordingly. One must constantly track measurements, break down commitment rates, and change content to enhance the exhibition.

Choosing the proper social media channels is essential for the outcome of accommodation advertising endeavors. It is essential to choose channels that align with the ideal interest group, advertising objectives, financial plan, and assets and to screen and constantly change one's procedure for ideal outcomes.

## 2.12 SIGNIFICANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING IN ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS

One of the most competitive fields of the service sector is the tourism industry, which requires viable management of natural, monetary, and human resources (HR) existing in the country (Cant & Van Rooyen, 2017). The essence of successful marketing is to provide sufficient value to gain loyal, long-term customers. There are various kinds of instruments in marketing that aim to achieve consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Social media is a crucial apparatus for achievement in business today. As of now, individuals are discussing their business using social media. Organizations can set up good relations with their customers. Utilization of the Internet for booking will, in general, be higher in countries that have high Internet entrance levels (Charita, 2015).

Marketers realize that social media should be a ground-breaking approach to produce feasible, positive verbal promotions. Significantly, marketers select the correct social media platforms, design the correct message, and engage the right users to spread that message to actualize an effective campaign. A tourism industry team must work daily with various collaborative media for the tourism industry, attracting millions of guests from various countries. According to Funk (2013), Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Podcasts, and



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Travel Shake are the most popular and compelling social media networks for marketing in the tourism and hospitality industries.

## 2.13 FAVOURABLE PLATFORMS FOR ACCOMMODATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Social media for accommodation has many advantages. With the right strategy, all social media platforms can open the booking capability of accommodation establishments by motivating users to travel. The section below provides a brief overview of various social media platforms that can be used to promote tourist accommodation.

### 2.13.1. Facebook marketing

Patel (2022) points out that “Facebook marketing” refers to various tactics you might use to advertise a company on Facebook. It consists of Facebook Groups, Marketplace, Business Pages, and Advertising on Facebook. Facebook marketing is a platform that offers a variety of highly targeted paid advertisements and organic posts, allowing brands to put their products and services in front of a massive audience. Facebook has evolved over the past ten years from being the most well-known social network to one of the largest marketplaces.

It is important to keep realistic expectations about the marketing outcomes of using Facebook (Treadaway & Smith, 2010) because the results depend on how well business firms utilize the website as a marketing tool. Presently, Facebook has two billion monthly active clients. That is why it ought to be a significant accommodation for online marketing efforts. Marketers should utilize this platform to communicate directly with their current and future customers and promote their image more effectively.

### 2.13.2 Instagram marketing

Instagram marketing is a type of social media promotion that incorporates a brand's promotion on the platform. With the aid of this social media network, businesses may



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reach a sizable audience, build brand recognition, and enhance sales (Bevins,2014). According to statistics from extrabrains.net 2016, 76% of voyagers post photographs of their outings, so Instagram has incredible potential as a marketing tool for the accommodation business. Instagram is the ideal platform to show an organization's offers by posting lovely photographs of rooms, food, services, facilities, nearby attractions, and tourist destinations. This social network depends on visual content, so posting excellent spending time areas is essential. Instagram marketing is an effective way to advertise a product, as it is said that a picture speaks a thousand words (Silva et al., 2013).

According to Barnes (2014), as cited in (Dennis, 2014), marketers can add a human touch to their marketing campaigns by introducing the backstage and posting photographs of individuals that run the accommodation managers, chefs, and other employees. This way, the marketer can construct more personal relations with their guests. Besides, Instagram is an ideal place to feature client-produced content. Marketers should urge their visitors to post photographs and share their stories with a committed hashtag. Hashtags are vital because they help people find the topics they are interested in, simplify browsing the platform, and help them discover motivation.

### 2.13.3 Twitter marketing

Launched in 2006, Twitter is the most mainstream micro-blogging site worldwide and is in third position among the most visited social media networks after Facebook and MySpace (Abbott, 2009). Twitter is an incredible social media channel for client engagement and an extraordinary spot for exhibiting user-generated content. Twitter can be utilized to advise visitors about current events and connect with them during their visits. Many accommodation establishments use Twitter to direct client services by responding to visitor inquiries.

The use of Twitter as a marketing tool is a new idea. It has become a popular strategy for following and guiding clients' attention toward specific tourism products and services. It allows establishments to pay attention to their clients and follow up on their comments.



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The popularity of Twitter is identified by its low entry costs, effortlessness of utilization, broadband accessibility, and the developing number of individuals who feel comfortable using new strategies to communicate (Hay, 2010).

Twitter is likewise viewed as a social sharing site, which implies organizations might utilize it to discuss issues straightforwardly with main interest groups (Minazzi, 2015). Twitter, as a marketing instrument, lends itself to serve four needs: (a) market research and feedback generation, (b) exposure, branding, and reputation management, (c) business networking, and (d) customer service and customer relationship (Thoring, 2011). Most establishments and establishment chains do not use Twitter successfully to market their services (Hay, 2010).

## 2.14 ADVANTAGES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

With the growth of digital marketing, many companies are now looking at how social media may help them promote their products and services to both potential and existing customers, Watson et al. (2002), quoted by Sheth and Sharma (2005).

### 2.14.1 Social media marketing benefits and drawbacks

#### 2.14.1.1 Cost-related

According to Weinberg (2009), the main advantage of social media marketing is cost related. The financial barriers to social media marketing are low compared to others. Unlike traditional marketing campaigns that can cost millions of dollars, many social media platforms, including those for corporate usage, are free. Businesses may execute highly effective social media marketing campaigns on a limited budget. Reaching the organization's intended audience with minimal to no financial outlay has significant advantages, and the audience who wants the organization's information voluntarily joins or follows the organization.



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2.14.1.2 Social interaction

One of the most notable new media phenomena is how it has increased and created new forms of social interaction. People spend more than a quarter of their time online involved in communication activities (e.g., emails, IM chat, and social networks), which is equivalent to the total time spent online for general leisure and entertainment (Riegner, 2007) as cited by (Hill & Moran, 2011). New media has changed how frequently people communicate online, increased the number of people they may communicate with, and created new channels for behavior modification (Burmaster, 2009). Consumer behavior studies show that people are more likely to follow online advice and information and spend more time on websites offering third-party ratings (Huang et al., 2009).

2.14.1.3 Interactivity

As observed by Steuer (1992), cited by Polit, Hill & Moran (2011), unlike watching television or listening to the radio, the interactivity of new media lets consumers become more than just passive recipients of stimulation. One of the defining features of contemporary media technologies is interactivity, which enables better information availability and improved user control over and involvement with social media content. (Fiore et al. 2005) cited by (Hill & Moran, 2011).

Interactivity depends on the context. In an online social networking context, interactivity refers to a user-centered interaction with machines, messages, or other users, focusing on the experiential aspect of the networking process (Liu & Shrum, 2002) cited by (Hill & Moran, 2011). Customers can take part in personal social networking by choosing the content, timing, and communication act thanks to this user interaction. Several social media platforms give users the authority to act and engage in two-way communication (Li et al., 2002).

2.14.1.4 Targeted market



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With social media, marketers may target audiences and customers based on the specific interests of site visitors and what their friends enjoy. Marketers can efficiently target the consumers most interested in their products and services using "smart" marketing and advertising. Also, social networking makes it possible for word-of-mouth to promote goods more effectively than only advertising can (Hill et al., 2006).

2.14.1.5 Customer service

Customer service is another crucial area for social media marketing (Helmsley, 2000). Sometimes, website designers cannot avoid a certain degree of complexity in the architecture of a website. Therefore, it is necessary to have a thoughtful customer service system. Links to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and links to online representatives are helpful to assist customers in the selection or buying process. A marketer should offer more than just online assistance. It is often more convenient for customers to call a company. Therefore, using a toll-free phone number for customers should be considered (Gommans et al., 2001).

### 2.14.2 Benefits of using social media as a promotional mix element

Like individuals using social media applications, businesses have recognized opportunities to communicate and engage with their target market through these modern means. There are certain benefits of utilizing social media applications for marketing purposes (Haataja, 2010, p. 22; Marken, 2009, p. 10; Powys, 2012, p. 2) and these are:

- Social media is an effective method of building and maintaining relationships with customers or potential customers through continuous and informative communications.
- Owing to the two-way nature of social media, it is possible to answer customers' questions and pose questions to consumers that may advise businesses about new products or future marketing strategies.
- Viral promotion allows information to be disseminated to customers much faster. If many people pass the advertisement on to friends, the growth will snowball (like



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traditional word-of-mouth). If this does not happen, the marketing campaign can become stagnant and ineffective.

- Social media can provide a cost-effective way of promoting and creating brand or image awareness.
- It provides a view of consumers' perceptions, which allows companies to see future trends or barriers.
- Word-of-mouth has incredible control over perception and acceptance.
- User community sites and blogs provide valuable user experience and opinions.
- It can generate effective virtual campaigns for products.
- It provides a unique opportunity to connect with colleagues and customers to gain feedback and learn from it.
- Social media allows fast, flexible, and effective ways to reach big audiences and keep the organization up to date regarding environmental changes and developments in customer behavior patterns.
- Social media applications allow personal contact and relationship-building with customers.

Thus, the advantages of social media include Item achievement and interest, customer interactions through transactions, referrals, and recognition management.

### 2.14.3 Disadvantages of using social media as a promotional mix element

There are also certain disadvantages regarding using social media applications as a promotional mix element and Haataja (2010:24) identified the following disadvantages:

- Negative remarks, reviews, or feedback posted on social media applications can harm the organization's image.
- Marketers and organizations cannot control the content being published on the social media website. In addition, complicated trademark and user rights issues can arise.



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- Social media must be integrated closely with other marketing channels and then supported by the whole marketing strategy.
- When utilizing social media as an additional element of the promotional mix, it is difficult for organizations to measure and interpret the effectiveness of social media.
- Consumer behaviors and expectations are changing rapidly due to the internet and social media. This can challenge marketers, as they must continuously adapt their marketing strategy.

## 2.15 THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA USE ON ENTITY PERFORMANCE – HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Tourism businesses use social networking sites to achieve a better position in the competition for the grace of tourists. For example, making a Facebook fan page empowers different tourism organizations to reach scores of individuals effectively, inexpensively, and rapidly, communicate with past and possible guests, go associations with fans, or even open doors for holding their settlement on the page. Everybody adores sharing experiences about their excursion.

Past guests' positive experiences and stories are genuine third-party contributions that may encourage others to visit. One of the activities that community members of Tripadvisor can do is post reviews about hotels, attractions, and restaurants. By analyzing the remarks on the website page, businesses can better understand what their visitors like and dislike about them and even their competitors. This can help organizations strengthen shortcomings and help keep up and improve what guests like (Gergely Rathonyi, 2013). It is worth noting that some of these factors may be relevant depending on the accommodation's marketing strategy, target audience, and the social media platforms they choose to use (Gursoy et al., 2019).

Table 2.2: Positive and negative impacts of social media marketing on accommodation establishments



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| Positive impacts | Negative impacts |
|---|---|
| Increased brand awareness and visibility. | Potential for negative online reviews |
| Ability to reach a wider audience. | Difficulty in measuring ROI |
| Cost-effective compared to traditional advertising. | Limited control over user-generated content |
| Personalized communication with customers | Risk of negative publicity going viral |
| Ability to generate user-generated content through contests and promotions. | Potential for negative social media backlash |
| Increased customer engagement and loyalty | Risk of social media accounts being hacked or impersonated. |
| Opportunity to build relationships with influencers and bloggers. | Over-reliance on social media as a marketing channel |
| Real-time feedback from customers to improve services. | Difficulty in keeping up with changing algorithms and trends. |
| Ability to target specific demographics and interests. | Risk of appearing as spam or intrusive |
| Ability to track and analyze social media metrics. | Risk of privacy breaches and data misuse |
| Increased website traffic and bookings | Difficulty in standing out from competitors in crowded platforms |



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For accommodation establishments, social media marketing may be a very effective tool, but a calculated strategy is needed to maximize the benefits and minimize the negative aspects. The accommodation business may succeed with social media marketing with consistent monitoring, engagement, and adaptability. While social media has many benefits for accommodation establishments, managing social media carefully and strategically is essential to avoiding problems and maximizing the advantages of online interaction. Some of these factors may be more or less relevant depending on the accommodation's marketing strategy, target audience, and the social media platforms they use (Gursoy et al., 2019). Given the above discussion, this study hypothesizes that: H1: *Social media use is positive and significantly related to the generation of bookings.*

## 2.16 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING STRATEGIES AND BRAND AWARENESS

According to (Puga, 2017), tourists use social media to read reviews and request accommodation recommendations when deciding about their travel destinations, as such accommodations need to focus on social media.

### 2.16.1 Reasons for active accommodation social media pages

#### 2.16.1.1 Showcase brand

Social media networks can help spread the word about accommodation establishments. Marketers can tell potential clients who they are by what they post. The advertiser can make and show photographs, recordings, and other substances that recognize the brand.

#### 2.16.1.2 Create and enhance relationships

Marketers can connect with their target audience by sending appropriate content. Individuals might see that the content matches their interests and book accommodation. Sigala (2003) states that engaging with customers and meeting their demands is essential



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in this new paradigm. The types of programs that are accessible for which email may be a delivery method are what establish and maintain relationships with the clients, not straight email itself. According to Winer (2001), a complete Customer Relationship Management (CRM) is made up of a variety of interconnected elements, including customer service (numbers, faxback/customer comment cards, email, FAQ), frequency, loyalty and reward programs, customization, and community building (e.g., virtual communities).

2.16.1.3 Reach new customers

Long, Tellefsen, and Lichtenthal (2007) state that new potential customers have traditionally derived from various sources, e.g., suppliers, dealers, non-competing salespeople, and satisfied buyers. Buyers might also identify themselves as they are responding to a company's offline or online marketing activities. Tourists trust organizations on social media networks with billions of users so that marketers are sure to find people who fit their target audience demographics. There are likewise many leads, and the marketer can set up ads that target genders, ages, and locations to get new and loyal clients.

2.16.1.4 Get direct bookings

Years ago, vacationers mainly depended on travel agencies to find accommodation. Today, travelers are entirely independent and very well informed when choosing accommodation. If the marketer associates with potential customers, they are bound to book directly with the marketer. Positive and negative customer reviews significantly impact hotels' actions since they raise awareness of the establishment and alter guests' perceptions of it (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). Marketers can use social media to inform followers about deals and help them remember the advantages of direct bookings.

2.16.1.5 Give value



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It is critical to consider social media platforms as promotional tools for accommodation and as places to provide customer service. If someone mentions the accommodation with a tag on social media, they expect a response. If there are any bad reviews or comments, marketers can take a few measures to keep the discussion from turning negative. Next, advertisers should zero in on featuring lovely encounters and visitor stories since they can assist with driving income. Social media helps customers enjoy new benefits that have never been available, such as collecting pre-departure information about the properties, reading online reviews from previous guests, and engaging in two-way communication where they can connect directly with the hosts (Zhang et al., 2019). Based on the above discussion, the study further hypothesizes that:

H0: *Social media use does not predict brand awareness.*

*H2: Social media use predicts brand awareness.*

## 2.17 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has reviewed all the relevant theoretical literature used to find out how the accommodation sector markets its establishments using social media. Choosing the proper social media channels is crucial for the organization's advertising endeavors. Social media is a crucial apparatus for achievement in business today. The tourism industry team works daily with various collaborative media for the tourism industry, attracting millions of guests from various countries. Accommodation establishments have recognized opportunities to communicate and engage with their target market through these modern means. The following chapter discusses the study's hypotheses, methodology, and analysis.



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# CHAPTER 3

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

A research methodology is the data collection process and the analysis and interpretation of the collected data (Creswell, 2014). This chapter describes and discusses the research design, study area, study population, sampling method and procedure, the validity and reliability of the study, data collection instruments used, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

## 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Burns and Bush (2010, p. 148) explain a research design as a detailed outline of the procedures that were followed in a research effort to achieve the set aim and objectives. It relates to specified research methods that were followed in the collection and analysis of data. Tripathy and Kumar (2017, p.27) describe a research design in terms of the justification for a research study, which sheds light on the reasons for and methods used



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in the research. It shows how most of the essential components of the research study, namely the samples or groups, measurements, treatments, or programs, collaborate to try to answer the research questions.

For this study the researcher used a descriptive research design. Polit and Beck (2008:752) view a descriptive research design as applying to research that has as its main objectives an accurate description of the characteristics of the persons, situations or groups under study. Shield and Hassan (2006:313) see a descriptive research design in terms of collecting data and characteristics about the population being studied. In this study the researcher chose a descriptive approach to the data collection

The researcher chose a descriptive research design in this study since it is a valuable tool for exploring new topics, coming up with theories, and obtaining preliminary knowledge before starting more formal and meticulous investigations.

**3.2.1 Research Approaches: Quantitative research**

Quantitative data often consists of participant responses that are coded, categorized, and reduced to numbers so that these data may be manipulated for statistical analysis (Creswell, 2014). Easterby-Smith (2015) concurs that quantitative research involves the numerical representation and manipulation of observations to describe and explain the phenomena that the observations reflect, and it is categorized as a descriptive study. The quantitative research approach deals with data collection and data analysis procedures, such as using questionnaires and statistics or graphs that use statistical models and numerical data.

This study used a quantitative approach to ensure the survey is dependable and factual. Futhermore Cooper and Schindler (2011) stated that quantification allows for more precision in analysis and ease in summarizing data and making inferences. The results are presented in tables, graphs, or other forms of statistics, and these methods of data presentation allow for objectivity. Saunders (2012) asserts that quantitative research



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generates statistics through large-scale survey research using questionnaires or structured interviews.

### 3.2.2 Study area

A study area is a particular area within the field of research that researchers use to carry out research to answer specific research questions or objectives (Creswell, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2015). A research project's boundaries and scope are greatly influenced by the definition of the subject area, which also provides background information for data collection, analysis, and interpretation (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This study was conducted in Vhembe District, focusing on all tourist accommodation establishments. Vhembe District Vhembe is one of the five districts of the Limpopo province of South Africa. It is the country's northernmost district and shares its northern border with Beitbridge district in Zimbabwe and on the east with Gaza Province in Mozambique.




**Figure 3. 1: Map showing placement of Vhembe District**

Source: [www.mapsofvhembedistrct](www.mapsofvhembedistrct)



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## 3.3 POPULATION

A study population concentrates on groups of individuals or organizations inside a specific group for a review with normal, restricting qualities or attributes. The research population alludes to people selected for a review, which the researcher plans to generate information about (Jensen & Laurie, 2016, p. 88). The research population is the complete set of individuals or objects with some common characteristics from which the sample is selected.

This study's population comprised all the tourism convenience foundations, barring lodgings in Vhembe District, active on social media and available for Google searches, including booking.com websites. The target population of this study is Vhembe District, as it has different types of attractions for tourists visiting tourist' accommodations. The attractions are within them, while other accommodations are situated around those attractions or situated from a distance. In the research study, the targeted accommodation establishments include hotels, B&Bs, guest houses, lodges, game lodges, and resorts. The established sample will be the operating accommodations with active social media platforms.

### 3.3.1 Sampling

Sekerani and Bougie (2010:296) characterize a sample as a subset of the examined populace. Besides, they add that a more prominent sample size refers to more reliability of the findings from the study. Sekaran and Bougie (2010, p. 296) express that an appropriate sample size should be between 30 and 500 respondents. Numerous sampling techniques exist, each with unique benefits and drawbacks, such as stratified, convenience, random, and snowball sampling. The researcher used probability sampling and its sub-type simple random sampling for this study.

### 3.3.2 Sampling methods



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Probability sampling and its sub-type simple random sampling were used to achieve the study's objectives. The researcher used simple random sampling to select the participants for the study. Singh (2003, p. 71) states that simple random sampling is the simplest and most common method of sampling, in which the sample is selected unit by unit, with an equal probability of selection for each unit at each draw. The sampling method was selected because it enables researchers to draw reliable statistical conclusions about the population from the characteristics of the sample. This is essential for generating trustworthy conclusions and extrapolating research results to a larger population.

### 3.3.3 Sample size

Sample size refers to the number of units selected for the research study (Burns & Bush, 2010, p. 60). Factors such as the precision of data collection instruments and population heterogeneity impacted the sample size. Without a municipality database, the researcher used Google search to determine how many accommodation establishments are available in Vhembe District. According to the findings on Google search and booking.com website, the estimated total number of accommodation establishments is 207. One hundred and seven (107) was sampled as the study's sample size, the establishments sampled were active on more than one social media platforms hence they were selected o r sampled. The established sample consisted of accommodations operating with active social media platforms.

### 3.3.4 Unit analysis

Cooper and Schindler (2011:166) characterize a unit of analysis as the component being considered and in which the researcher concludes how to break down information of the study. For example, individuals, gatherings, or people could be a unit of analysis in a review. In this research, this unit of analysis will contain a group of people. These individuals incorporate accommodation establishments around the Vhembe District municipality.



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### 3.3.5 Data collection

Data collection gathers and measures information on variables of interest in an established, systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes (Creswell, 2017, p. 201). On the other hand, Sekaran and Bougie (2016:156) define data collection as collecting information from all the relevant sources to find answers to the research problem, test the hypotheses, and evaluate the outcome.

There is primary and secondary data collection for research; for secondary data, the researcher uses existing data found in written documents such as books, professional journals, newsletters, government documents, reports, and information from the internet. The quantitative research approach deals with data collection and data analysis procedures, such as using questionnaires and statistics or graphs that use statistical models and numerical data. The study used a quantitative research approach. The researcher distributed questionnaires to the selected targeted accommodation establishments around Vhembe District. The researcher visited the accommodation establishments to administer or collect data for the study.

## 3.4 VALIDITY

Sekaran and Bougie (2010: 156) define validity as a measure of how well a particular concept was measured with the research instrument. All efforts were made to ensure that the questions in the questionnaire are constructed in line with the research objectives, research literature, and conceptually sound results obtained by other scholars about social media and its influence on the tourism industry.

## 3.5 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

According to Saunders *et al.* (2007: 103), the research instruments that can be used for primary data collection are interviews, observations, questionnaires, standardized tests,



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archival records, and documentation. For this study, the research instrument developed to obtain primary data will be questionnaires. Zikmud and Babin (2013: 280) support using questionnaires in self-administered surveys such as this one.

### 3.5.1 Questionnaires

Polit and Beck (2014, p. 389) refer to the questionnaire as a document to gather self-report data via self-administration of questions. The questionnaire contained questions and other items designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis (Barbie & Mouton, 2007, p. 246). The researcher visited the accommodation establishments to administer the questionnaire and collect data for the study. The questionnaire contained seven five-point Likert scale questions. The first section of the survey focused on demographics profiles. The next section focused on the types of establishments. The following section focused on operational years of the businesses and different toes of social media platforms, followed by the effectiveness of traditional marketing and rating of social media by orgarnisations.

## 3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Wilson (2010: 200) supplements that data analysis is the organization of the research data systematically used and the use of that data to test the research hypotheses. The study used descriptive and simple linear regression analysis. As per Kotz and Johnson (2005), descriptive analysis entails enumerating and characterizing the principal characteristics of a dataset without drawing conclusions or verifying theories. The distributions' mean, median, mode, standard deviation, range, and frequency are all measured. According to Montgomery, Peck, and Vining (2012), simple linear regression analysis is a statistical technique used to fit a linear model to the data to investigate the relationship between two continuous variables. Its main goal is to find the best-fitting line that minimizes the discrepancy between the dependent variable's observed and forecasted values.



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The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software (SPSS)) was used to analyze data. Descriptive statistics described the basic features of the data in the study, which provided simple summaries of the sample and measures.

## 3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

This study required the participation of tourism accommodation establishments, and a letter informing them of the reasons for conducting this study was shown to them. Participants were told about the aim of this research and that the results may be shown to interested parties. Ethical standards were be observed in this study. No one was forced to participate in the survey if he/she was unwilling to do so.The study was guided by the University of Venda's ethics research guidelines. A completed clearance ethics form was submitted to the University of Venda in the School of Management Sciences, Research Faculty, and Innovation Committee for ethical approval. This was to confirm or ensure that the information collected from individuals remained confidential. The ethical clearance certificate was obtained with the ethical clearance no. FMCL//TOUR/01/1308.

## 3.8 ANONYMITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

According to Crow and Wiles (2008:1), anonymity and confidentiality refer to the ability of the researcher to safeguard sensitive information and the names of the respondents. Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured in this study to keep the questionnaires away from the public and by not asking the respondents to divulge their names. As indicated by Leedy and Ormond (2014:109-110), if a specific individual's conduct is portrayed inside and out in the exploration report, he or she ought to be given an alias and other insignificant, irrelevant detail that may give away the individual's identity ought to be changed to guarantee secrecy. In this study, respondents were assured that their identity and the information they give will remain confidential.

## 3.9 CHAPTER SUMMARY



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This chapter outlined how the research will be conducted, illustrating the process used to select the participants, the methods used to collect data, and the approach used in analyzing the texts. The researcher used a quantitative method, with questionnaires distributed to the sampled accommodation establishments. The next chapter presents and analyses the results of the study.

# CHAPTER 4:
# DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS REPORTING

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the study's results. The study sought to explore the different social media platforms used by tourism accommodation owners to promote their establishments, to determine whether there is a difference in the selection of social media platforms used to promote businesses by accommodation owners, and the value of social media in promoting tourism accommodation businesses. To achieve this, the study relies on descriptive statistics, and for reporting purposes, frequency tables, means, and standard deviation are used to determine the meaning of the data.

## 4.2 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Frequency tables, means, and standard deviation are the descriptive statistics that will be reported and interpreted in this section about the study's objectives. The study's results are reported in sequence following the outline of the research instrument.

### 4.2.1 The role of the business owner/manager

The researcher sought to find out the role's participants play as far as the business is concerned. Results in Table 4.1 reveal that approximately 45% of the participants played the role of owner/manager, followed by 21% who played the role of marketing



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representatives and another 21% who played the role of HR, while 14% were in the role of front office bearers.

Table 4. 1: Participants' role in the business

| **Role** | **Frequency** | **Percent** | **Valid percent** | **Cumulative percent** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Owner/manager | 48 | 44.9 | 44.9 | 44.9 |
| Marketing Representative | 22 | 20.6 | 20.6 | 65.4 |
| HR rep | 22 | 20.6 | 20.6 | 86.0 |
| Front Office | 15 | 14.0 | 14.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.2 Tourism business type

The researcher sought to find out what type of tourism establishments/businesses were being run by respondents. The results in Table 4.2 reveal that about 28% of the selected establishments are lodges, followed by hotels, with 27% and 22.4% being guest houses and Bed and Breakfast (B&B), respectively.

Table 4. 2: Type of tourism establishment

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hotel | 29 | 27.1 | 27.1 | 27.1 |
| Guest house | 24 | 22.4 | 22.4 | 49.5 |



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bed and breakfast | 24 | 22.4 | 22.4 | 72.0 |
| Lodge | 30 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 100.1 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.3 Operational years of the enterprise

The study was interested in understanding how long the tourism business has been operating. The results in Table 4.3 show that 36% of the businesses were operating for 11-15 years, followed by businesses that were operating for 6-10 years with 32%, followed by 29% of businesses that have been operational for more than 16 years and 2% of business that have been on business between 1-5 years.

Table 4. 3: Operational years of the enterprise

| Number of years in operation | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1-5 | 2 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 1.9 |
| 6-10 | 34 | 31.8 | 31.8 | 33.6 |
| 11-15 | 39 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 70.1 |
| > 16 | 31 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 99.1 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.4 Social media usage: Formerly Twitter and now known as X

The researcher sought to know if the tourism establishments used one of the social media platforms, Twitter, now known as X. The results in Table 4.4 show that approximately 58% of the tourism businesses do not use X. In comparison, 41% indicated that they use X. These results are contrary to the views of Hay (2010), who noted that the popularity of Twitter is identified with its low entry costs, effortlessness of utilization, broadband



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accessibility, and the developing number of individuals who feel comfortable using new strategies to communicate. The results show that accommodation providers use X needs at a higher level. In this regard, as barriers to contact between individuals and organizations began to dissolve, X emerged as a medium that increased the effectiveness of this open connection (Atadil et al., 2010). Brief and direct messages enabled businesses to disseminate any significant event in real time, keeping customers and the public updated (Bigne et al., 2018). Martinez-Villa (2012) noted that this rapid communication led to the emergence of microblogging, an additional subset of blogging, as a crucial instrument in strategic social media marketing.

Table 4. 4: X (formerly Twitter) usage

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 62 | 57.9 | 57.9 | 57.9 |
| Yes | 44 | 41.1 | 41.1 | 99.1 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.5 Social media usage: Facebook

The researcher sought to know if the respondents use Facebook, another social media platform that clients widely use. The results shown in Table 4.5 show that approximately 98% of businesses use Facebook as a marketing tool, while less than 1% do not use it. Treadaway and Smith (2010) stated that Facebook users make a more significant number of posts about travel than about some other occasions in their lives; Facebook has billions of active clients. That is why it should show a significant slice of online marketing efforts. Marketers should utilize this platform to communicate directly with their current and future customers and promote their image more effectively. The high usage of Facebook by tourist accommodation providers concurs with the views of Chan and Guillet (2011) and



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Pempek et al. (2009), who noted that Facebook evolved as an alternative web-based platform businesses used to answer customer inquiries, advertise items, and provide information.

The results also align with the claim by Hsu (2012), who argued that in just five years, Facebook rose to the top of the social networking scene, making it possible for hotels to cater to a sizable global clientele through a single platform. Furthermore, the platform demonstrated the ability to convert many contented clients into devoted ones (Capatina et al., 2018). The high usage of Facebook by these accommodation providers can also be linked to the suggestions by Noone et al. (2011), who projected that posting customized links on Facebook that helped bring prospective customers to the hotel's website or booking engine, resulting in a rise in direct bookings, a decrease in the need for intermediaries, and financial gains for the company.

Table 4. 5: Facebook usage

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 1 | .9 | .9 | .9 |
| Yes | 105 | 98.1 | 98.1 | 99.1 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.6 Instagram usage

The researcher sought to know if the tourism establishments selected to use Instagram social media platforms. The results shown in Table 4.5 show that approximately 49% of tourism establishments use Instagram as a marketing platform to communicate with customers, followed by establishments that do not use Instagram as a marketing tool 51%. The findings about the usage of Instagram conflict with the findings of Smith's (2018) book "Instagram Abroad: Performance, Consumption and Colonial Narrative in Tourism," which claimed that Instagram is one of the most widely used and rapidly expanding social



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media platforms worldwide. Smith (2018) further noted that Instagram gives travel journals an additional layer that appeals to many senses in addition to travel writing.

Table 4. 6: Instagram

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | No | 55 | 51.4 | 51.4 | 51.4 |
| | Yes | 52 | 48.6 | 48.6 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.7 TripAdvisor as a marketing platform

The researcher sought to find out if the tourism establishments selected the use of the following social media platform, TripAdvisor. The results in Table 4.6 show that approximately all the tourism establishment participants use TripAdvisor, with a 100% result. These findings are congruent with Sanlioz Ozgen and Kozak (2015), who claimed that TripAdvisor is the most popular travel website worldwide, operating in more than 45 countries. It is also noted that in 2018, there were eight million registered tourist businesses (hotels, airlines, restaurants, and attractions) on TripAdvisor, with over 702 million reviews, and the platform was available in 49 countries (TripAdvisor, 2019a). These results also coincide with those of Conrady and Bucks (2012), who contested that TripAdvisor was the first pre-travel planning tool used by the growing number of internet-dependent travelers, which opened the door for social media to penetrate the tourism industry. These results are also supported by Law (2006), who characterized TripAdvisor as a social media platform offering objective suggestions for hotels and other tourism-related enterprises. Jeacle and Carter (2011) classified it as a traveler's forum for experience sharing. On the other hand, TripAdvisor was acknowledged by Leung et al. (2013) as a tool that hotel companies have started to use to attract new customers and obtain a competitive edge. These days, this platform hosts content created by clients and business-related data and allows users to compare data from 200 booking engines



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(TripAdvisor, 2019a). This expands the services related to social media and shows how quickly social media is becoming the dominant force in the travel industry.

Table 4. 7: TripAdvisor

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

### 4.2.8 Booking.com marketing platform

The researcher sought to find out if the tourism establishments selected the use of the following social media platform, Booking.com. The results in Table 4.6 show that approximately all the tourism establishments participants use Booking.com with results of 100%.

Table 4.8: Booking.com

| Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

### 4.2.9 Duration of using social media daily

The research wanted to know how frequently the participants use social media to interact or to post about their services to customers on their social media pages. Results in Table 4.8 reveal that approximately 50% of the participants spend 121-240 minutes, which is 3 hours per day, followed by 39% of participants who are on social media for about 30-60 minutes, which in an hour, followed by participants who are on social media daily for less than 39 minutes, while 8% of participants are on social media for more than 240 minutes per day. These results align with the views of Huang et al. (2009), who noted that



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consumer behavior studies show that people are more likely to follow advice and information given online. They spend more time on websites that offer third-party ratings.

Table 4. 9: Duration of social media

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| < 30 minutes | 13 | 12.1 | 12.1 | 12.1 |
| 30-60 | 32 | 29.9 | 29.9 | 42.1 |
| 121-240 | 53 | 49.5 | 49.5 | 91.6 |
| 121-240 | 9 | 8.4 | 8.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.10 Engagement on social media with customers

The researcher wanted to know how often the participants engage/follow their customers on social media platforms. Results in Table 4.9 reveal that approximately 39% of the participants use social media very often to engage with customers, followed by those who often engage with customers with 36%, followed by 22% who are occasionally engaged with customers. In comparison, 3% of the participants rarely follow or engage their customers on social media platforms.

Table 4. 10: Social media engagements

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rarely | 3 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| occasionally | 23 | 21.5 | 21.5 | 24.3 |
| Often | 39 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 60.7 |



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| very often | 42 | 39.3 | 39.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.11 Duration of content posting on social media

The researcher sought to determine how often the participants post content on social media platforms. Results in Table 4.10 reveal that approximately 39% post content once a day, followed by 22% of participants who post once a week, followed by 17% where participants post a few times a week, followed by 12% of participants that post multiple times a day while 10% shows that they post once a week.

Table 4. 11: Content posting

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| < once a week | 23 | 21.5 | 21.5 | 21.5 |
| once a week | 11 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 31.8 |
| few times a week | 18 | 16.8 | 16.8 | 48.6 |
| once a day | 42 | 39.3 | 39.3 | 87.9 |
| multiple times a day | 13 | 12.1 | 12.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.12 Photo posting

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism businesses that are being targeted use social media platforms to post photos of their establishments and services. Results in



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Table 4.11 reveal that approximately 100% of the participants use social media platforms to post photos of their establishments.

Table 4. 8: Photo posting

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

### 4.2.13 Video posting

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism businesses that are being targeted use social media platforms to post videos of their establishments and services. Results in Table 4.11 reveal that approximately 100% of the participants use social media platforms to post videos of their establishments.

Table 4. 9: Video posting

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

### 4.2.14 Guest reviews

The researcher sought to determine if tourism business establishments post guest reviews on social media platforms. Results in Table 4.13 reveal that approximately 99% post guest reviews, while 0.9% of the other business establishments do not. These results are supported by the views of Gergely and Rathonyi (2013), who contested that past guests' positive experiences and stories are genuine third-party contributions that may encourage others to visit.



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Table 4. 10: Guest reviews

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 1 | .9 | .9 | .9 |
| Yes | 99.1 | 99.1 | 99.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.15 Local Attractions Posting

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism establishments post about the attractions found around or within the area of the accommodation establishment. The results shown in Table 4.14 reveal that 60% of the establishments do not post about attractions around them, while 40% show that they do post about local attractions on their social media platforms.

Table 4. 11: Local attractions

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 64 | 59.8 | 59.8 | 59.8 |
| Yes | 43 | 40.2 | 40.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.16 Special offers and promotions

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism establishments post about the attractions found around or within the area of the accommodation establishment. The results shown in Table 4.15 show that 83% of the accommodations do specials and promotions of their services on social media, while 17% show that they do not post specials and promotions. These results are in line with the views of Demir and Kozak (2013: 124), who noted that businesses use social media to reach consumers, and this allows for two-way



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communication, where consumers can quickly obtain information such as brand, price, product, discount, and consumer comments.

Table 4. 12: Specials and promotions

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| no | 18 | 16.8 | 16.8 | 16.8 |
| yes | 89 | 83.2 | 83.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.17 Event posting

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism establishments post about the events at the accommodation establishment. The results in Table 4.16 reveal that 54% of the establishments do not post about events at their businesses. In comparison, 46% reveal that they post about the events happening at their businesses.

Table 4. 13: Event posting

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| no | 58 | 54.2 | 54.2 | 54.2 |
| yes | 49 | 45.8 | 45.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.18 posting of other relevant activities

The researcher sought to find out if they post other relevant activities at their accommodation establishments other than the ones known/ shown above. The results shown in Table 4.17 reveal that 97% of the accommodation establishments do post other



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relevant activities, followed by 3% that reveal that they do not post other relevant activities.

Table 4. 14: Relevant activities

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 104 | 97.2 | 97.2 | 97.2 |
| Yes | 3 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.19 Travel tips and recommendations

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism establishments recommend and give their customers traveling tips. The results shown in Table 4.18 reveal that approximately 75% of the establishments do not post about traveling tips and recommendations, while 25% reveal that they do recommend and post about traveling tips.

Table 4. 15: Travel tips

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 80 | 74.8 | 74.8 | 74.8 |
| Yes | 27 | 25.2 | 25.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.20 User-generated content

The researcher wanted to know if the businesses post user-generated content, including customer comments and experiences. The results shown in Table 4.19 reveal that 61% of the establishments post their customer's comments and experiences, while 39% reveal that they do not post about it.



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Table 4. 16: User-generated content

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 42 | 39.3 | 39.3 | 39.3 |
| Yes | 65 | 60.7 | 60.7 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.21 Responding to comments and messages

The researcher wanted to find out if the businesses respond when their customers comment on their posts and if they respond to messages sent to them by their customers. The results in Table 4.20 reveal that 96% of the businesses do respond and comment on their customers' messages, while 4% reveal that they do not respond.

Table 4. 17: Respond to comments and messages

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 4 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 |
| Yes | 103 | 96.3 | 96.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.22 Contests and give-aways runs

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism businesses run contests and giveaways for customers visiting their establishments. The results shown in Table 4.21 reveal that 64% of the establishments give giveaways and run contests, followed by 34% that do not run contests.

Table 4. 18: Contests and giveaway runs

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 36 | 33.6 | 33.6 | 33.6 |
| Yes | 71 | 66.4 | 66.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.23 Sharing of user-generated content

The researcher sought to know when the tourism businesses share the experiences of their customers who visit their establishments. Results revealed in Table 4.22 show that 74% of the establishments do not share, while 26% do post their customer's experiences and reviews.

Table 4. 19: User content sharing

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 79 | 73.8 | 73.8 | 73.8 |
| Yes | 28 | 26.2 | 26.2 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.24 Collaboration with social media influencers/brand ambassadors

The researcher wanted to determine if the participants have influencers or brand ambassadors who advertise or promote their services on social media. The results shown in Table 4.23 reveal that 70% of the establishments do not have influencers or brand ambassadors, while 30% do have ambassadors/ influencers to market their businesses on social media.

Table 4. 20: Influencers/brand ambassadors

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 75 | 70.1 | 70.1 | 70.1 |
| Yes | 32 | 29.9 | 29.9 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.25 Hosting of live videos or Q&A

The researcher wanted to know if the tourism establishments host live videos/ questions and answer sessions on social media with their followers and customers. The results in Table 4.24 reveal that 64% of the establishments do not do live videos and have question-and-answer sessions with customers. In comparison, 36% of the establishments host live videos and question-and-answer sessions.

Table 4. 21: Live video/ question and answer sessions

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | 68 | 63.6 | 63.6 | 63.6 |
| Yes | 39 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.26 Gathering of information through surveys

Gathering information from surveys and suggestion boxes helps businesses improve service delivery to meet customers' expectations. The researcher sought to determine if the participants collected or gathered customer information through surveys. The results in Table 4.25 reveal that 78% of the establishments gather information through surveys, while other participants reveal that they do not gather information by 22%.

Table 4. 22: Surveys

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|



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| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | no | 23 | 21.5 | 21.5 | 21.5 |
| | yes | 84 | 78.5 | 78.5 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.27 Sharing of accommodation-related content

Besides sharing the accommodation content, the researcher wanted to find out what other related content they have in their accommodation. The results in Table 4.26 show that 64% of the establishments do not share other related content, while 36% reveal that they share other accommodation-related content.

Table 4. 23: Accommodation related content

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | no | 68 | 63.6 | 63.6 | 63.6 |
| | yes | 39 | 36.4 | 36.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.28 Social Media Effectiveness

The researcher sought to find out how effective is social media when marketing a business. The results shown in Table 4.27 reveal that 69% of the participants say that social media platform marketing is effective. In comparison, 31% say social media platforms are very effective when marketing accommodation establishments.

Table 4. 24: Social Media Effectiveness

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|



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| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | effective | 74 | 69.2 | 69.2 | 69.2 |
| | very effective | 33 | 30.8 | 30.8 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.29 Traditional Marketing Channels Effectiveness

The researcher sought to find how effective or ineffective traditional marketing channels are when interacting with customers visiting their establishments. The results in Table 4.28 show that 69% of establishments say that traditional marketing channels are effective, followed by 31% of participants saying that they are neither effective nor practical.

Table 4. 25: Traditional marketing channels

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | neither effective nor effective | 33 | 30.8 | 30.8 | 30.8 |
| | effective | 74 | 69.2 | 69.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.30 Increased reservation/booking

The researcher wanted to find out if the participants measured the success of their marketing efforts through an increase in booking/reservations. The results in Table 4.29 reveal that all the selected participants measure the success of their marketing efforts by an increase in booking/reservations of 100%. These results align with the views of Social



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Bakers (2014), who noted that the number of social media communications prompts more visits to the brand's site, while others propose that social media commitment is inadequate in stimulating brand loyalty and sales.

Table 4. 26: Increased bookings

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | yes | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

### 4.2.31 Increase in web traffic

The researcher wanted to find out if the participants measured the success of their marketing efforts through increases in web traffic. The results in Table 4.30 reveal that 71% of the establishments measure their success through web traffic, while 29% reveal that they do not measure the success of the establishments through web traffic.

Table 4. 27: Web traffic

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | no | 31 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 29.0 |
| | yes | 76 | 71.0 | 71.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.32 Social Media Engagement Metrics

The researcher wanted to determine if the participants measured the success of their marketing efforts through social media engagement metrics. The results in Table 4.31



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reveal that 79% of the establishments measure their success through web traffic, while 21% reveal that they do not measure the establishments' success through social media engagement metrics.

Table 4. 28: Social media engagement metrics

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | no | 22 | 20.6 | 20.6 | 20.6 |
| | yes | 85 | 79.4 | 79.4 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.33 Marketing efforts through conversion rates

The researcher wanted to determine if the participants measured the success of their marketing efforts through conversion rates. The results in Table 4.32 reveal that 69% of the establishments measure their success through conversion rate, while 31% reveal that they do not measure the establishments' success through social media conversion rate.

Table 4. 29: Conversion rates

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | no | 33 | 30.8 | 30.8 | 30.8 |
| | yes | 74 | 69.2 | 69.2 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |



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### 4.2.34 Social Media marketing efforts are effective in generating bookings compared to traditional marketing channels.

The researcher sought to find out if social media marketing platforms are effective or not adequate compared to traditional marketing channels when marketing tourism businesses through social media. The results shown in Table 4.33 reveal that 39% say that social media marketing is somewhat more effective, followed by 32% who say that social media marketing is equally effective to traditional marketing channels, and 29% who say that social media marketing is significantly more effective compared to traditional marketing channels.

Table 4. 30: Social media marketing vs traditional marketing channels

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| equally effective | 34 | 31.8 | 31.8 | 31.8 |
| somewhat more effective | 42 | 39.3 | 39.3 | 71.0 |
| significantly more effective | 31 | 29.0 | 29.0 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.35 Effectiveness of traditional marketing channels in reaching the target market



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The researcher sought to find out if traditional marketing channels are effective or not effective when marketing tourism businesses to reach their target market. The results shown in Table 4.34 reveal that 100% of the participants say that traditional marking channels are neither effective.

Table 4. 31: Traditional marketing channels

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | neither effective | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

### 4.2.36 Rating of social media activities by organizations

The researcher wanted to know how participants keep up with their social media activities. Table 4.35 shows that the participants monitor their social media pages with (M = 4.50, SD = 0.705), meaning that they engage with customers and listen to what interests customers and also are updated with trends and valuable information to exceed customers' expectations, followed by mean of 4.40 where participants said that they encouraging customers/guests to leave feedback online (M = 4.42, SD= 0.727), which can also be used as positive reviews to other guest who want to visit their accommodation establishments. This is followed by participants saying they attend to customer queries and complaints (M = 4.40, SD = 0.712). In addition, participants agreed to take time to respond to questions asked by customers on their social media (M = 4.34, SD = 0.752). At the same time, other players value posting about their establishments on social media platforms (M= 4.31, SD = 0.621).

Table 4. 32: Company social media activities



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| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| I post about our company on SM | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.31 | .621 |
| I communicate with customers on SM | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.28 | .762 |
| I take time and make enough effort to reply to questions on social media | 107 | 2 | 5 | 4.34 | .752 |
| I encourage guests to leave feedback online | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.42 | .727 |
| I attend to customers' queries and complaints | 107 | 2 | 5 | 4.40 | .712 |
| I monitor our social media page performance | 107 | 2 | 5 | 4.50 | .705 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 107 | | | | |

### 4.2.37 Social Media Usage

Table 4.36 below shows the usage of social media platforms by accommodation establishments and how they rely on or use them to market their establishments. The most relevant aspects that the participants outlined was that social media allows the interaction between the establishment and its customers with a mean of 4.64, followed by social media that allows establishments to advertise through various mediums, which are Facebook, TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Twitter, and Instagram with mean 4.56. According to Table 4.36 below, the participants said that the least relevant aspect is that social media can persuade customers to purchase or book by a mean of 4.49, as most information on social media platforms may need to be more accurate. This can prevent customers from visiting participants' establishments. These results are supported by the views of Bakers (2014), who contested that businesses' use of social media communications prompts more visits to the business site.



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Table 4. 33: Social media usage

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Social media informs customers of the establishment's offerings | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.53 | .555 |
| Social media acts as a platform to remind customers of the establishments | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.54 | .603 |
| Social media allows the interaction between the establishment and its customers | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.64 | .556 |
| Social media allows establishments to advertise through various mediums | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.56 | .647 |
| Social media gives customers the information needed before actually experiencing the service | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.53 | .663 |
| Social media can persuade customers to purchase or book | 107 | 3 | 5 | 4.49 | .732 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 107 | | | | |

### 4.2.38 The importance of social media to the overall marketing strategy

The researcher sought to find out how important social media marketing is to the establishments' overall marketing strategy for their accommodation. The results in Table



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4.37 reveal that 97% of establishments say that social media strategy is essential, while 3% reveal that social media strategy is essential for accommodation services.

Table 4. 34: Importance of social media strategy

| | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very important | 104 | 97.2 | 97.2 | 97.2 |
| Important | 3 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 100.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

### 4.2.39 Changes to SM marketing strategy based on customer feedback solicited through social media

The researcher wanted to know if the participants have ever changed their social media marketing based on customer feedback. The results in Table 4.38 show that all participants have changed their marketing strategies based on customer feedback by 100%. The results are supported by the views of Quach (2017), who noted that accommodation establishments can upgrade their services using visitor feedback or construct a positive reputation by motivating their visitors to speak well about their stay.

Table 4. 35: Social media marketing strategy changes based on customer feedback.

| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Valid | Yes | 107 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

In the absence of dependent and independent variables, inferential statistics cannot be used to arrive at conclusions as far as objective two, stating that *there is a difference in the selection of social media platforms by accommodation owners* is concerned.



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However, the study wanted to establish whether there is a difference in the means of Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Trip Advisor, and Booking.com usage.

Table 4. 36: Descriptive Statistics (summary statistics from collected data0

| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Twitter | 107 | 0 | 4 | .45 | .602 |
| Facebook | 107 | 0 | 2 | 1.00 | .137 |
| Instagram | 107 | 0 | 1 | .49 | .502 |
| Tripadvisor | 107 | 1 | 1 | 1.00 | .000 |
| Booking.com | 107 | 1 | 1 | 1.00 | .000 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 107 | | | | |

There is no difference in Facebook, Tripadvisor, and booking.com usage. However, there is a significant difference in the usage of Instagram and Twitter compared to the rest of the social media platforms. Facebook allows establishments to target intended clients by almost anything if the user has shared information on Facebook. The Facebook platform offers a wide range of marketing types by using photos, videos, advertising on Facebook stories, and many more, which participants agreed to do. Hence, they have a mean of 1.00 compared to Twitter and Instagram. TripAdvisor and Booking.com provide traveler with reviews of hotels, restaurants, and tourism activities so they can receive positive assurance before booking their travels. Almost all the sampled participants agreed to use TripAdvisor and Booking.com to book their clients' accommodation with a mean of 1.00.

The table above shows that some participants do not use Twitter as a marking platform for their establishments, with a mean of 0.49. Twitter is too pricey when advertising and



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marketing an establishment; if it needs more followers, the information intended to reach a target market of potential clients will take time or might not even reach them. It also takes time to process marketing on Twitter as ads go through an approval window that takes more than 48 hours to days before ads are placed, which is terrible for establishments as it is time-consuming.

The researcher found that some establishments do not use Instagram to market their accommodation, with a mean of 0.45. Instagram is less effective, sometimes not allowing customers to follow links to specific websites. It also has a limited audience. This may be because it is expensive to use as data is needed, and it might be hard to find their target market as some might need to be using the app.

## 4.3 INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

In this section, the results of inferential statistics are reported. The study sought to establish whether social media usage positively affects performance, that is, the generation of bookings. Lastly, the study examined whether social media usage made customers aware of the establishment (brand awareness). To achieve this, simple linear regression analysis was performed to test H1, stating that social media usage positively impacts a generation of bookings (firm performance), and H2 states that Social Media usage significantly predicts brand awareness. Before inferential statistics were performed, the scales' reliability was assessed using Cronbach Alpha coefficient (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR).

### 4.3.1 Reliability test of the scales

A parallel model was requested when performing the reliability test, given that it is robust. A parallel model provides both the CA and the unbiased reliability, that is, the CR. The results with respect to the reliability of the social media usage scale are shown in Table 4.40.



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Table 4. 37: Social media usage scale reliability test results

| | |
|---|---|
| Common variance | 0.511 |
| True variance | 0.243 |
| Error variance | 0.268 |
| Common inter-item correlation | 0.476 |
| Reliability of scale – Cronbach Alpha coefficient (CA) | **0.845** |
| Reliability of scale (unbiased)- Composite reliability (CR) | **0.848** |

The results shown in Table 4.40 indicate that the social media scale is internally consistent, and we can rely on it to measure social media usage given CA = 0.848 and CR = 0.848. Research by Ahdika (2017) pointed out that a CA > 0.4 to 0.6 is quite reliable, reliable when the score is > 0.6 to 0.8, and very reliable when the score is > 0.8 to 1. As noted in this study, CA falls within the reliable category of> 0.6 to 0.8. According to Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, and Ringle (2019), a CR ≥ 0.7 is required for a scale to be considered reliable. As shown in Table 4.40, a CA = 0.848 was achieved, indicating that the scale is reliable.

The generation of bookings scale was also investigated to establish whether it was reliable. Similarly, the parallel model was requested to investigate the reliability of the four-item scale. The results are shown in Table 4.41.

Table 4. 38: Generation of bookings scale reliability results

| | |
|---|---|
| Common variance | 0.414 |
| True variance | 0.169 |
| Error variance | 0.245 |
| Common inter-item correlation | 0.409 |
| Reliability of scale – Cronbach Alpha coefficient (CA) | **0.72** |
| Reliability of scale (unbiased)- Composite reliability (CR) | **0.74** |



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The reliability results for generating the booking scale are also reliable, given CA = 0.72 and CR = 074. The last scale that was investigated for reliability was the establishment awareness scale. This is about hypothesis two of the study. Results are shown in Table 4.42. The results indicate that the scale is reliable, given CA = 0.819 and CR = 8.22.

Table 4. 39: Establishment awareness scale reliability results

| | |
|---|---|
| Common variance | 0.396 |
| True variance | 0.170 |
| Error variance | 0.226 |
| Common inter-item correlation | 0.429 |
| Reliability of scale – Cronbach Alpha coefficient (CA) | **0.819** |
| Reliability of scale (unbiased)- Composite reliability (CR) | **0.822** |

This is the last scale that was investigated for reliability was the establishment awareness scale. This is about hypothesis two of the study. Results are shown in Table 4.42. The results indicate that the scale is reliable, given CA = 0.819 and CR = 0.822.

### 4.3.2 Hypotheses testing

This section reports on inferential statistics performed to test H1 and H2 of the study.

4.3.2.1 H1: Social media use is positive and significantly related to the generation of bookings

A simple linear regression analysis examined whether social media usage positively impacted booking generation. When performing simple linear regression analysis, bootstrapped confidence intervals were requested. Bootstrapped confidence intervals were requested as they are not affected by distributional assumptions, that is, issues related to normality. Concerning H1, the model summary results reveal a positive relationship between social media usage and firm performance (generation of bookings),



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$r$ = 0.111. The results further show that social media usage accounts for approximately 1.2% of the variance in the generation of bookings due to social media use by the entity owner, $R^2$ = 0.012. The low correlations indicate that social media use has yet to produce the desired outcomes compared to other sectors for the respondents. This outcome is summarized in Table 4.43.

Table 4. 40: Model summary

| Model | R | R-square | Adj R Square | Std Error |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.111[a] | 0.012 | 0.003 | 0.39070 |

a. Predictor: Social media usage

Further, the results also reveal that the model could better predict the generation of bookings given an *F-ratio* = 1.319, which is insignificant given $p$ = 0.253 greater than $p$ = 0.05. Given this outcome, it is better to predict the generation of bookings through the mean value. Results are summarized in Table 4.44.

Table 4. 41: Model fitness based on ANOVA[a]

| Model | | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 0.201 | 1 | 0.201 | 1.319 | 0.253[b] |
| | Residual | 16.028 | 105 | 0.153 | | |
| | Total | 16.229 | 106 | | | |

a. Dependent variable: Generation of bookings

b. Predictors: (Constant) Social media usage

The model parameter estimates reveal $\beta_0$ = 3.131 and $\beta_1$ = 0.081. Although the results indicate a positive relationship between social media usage, $\beta_1$ = 0.081, this relationship is insignificant given $p$ = 0.286. Therefore, there is not enough evidence to support H1 stating that social media use is positive and significantly related to the generation of



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bookings. This result indicates that as much as owners of hospitality facilities invest so much in social media, the returns do not match the effort. In other words, their clientele could still strongly rely on traditional marketing modes, such as agencies and referrals, when making trips. Results are shown in Table 4.45.

Table 4. 42: Predictor of generation of bookings

| Model | | B | Bootstrap | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Bias | Std. Error | Sig. (2-tailed) | BCa 95% Confidence Interval | |
| | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3,131 | -,020 | ,330 | <,001 | 2,482 | 3,710 |
| | SM_Usg | ,081 | ,004 | ,075 | ,286 | -,070 | ,239 |

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples

4.3.2.2 H2: Social media use predicts brand awareness

Simple linear regression analysis was also performed to examine whether the use of social media has a significant positive impact on brand awareness. The model summary results show a positive correlation between social media usage and brand awareness, $r = 0.25$. The results also reveal that social media usage explains approximately 6.3% of the variance in brand awareness $R^2 = 0.063$, as shown in Table 4.46.

Table 4. 43: Model Summary

| **Model** | **R** | **R-square** | **Adj R Square** | **Std Error** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 0.250[a] | 0.063 | 0.054 | 0.44316 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social Media Usage



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The ANOVA output reveals an *F-ratio* = 7.03, significant at $p < 0.05$. Given this result, relying on the model is better at estimating brand awareness than using the mean, as shown in Table 4.47.

**Table 4. 44: Model fitness based on ANOVA.**

| **Model** | | **Sum of squares** | **df** | **Mean square** | **F** | **Sig** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Regression | 1.379 | 1 | 1.379 | 7.023 | 0.009[b] |
| | Residual | 20.621 | 105 | 0.196 | | |
| | Total | 22.001 | 106 | | | |

a. dependent variable: Brand awareness

b. Predictor: (Constant), Social Media Usage.

The model parameter estimates reveal $\beta_0 = 3.618$ and $\beta_1 = 0.213$. This result shows that given a unit increase in social media usage, brand awareness increases by a corresponding 0.213 units, which is significant given $p < 0.05$. Based on this outcome, we conclude that sufficient evidence supports H2, stating that social media usage significantly predicts brand awareness. The results are summarized in Table 4.48.

Table 4. 45: Predictor of brand awareness

| Model | | B | Bootstrap | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Bias | Std. Error | Sig. (2-tailed) | BCa 95% Confidence Interval | |
| | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.618 | -0.012 | 0.430 | <.001 | 2.814 | 4.449 |
| | Social Media Usage | 0.213 | 0.002 | 0.096 | 0.030 | 0.017 | 0.401 |

a. Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 1000 bootstrap samples



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## 4.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher presented the analysis and findings of the quantitative data from the sampled accommodation establishments using descriptive statistics. Frequent tables, means, and standard deviation are the descriptive statistics that will be reported and interpreted in this section concerning the study's objectives. The participating accommodations' profile, role, and age were considered. Upon analyzing the questionnaire/participants, it was revealed that many or almost all the sampled participants prefer social media marketing to interact with their customers and attract new customers to visit the accommodation establishments. TripAdvisor, Facebook, and Booking.com are the social media platforms that accommodation establishments and customers use most to communicate, interact, and make bookings compared to Twitter and Instagram. Simple linear regression analysis was performed to examine two hypotheses, and there was enough evidence to support H2, but there was insufficient evidence to support H1.

# CHAPTER 5:
# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this research was to determine if tourist accommodation establishments use social media marketing services in the Vhembe District. The researcher set out to achieve the following objectives:

- To explore the different social media platforms tourism accommodation owners use to promote businesses.



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- To assess whether there is a difference in the selection of social media platforms by accommodation owners.
- To examine the value of social media in promoting tourism accommodation businesses .
- Investigate whether social media use predicts brand awareness.

To address the research questions, questionnaires were provided by the researcher to the management of the accommodation establishments to get more knowledge of their marketing skills on social media platforms. This chapter presents conclusions and recommendations on how accommodation establishments use social media platforms to promote them. The chapter also outlines the recommendations for future research and sets out the various limitations of the study.

## 5.2 FINDINGS ABOUT THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This section considers the study's findings about each of the research objectives.

**Objective 1**: To explore the different social media platforms tourism accommodation owners use to promote businesses.

Social media systems are progressively utilized by organizations to promote their image, items, or administrations and to build relationships with buyers (Cant & Van Rooyen, 2017). Increased tourism businesses use social networking sites to achieve a better position in the competition for the grace of tourists.

The findings regarding this objective show that most accommodation establishments are operated by managers/owners, human resources, marketing representatives, and front office bearers. All the selected accommodation establishments use social media platforms to market their services. The real-time nature of social media makes it possible to post instant feedback, which might reach thousands of other potential buyers (Russell,



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2010). More businesses across different industries have been actively integrating social networks into their marketing toolkits (Qualman, 2012).

According to the results, Chapter Four states that Facebook, TripAdvisor, and Booking.com are mostly or are particularly important when it comes to marketing accommodations, followed by Twitter and Instagram, which are least used when it comes to marketing. This reveals how influential social media is in the promotion of accommodation establishments. It goes from creating content about destinations to influencing the individual to visit the accommodation establishments. The types of accommodation selected were hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfasts, and lodges. The selected accommodation establishments ranged in terms of differing years of operation, how often the marketers post, and how much time they spend on social media interacting with their customers.

**Objective 2**: To assess whether there is a difference in the selection of social media platforms by accommodation owners.

There are many social media platforms, and their number is still growing. Companies must be accessible to all of them while delivering a steady flow of content to their followers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). Nga Ling and Guillet (2011) suggest that establishments should observe which social media their rivals use and consider embracing similar platforms. The findings of this objective show that the participants selected social media platforms that are suitable for their accommodation and affordable for their customers. Facebook, TripAdvisor, and Booking.com are mostly or are particularly important when it comes to marketing accommodations, followed by Twitter and Instagram. The participants in the questionnaire stated that Twitter and Instagram are the least used when it comes to marketing. Participants also stated they use social media to post photos, videos, guest reviews, travel tips and recommendations, remarkable offers, and promotions. They also engage with customers online and in the form of messages.



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**Objective 3**: To examine the value of social media in promoting tourism accommodation.

The popularity of digital marketing is growing; many companies are now looking at how social media may help them promote their products and services to potential and existing customers (Watson et al., 2002), quoted by Sheth and Sharma (2005). The essence of successful marketing is to provide sufficient value to gain loyal, long-term customers. The findings in Chapter 4 state that the participants value social media usage, which is considered when it comes to promoting/ marketing their accommodations.

The findings proved that participants keep up with their social media activities and monitor their social media pages, meaning that they engage with customers, listen to what interests them, and are updated with trends and valuable information to exceed customers' expectations. Participants said they are encouraging customers/guests to leave feedback online, which can also be used to provide positive reviews to guests who want to visit their accommodation establishments. This is followed by participants saying they address customer queries and complaints.

The participants also showed or commented on the effectiveness of social media and traditional marketing. Many participants stated that social media platforms are more effective when it comes to marketing than traditional channel marketing, even though they still need to specify that traditional channels are not effective at all.

## 5.3 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study will be significant for the accommodation sector since it will make things simple for them to produce more strategies and ways by which they will want to communicate and share relevant information with their clients and other people who are keen on buying or using their products and services. The study will help the tourism businesses or industries around Vhembe district develop their social media usage further and show noteworthy features that will meet the needs of tourists. It will also help the clients get applicable information about goods and services they are willing to buy.



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This study will assist other researchers in filling the missing gaps that need to be added regarding the social media marketing of tourist accommodation establishments. They will use this research to find out the outcome and how social media marketing plays a role in the success of accommodation establishments. More people will be aware of the services offered by sampled establishments in more detail.

## 5.4 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Several limitations were encountered in this study. A significant limitation was that the samples were collected only in Vhembe District. The main limitation of the study is related to the sample size. The need for more social media marketing usage by the accommodation establishments in Vhembe District limited the sample size. Finding a place to collect data was complex because some of the accommodation establishments made it challenging to talk to them, as some said they were busy while others seemed uninterested.

## 5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCHERS

Social media has influenced both the ways people communicate and the ways they make their purchasing decisions. As growth in the accommodation industry is experienced, accommodation establishments will continue to offer better and more products. This research study has only investigated Vhembe District; within this district, only a few accommodations were selected. The data was collected from a relatively small group of accommodation establishments. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to say that all participants use only social media platforms for marketing their establishments. There are a variety of platforms of social media on which people interact and communicate for a range of reasons: via writing blogs (e.g., WordPress or BlogSpot), social networks (e.g., Facebook), sharing videos or pictures (e.g., YouTube or Twitter), contributing to online forums and reviews (e.g., Tripadvisor and Amazon), posting news articles (e.g. Digg),



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accessing information provided by numerous contributors (e.g. Wikipedia), or micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter). Further research could investigate the other marketing platforms the accommodation industry could use to communicate with their potential and new customers about their services and products.

## 5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS' MARKETERS

The researcher also recommends the following to the accommodation establishments' marketing teams based on the findings and successful marketing strategies, which will benefit the establishment and target market. These recommendations will help establishments lure in, attract their customers and exceed their expectations.

- Define target audience: Identify ideal guests, as well as their demographics, interests, and preferences. This will help tailor content to make it appealing.
- Choose the Right Platforms: Focus on social media platforms that align with the target audience.
- High-Quality Visual Content: Invest in professional photography and create visually engaging content. Showcase accommodations' rooms, amenities, and the establishment's overall experience.
- Content Calendar: Plan content. Create a content calendar to ensure a steady flow of posts and to stay organized.
- Engage with Audience: Respond promptly to comments and messages. Engage with followers by asking questions and running polls or contests.
- User-Generated Content: Encourage guests to share their experiences on social media and use a dedicated hashtag. Share and celebrate user-generated content to build trust and authenticity.
- Influencer Partnerships: Collaborate with travel or local influencers who can showcase the establishment to their followers.
- Share Local Insights: Highlight nearby attractions, activities, and events. This helps potential guests see the value of staying at specific accommodation.



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- Collaborate with Local Businesses: Partner with nearby restaurants, tour operators, or event venues for cross-promotion on social media.

## 5.7 CONCLUSION

The study analyzed social media marketing by accommodation establishments to ensure the success of their businesses. The study was conducted in Vhembe District in Limpopo province. Data were collected from the sampled participants from 107 accommodation establishments: hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfasts, and lodges. The study identified the social media platforms that accommodation establishments use to market their services, engage with customers, and post pictures and videos of their amenities. The literature revealed that social media marketing is a powerful communication tool if used effectively by businesses. Social media is still regarded as a relatively new form of communication, and many businesses are now marketing their services to customers through social media platforms while still considering the traditional channels, even though it could be more effective than social media marketing. Accommodation establishments must use social features to break communication barriers and increase efficiency to remain competitive. This study concluded that the accommodation industry finds social media more effective than traditional marketing. Therefore, accommodation businesses should use social media more often to communicate and engage with their followers and customers.



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# APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES



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SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING BY TOURIST ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS IN VHEMBE DISTRICT

Good morning/ good afternoon, my name is Ulendah Rampedi and I am a master's student in the tourism department at the University of Venda. I am conducting research on how accommodation market their businesses on social media around Vhembe District. Its purpose is to find out how marketers communicate with their customers, how they let them know about their services and products, and also how they advertise their accommodation. Am requesting less than 10 minutes of your time to help with completing the questions, all information will be confidential. Thank you in advance for your time and cooperation.

For any queries, you may contact my supervisors:

Dr Mamotse Mokabe, cell: 083 543 2553

Email: mamotsemokabe@univen.ac.za

Prof Takalani Ramukumba, cell: 0823581345

Email: takalaniramukumba@gmail.com

SECTION A: Biographical information

**1. Please specify your role in the company/business**



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| Owner/manager | Marketing representative | HR representative | Front office |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**2. What type of tourism establishment are you running?**

| Hotel | G/house | BnB | Motel | Lodge | other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**3. How many years has the establishment been in business?**

| 1-5 | 6-10 | 11-15 | >16 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

**4. Which social media platforms do you use to promote your accommodation business? (please select yes or no)**

**4.1 Do you use Twitter, (please select yes or no)**

| Yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

**4.2 Do you use Facebook, (please select yes or no)**

| Yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

**4.3 Do you use Instagram, (please select yes or no)**

| Yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

**4.4 Do you use TripAdvisor, (please select yes or no)**

| Yes | No |
|---|---|



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| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

**4.5 Do you use booking.com, (please select yes or no)**

| Yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

**5. On average, how much time do you spend on social media per day?**

| < 30 minutes | 30 - 60 minutes | 61 -120 minutes | 121 – 240 minutes | >240 minutes (4hours) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**6. How often do you follow or engage with customers on social media platforms?**

| never | rarely | occasionally | Often | Very often |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**7. How frequently do you post content on social media for your accommodation business?**

| Less than once a week | Once a week | A few times a week | Once a day | Multiple times a day |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**8. Questions that follow seek to find out whether you do post various forms of SM content with regard to your accommodation.**

8. 1 Do you photos of accommodations [please indicate yes or no]

| Yes | No |
|---|---|
| | |



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| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

8.2 Do you post videos of accommodations [please indicate yes or no

| | |
|---|---|
| yes | No |
| 1 | 0 |

8.3 Do you post guest reviews/testimonials, [please indicate yes or no]

| | |
|---|---|
| yes | No |
| 1 | 0 |

8.4 Do you post local attraction activities, [please indicate yes or no]

| | |
|---|---|
| yes | No |
| 1 | 0 |

8.5 Do you post special offers and promotions, [please indicate yes or no]

| | |
|---|---|
| yes | No |
| 1 | 0 |

8.6 Do you post events happening at your accommodation, [please indicate yes or no]

| | |
|---|---|
| yes | No |
| 1 | 0 |

8.7 do you post any other relevant activities taking place at your accommodation, [please indicate yes or no]



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| yes | no |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

8.8 do you post travel tips and recommendations, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

8.9 Do you post User-generated content (guests' posts and experiences) at your accommodation, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

**SECTION B: The value of social media promotion and selection of social media platforms**

9. **How do you engage with your audience on social media platforms? Please select all strategies you utilize:**

9.1 Do you Respond to comments and messages left by customers, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

9.2 Do you do run a contests or giveaways, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |



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9.3 Do you share user-generated content and giving credit, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

9.4 Do you collaborate with influencers or brand ambassadors, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

9.5 do you host live videos or Q&A sessions, [pleas indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

9.6 do you conduct surveys, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

9.7 Do you sharing content related to the accommodation, [please indicate yes or no]

| yes | No |
|---|---|
| 1 | 0 |

**10. Please rate the effectiveness of each SM platform in generating bookings/reservations for your accommodation?**

10.1 Social media platforms

| Very ineffective | ineffective | neither effective | effective | Very effective |
|---|---|---|---|---|



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10.2 Traditional marketing channels

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very ineffective | ineffective | neither effective | effective | Very effective |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**11. How do you measure the success or effectiveness of your marketing efforts on social media platforms? (Select all that apply)**

11.1 Do number of bookings/reservations increase when you post SM content of your accommodation?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| No | 0 | Yes | 1 |

11.2 Do you observe an increase in website traffic when you post SM content of your accommodation?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| No | 0 | Yes | 1 |

11.3 Do your social media engagement metrics (likes, comments, shares, etc.) increase when you post SM content of your accommodation?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| No | 0 | Yes | 1 |

11.4 Do you receive many conversion rates (e.g., leads, inquiries) after posting SM content of your accommodation?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| No | 0 | Yes | 1 |



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12. **How would you rate the effectiveness of your social media marketing efforts in generating bookings or sales compared to traditional marketing channels?**

| Significantly less effective | Somewhat less effective | Equally effective | somewhat more effective | Significantly more effective |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

13. **Please rate the following statements below on how likely or unlikely you are regarding social media activities for your company**

**1 = very likely, 2 = likely, 3 - neutral, 4 = unlikely, 5 = very unlikely**

| | | Very likely | likely | neutral | unlikely | Very unlikely |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13.1 | I post about our company on social media | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13.2 | I communicate with customers on social media | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13.3 | I take time and make enough efforts to reply to questions on social media | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13.4 | I encourage guest to leave feedback online | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13.5 | I attend customers query and complains | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13.6 | I monitor your social media pages performance | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

14. **On a scale of 1-5, please rate the effectiveness of traditional marketing channels in reaching your target audience.**



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| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not effective at all | ineffective | neither effective | effective | very effective |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**15. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the usage of social media using a scale of**

Strongly disagree =1; Disagree = 2; Neutral = 3; Agree = 4 & strongly agree = 5

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15.1 | Social media informs customers of the establishment's offerings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15.2 | Social media acts as a platform to reminds customers of the establishment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15.3 | Social media allows the interaction between the establishment and its customers | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15.4 | Social media allows establishments to advertise through various mediums | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15.5 | Social media gives customers the information needed before actually experiencing the services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15.6 | Social media has the ability to persuade the customers to purchase or book accommodation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**16. How important is social media marketing to your overall marketing strategy for your accommodation services?**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not at all important | Not very important | Somewhat important | Very important |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |



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**17. Have you ever made changes to your social media marketing strategy based on customer feedback or responses on social media?**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | No | 0 |



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