ARTIGO CONCEITUAL / CONCEPTUAL PAPER / ARTÍCULO CONCEPTUAL

SOCIAL MEDIA'S IMPACT ON HOSPITALITY MARKETING: TRENDS, STRATEGIES, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the multifaceted impact of social media on hospitality marketing, focusing on identifying key trends, strategies, and future directions. The review synthesizes key concepts such as omni-channel strategies, influencer marketing, and user-generated content (UGC), illustrating their interrelationships and implications for the hospitality industry. These concepts highlight how social media platforms have evolved into dynamic online communities characterized by user-generated content and participatory engagement. Using a comprehensive literature review, this study examines existing research to identify significant patterns and themes. The findings reveal that social media enhances brand identity, customer engagement, and reputation management through visual storytelling, influencer partnerships, and responsive feedback mechanisms. The review underscores the importance of integrating online and offline touchpoints to create cohesive guest experiences and foster loyalty. Additionally, the analysis highlights the persuasive power of authentic influencer endorsements and the credibility of UGC in shaping consumer perceptions. The conclusions emphasize the necessity for hospitality businesses to adopt integrated marketing approaches and leverage social media's dynamic capabilities to meet the evolving needs of digitally engaged consumers. By addressing identified research gaps, such as the long-term impact of influencer endorsements and the nuances of customer trust in UGC, this study offers both theoretical insights and practical recommendations. These insights aim to guide the development of effective strategies that enhance guest experiences, optimize marketing efforts, and ensure industry relevance in the digital age.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing; Online Reviews; Influencer Collaborations; Hospitality Industry.

O IMPACTO DAS MÍDIAS SOCIAIS NO MARKETING DE HOSPITALIDADE: TENDÊNCIAS, ESTRATÉGIAS E DIREÇÕES FUTURAS

Resumo

Este estudo investiga o impacto profundo das mídias sociais no marketing de hospitalidade, com foco nas tendências emergentes, nas estratégias e nas direções futuras. Examina como as plataformas de mídia social evoluíram para se tornarem comunidades online dinâmicas, caracterizadas por conteúdo gerado pelos usuários e engajamento participativo. O artigo explora o potencial das estratégias omni-channel para melhorar as experiências e a lealdade dos hóspedes, o papel do marketing de influenciadores e do conteúdo gerado pelos usuários na expansão do alcance e da credibilidade, e a importância da narrativa visual na construção da identidade da marca em plataformas como Instagram e Pinterest. Utilizando uma revisão abrangente da literatura, a pesquisa identifica estratégias e desafios-chave, empregando análise qualitativa de estudos de caso e de relatórios da indústria. Os resultados destacam a importância da integração entre métodos tradicionais e mídias sociais para campanhas de marketing eficazes, bem como a necessidade de colaborações éticas e culturalmente sensíveis com influenciadores. O estudo conclui ao abordar os objetivos da pesquisa e fornecer insights teóricos e práticos para navegar no cenário em evolução das mídias sociais no marketing de hospitalidade.

Palavras-chave: Marketing em Mídias Sociais; Avaliações Online; Colaborações com Influenciadores; Indústria de Hospitalidade.

EL IMPACTO DE LAS REDES SOCIALES EN EL MARKETING DE HOSPITALIDAD: TENDENCIAS, ESTRATEGIAS Y DIRECCIONES FUTURAS

Resumen

Este estudio investiga el profundo impacto de las redes sociales en el marketing de hospitalidad, con enfoque en las tendencias emergentes, las estrategias y las direcciones futuras. Examina cómo las plataformas de redes sociales han evolucionado para convertirse en comunidades en línea dinámicas, caracterizadas por contenido generado por los usuarios y por una participación activa. El artículo explora el potencial de las estrategias omnicanales para mejorar las experiencias y la lealtad de los huéspedes, el papel del marketing de influencers y del contenido generado por los usuarios en la expansión del alcance y la credibilidad, y la importancia de la narración visual para establecer la identidad de marca en plataformas como Instagram y Pinterest. Mediante una revisión exhaustiva de la literatura, la investigación identifica estrategias y desafíos clave, empleando análisis cualitativo de estudios de caso e informes de la industria. Los resultados destacan la importancia de integrar métodos tradicionales y de redes sociales en campañas de marketing efectivas, así como la necesidad de colaboraciones éticas y culturalmente sensibles con influencers. El estudio concluye al abordar los objetivos de la investigación y proporcionar perspectivas teóricas y prácticas para navegar en el panorama cambiante de las redes sociales en el marketing de hospitalidad.

Palabras clave: Marketing en redes sociales; Reseñas en línea; Colaboraciones con influencers; Industria de la hospitalidad.

1 INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is profoundly influenced by the choices individuals make when selecting accommodations, a process increasingly governed by the narratives found in online reviews (Abuhashesh et al., 2019; Pan et al., 2013). This study investigates the intricate dynamics between review content and these critical choices, focusing on how both positive and negative narratives shape participants' decision-making processes. Moreover, the research explores the extent to which participants trust these review narratives and the role this trust plays in shaping their decisions.

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Recent shifts in the marketing landscape have been driven by the rapid expansion of social media (SM) platforms, which have fundamentally altered customer interaction strategies (Cooper et al., 2023). This transformation has drawn significant attention from global media and necessitated a reevaluation of traditional methods for connecting with customers.

Technological advancements, particularly the rise of Web 2.0, have revolutionized online user behaviour, creating a more interactive and collaborative online environment (Guo, 2020). Where once static websites prevailed, the modern digital space has become a dynamic arena where users actively create and share content, thereby shaping perceptions of hospitality services (Chan & Guillet, 2011).

In response to these changes, businesses have recognized the critical importance of social media for customer engagement. Organizations now deploy a variety of communication and marketing strategies, with social media platforms being central to these efforts.

The effectiveness of these strategies is measured through engagement metrics, highlighting the urgent need for academic research to address the dynamics of marketing in this evolving digital context (Avelino et al., 2020). The global adoption of social media underscores the necessity for a deeper scholarly examination of these marketing dynamics.

Traditional marketing approaches are increasingly inadequate in the digital age, as simply adapting offline strategies for online use fails to exploit the opportunities offered by social media fully. The interactive nature of these platforms offers businesses unique opportunities to forge authentic connections with customers, fostering brand loyalty beyond traditional marketing boundaries (Chan & Guillet, 2011).

Despite this, academic exploration of social media marketing remains relatively limited, indicating a significant gap in understanding the complexities of this evolving field (Alfdool, 2023). Researchers suggest that studies should qualitatively examine how companies utilize social media and review websites to communicate their service quality, brand identity, and marketing strategies. By identifying and analyzing the various types of content published, this study aims to deepen the understanding of how these digital interactions influence consumer perceptions and decision-making (Mondo et al., 2022).

Against this backdrop, this study embarks on an in-depth exploration of the role of review content within the tourism industry. Reviews can reflect positive experiences, but they can also carry negative implications if not managed effectively. The rise of blogs and other social media tools further amplifies community voices, impacting customer perceptions in ways that require careful analysis. Recognizing the transformative impact of these tools, this study aims to uncover the nuanced dynamics introduced by blogs and their role in the hospitality sector, providing valuable insights for navigating this rapidly changing landscape.

The research contributes to a broader understanding of blogs as platforms for unfiltered consumer opinions, examining both their benefits and challenges in managing potential negative impacts. Given the significant role of the tourism industry in the global economy and its susceptibility to the influence of the internet, this study seeks to analyze how customer feedback shapes the industry.

Online reviews, increasingly central to travel planning, empower travellers to share their experiences on prominent platforms such as TripAdvisor and Travelocity, thereby influencing tourism decisions. This investigation aims to elucidate the underlying dynamics of customer feedback's influence in the tourism sector, offering insights that can support both industry practitioners and researchers in adapting to contemporary marketing practices.

2 THEORETICAL REVIEW

The study by Kapoor and Dhamija (2020) examines the influential role of social media in customers' hotel selection decisions. The findings highlight that social media significantly shapes customers' perceptions and choices, underscoring the pivotal role of online platforms in hotel selection in Gurugram.

Social media platforms have evolved into dynamic online communities characterized by active participation, conversation, and user-generated content. These platforms empower individuals to publish, critique, control, and engage with diverse forms of content, fostering a fluid, interactive online environment. From virtual worlds to opinion-sharing platforms, the diversity of social media spaces offers a fertile ground for hospitality businesses to shape their brand identity.

2.1 Social Media's Penetration in Hospitality

The hospitality industry has experienced a revolutionary shift in its marketing practices with the advent of social media (Hu & Olivieri, 2021). Hotel brands have harnessed platforms like Twitter and Facebook not only for direct customer engagement but also to connect with influential third-party platforms such as TripAdvisor and Hotels.com. Han and Lee (2021) underscore the significance of Instagram as a visual storytelling tool that lifestyle hotels effectively use to communicate their brand identity, engage potential guests, and create aspirational experiences.

Lauhaluoma (2023) explores how culture influences the type of content posted by 5-star luxury hotels on Instagram and its subsequent effectiveness. Focusing on luxury hotels in the USA and Japan, the research reveals that cultural differences significantly shape the content choices hotels make on Instagram. While American luxury hotels emphasize lifestyle and entertainment, Japanese counterparts focus on authenticity and tradition.

Similarly, Andriany et al. (2022) investigated the Instagram performance of 5-star luxury hotels in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia. The study found that hotels used Instagram to promote their brands, products, and services, and to connect with potential customers. The hotels also used Instagram to run contests and giveaways and to provide information about travel restrictions and safety protocols.

The study found that the hotels' Instagram performance was generally good, with high levels of engagement and interaction. Social media's expansion continues to shape the hospitality industry, impacting

traveller behaviours, decision-making processes, and the way information is shared (Argadian, 2021).

Chu et al. (2020) found that social media advertising is an effective way to reach potential customers in the hospitality, tourism, and travel (HTT) industry. The study also found that several factors can influence the effectiveness of social media advertising, including the platform, target audience, and ad content. The study by Yost et al. (2021) found that active social media engagement positively impacts sales in the hospitality industry.

The study also found that the type of social media platform, the content of posts, and the time of day posts are published can all influence engagement levels. Engaging with social media platforms enhances brand awareness and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, social media profoundly impacts consumer decision-making when selecting hotels (Liu et al., 2020). Social media's transformative power is evident as it redefines conventional marketing strategies.

This transformation aligns with the evolving dynamics of the hotel industry. The Internet and social media offer novel ways to streamline communication, acquire customers, and bolster loyalty (Zhang & Li, 2019). Hotels recognize the need to engage consumers through social media to boost brand visibility and build relationships with new and loyal patrons. Internet-based distribution channels empower both hotels and customers to access and assess user-generated content (Shin, 2023).

Studies reveal that Twitter and Facebook are prevalent platforms, with YouTube, Flickr, and TripAdvisor also playing significant roles (Ofori-Okyere, 2019; Islam, 2021). Social media's affordability, consumer engagement potential, and credibility enhancement contribute to its efficacy (Schivinski et al., 2020).

For tourism businesses, monitoring third-party sources like TripAdvisor is vital, while luxury hotels must regularly update their social media platforms (Tsiotsou, 2022). Social media is a powerful tool for connecting with people on a personal level. When businesses use social media to share genuine content and interact with customers, they can build trust and rapport.

This can lead to increased sales and loyalty. However, if businesses only use social media to advertise their products or services, they will miss out on the opportunity to build relationships. Customers are more likely to be drawn to businesses with which they feel a connection.

2.2 Impact on Marketing Strategies

Social media's impact on marketing strategies has been profound. Hotels can now directly engage with their target audience through dynamic content creation and real-time interaction. Social media marketing can help businesses increase brand awareness, improve customer engagement, generate leads, increase sales, be cost-effective, and be measurable (Mason & Mason, 2021). The participatory nature of social media transforms hotels into active contributors to their brand narrative.

The retail industry has shifted from a strategy in which customers interact with the business through separate channels to one in which they can interact through multiple connected channels. (Verhoef et al., 2015). In multi-channel retail, businesses treat each channel as a separate entity, with unique processes and systems.

This can lead to a fragmented customer experience, as customers may have to provide their information multiple times or experience different levels of service depending on the channel they use (Hu & Olivieri, 2020). To improve customer satisfaction and gain a competitive advantage, hospitality businesses should adopt an omni-channel strategy to meet customer needs at every stage of the travel journey (Capriello & Riboldazzi, 2019).

Social media platforms have become essential digital touchpoints for businesses to engage consumers, enable interactive communication, and harness user-generated content (UGC) and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) (Alves et al., 2016; Dedeoğlu et al., 2020).

When planning a trip, travellers often turn to social media for information from both brand-owned and external sources. These external sources, such as user-generated content (UGC), can significantly influence purchase decisions (Cheng & Edwards, 2015; Villamediana-Pedrosa et al., 2019). The tourism sector has recognized this trend and has increased investments in internet-based applications (Wang et al., 2017).

Additionally, the importance of partner-owned touchpoints has been highlighted in the tourism literature. Online travel agencies (OTAs) play a vital role in gathering information about available accommodations, and influencer marketing has emerged as a prominent endorsement strategy (Bokunewicz & Shulman, 2017).

Confente and Kucharska (2021) found that social media can help companies foster brand community identification, which can lead to brand loyalty and the development of consumers' brand. However, it is important to integrate social media efforts with traditional online marketing to ensure that all channels work together to create a seamless, positive customer experience.

2.3 Building Brand Identity and Engagement

Visual storytelling has emerged as a central aspect of branding on social media platforms (Moscardo, 2020). Hotels leverage platforms like Instagram and Pinterest to visually showcase their offerings, creating captivating narratives that resonate with their target audience. For hotels, this popularization tool offers a chance, similar to other businesses, to broaden their sphere of influence, attract more potential customers, and achieve a new level of integration based on mutually beneficial terms (Balova et al., 2022).

The visual content not only captures attention but also communicates the brand's essence, values, and unique offerings. Lim and Childs (2020) investigated the effect of visual storytelling on Instagram. They found that narrative visuals, which are images that tell a story, can lead to higher levels of audience transportation and self-brand connection than exposure to images with no narrative elements. The study found that visual storytelling can be a powerful way to engage and connect with viewers on social media.

By using narrative visuals that are both immersive and interactive, brands can create a more meaningful and memorable experience for their audience. Visual storytelling has become a crucial element in establishing and

maintaining brand identity and engaging with audiences on social media platforms. Research has shown that consumers are increasingly drawn to visual content, with platforms like Instagram, TikTok and Pinterest becoming key channels for brands to showcase their offerings (Roggeveen et al., 2021).

By leveraging these platforms, hotels and other brands can create visually captivating narratives that resonate with their target audience. These narratives not only capture attention but also effectively communicate the brand's essence, values, and unique offerings.

This visual approach facilitates emotional connections and enhances brand loyalty. Cheung et al. (2019) emphasize the importance of visual storytelling in building brand identity and engagement on social media. Social media platforms offer a unique opportunity for brands to engage in two-way dialogue with their audience (Fuaddah et al., 2022). Through deals, content, and visual storytelling, brands can foster a deeper relationship with their audience by encouraging them to share their own brand-related stories.

Hughes et al. (2016) also highlight the power of storytelling on online platforms, particularly when combined with consumer-generated content. They argue that by involving consumers as active participants in storytelling, brands can create a more engaging and interactive experience.

This approach is efficient for vulnerable healthcare consumers, who can benefit from the transformative potential of image-based storytelling on social media.

2.4 Customer Feedback and Reputation Management

The hospitality industry has witnessed a shift in the way customer feedback and reputation management are handled, thanks to social media (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). Platforms like TripAdvisor play a crucial role in shaping potential guests' decisions (Yilmaz, 2020). Hotels actively manage and respond to customer reviews to enhance guest experiences and demonstrate responsiveness to feedback. Companies actively promote their clients' user-generated content (UGC).

This content provides valuable insights into public perceptions and feedback about the company's products or services. By analyzing these comments, whether positive or negative, companies can assess their service performance and understand how customer opinions might affect others' destination or product choices (Perinoyto et al., 2017). The study by Lee and Hsiao (2019) found that positive reviews can increase travellers' willingness to pay for a hotel stay, whereas negative reviews can decrease it.

The study also found that negative reviews can have a longer-lasting impact on a hotel's reputation than positive reviews. Hotels have recognized the importance of actively engaging with customer reviews to enhance guest experiences and demonstrate responsiveness to feedback. In an era where guest-generated content holds immense power, hotels have increasingly embraced social media and online review platforms as channels for direct communication with their guests (Petruzzi, 2021).

This proactive approach not only allows hotels to address issues promptly but also provides an opportunity to showcase their commitment to customer satisfaction (Verma

& Pullishery, 2020). Consequently, hotels are investing more resources in staff training to effectively manage and respond to customer reviews, thereby fostering an environment of continuous improvement (Hewagama et al., 2019).

Positive customer reviews have a substantial influence on potential travellers' decisions. In the digital age, consumers often rely on their peers' experiences, as expressed in online reviews, to make informed choices about accommodations. A plethora of research underscores the pivotal role that positive reviews play in shaping perceptions and building trust among travellers (Gretzel et al., 2010; Sigala, 2012; Prayag et al., 2013; Pan et al., 2015; Xiang & Gretzel, 2017). Positive reviews not only serve as testimonials but also help establish a favourable image of the hotel, ultimately influencing consumers' purchase intentions (Ye et al., 2020).

The impact of negative reviews cannot be underestimated, as they can inflict considerable damage on a hotel's reputation (El-Said, 2020). Casado-Díaz et al. (2020) found that negative online reviews on social media can significantly affect hotels. The study found that negative reviews can lead to a decrease in hotel attitude and booking intentions. Consequently, hotels that respond to negative reviews in a timely and constructive manner can improve their attitudes and booking intentions.

Research suggests that a slight drop in a hotel's ratings on review websites can result in a significant loss of income and occupancy (Xiang et al., 2017). As a result, hotels are becoming more proactive in responding to negative reviews in a timely and professional manner, not only to minimize potential harm but also to demonstrate their dedication to customer happiness.

2.5 Influencer Marketing and User-Generated Content

In addition to Social media, digital influencers have emerged as key strategies for marketing and promoting tourist destinations (de Andrade et al., 2018). Influencer marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for hotels to engage with their target audience and expand their reach (Ye et al., 2021). Influencers can affect consumers' awareness, expertise, preference, and purchase intent through their posts (Chopra et al., 2021).

Collaborating with travel influencers and bloggers allows hotels to reach a targeted audience of potential guests who are interested in their brand and offerings. The rise of blogging can be attributed to the increasing availability of the internet, the rise of social media platforms, and the decline of traditional media outlets (Salmon, 2021). Unlike traditional media, blogs enable individuals to share content that resonates with their unique perspectives, making it highly relatable and engaging.

The interactive nature of blogs fosters active engagement and conversations, transforming readers into active participants in the discourse. This rise in the prominence of blogs as social media tools underscores the need for a comprehensive analysis of their implications within various sectors, including the hospitality industry. Influencer marketing can be a valuable tool for hotels looking to increase brand awareness, improve customer engagement, and boost bookings. However, it is important to choose the

right influencers for your campaign and to create content that is relevant and engaging. Femenia-Serra & Gretzel, 2020).

User-generated content (UGC), including guest photos and reviews, holds immense value as authentic endorsements that resonate with potential customers (Ahmad & Rydén, 2023). UGC is seen as more credible and trustworthy compared to traditional advertising messages, as it stems from real guest experiences (Adeloye et al., 2022).

UGC can be a valuable tool for businesses that are looking to increase brand awareness, build trust, and influence purchase decisions (Khan et al., 2021). Hotels that encourage guests to share their experiences online can harness the persuasive power of UGC to validate their offerings and create a sense of community around their brand.

Encouraging guests to share their experiences online not only enhances a hotel's credibility but also improves its online visibility (Lee et al., 2021). Engaging with UGC allows hotels to populate their social media profiles and websites with genuine content, portraying a more authentic and relatable image. This strategy also aligns with the increasing consumer preference for authentic experiences and personalized recommendations, making UGC a valuable asset for hotels aiming to establish a unique brand identity (Almeida et al., 2021).

Furthermore, user-generated content often has greater potential for virality, enabling hotels to reach a wider audience beyond their immediate follower base. Ristova & Angelkova (2019) argue that social media influencers are changing the hotel industry by increasing brand awareness and credibility, driving traffic to hotel websites and booking pages, helping hotels target specific markets, and fostering a sense of community around hotels. Hotels can benefit from working with social media influencers by reaching a wider audience, building credibility, creating a sense of urgency, and personalizing the guest experience.

3 DISCUSSION

This study marks a significant advancement in understanding social media's influence on the hospitality industry by providing a structured and nuanced analysis of the evolution from initial social media adoption to the sophisticated integration of omni-channel strategies and influencer marketing. Unlike earlier research, which primarily focused on establishing an online presence, this study delves deeper into the strategic use of User-Generated Content (UGC) and influencer partnerships.

This approach offers a comprehensive view of how these elements, supported by Social Proof Theory (Cialdini, 2009), Trust Theory (Mayer et al., 1995), and Engagement Theory (Broderick & Mueller, 2007), shape modern marketing practices and consumer behaviour in the tourism sector.

The findings reveal several key advancements in the field:

Omni-Channel Integration: This study highlights the importance of integrating online and offline touchpoints to enhance guest experiences. Earlier research often addressed social media in isolation, whereas this study emphasizes the strategic value of a seamless omni-channel approach. By creating consistent brand narratives across various platforms, hospitality businesses can improve customer satisfaction and loyalty, a progression from the fragmented strategies observed in previous studies.

Sustained Influencer Partnerships: The investigation into influencer marketing shows that enduring relationships with influencers aligned with brand values can lead to long-term brand loyalty. This contrasts with earlier work that often focused on the short-term impacts of influencer endorsements. Authenticity and credibility in influencer collaborations are shown to have a more profound and lasting impact on guest perceptions, suggesting a shift towards more strategic, genuine influencer engagements.

Enhanced Credibility through UGC: The study underscores the growing significance of UGC, such as guest photos and reviews, in building credibility and visibility. Unlike prior research that treated UGC as a supplementary element, this study reveals its central role in validating hotel offerings and fostering community trust. Encouraging guests to share their experiences actively transforms satisfied customers into brand advocates, a notable advancement in leveraging UGC to enhance brand reputation.

Visual Storytelling: The findings emphasize the importance of visual storytelling on platforms like Instagram and Pinterest for communicating brand identity and values. This approach, which was less explored in earlier studies, shows how visually engaging content can forge emotional connections and reinforce loyalty among target audiences.

Proactive Feedback Management: The study highlights the necessity of swift and thoughtful responses to customer feedback, an area that was often overlooked in previous research. Effective management of online reviews and feedback is shown to build trust and satisfaction, mitigate negative impacts, and demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement.

Integration of Traditional and Social Media: This research introduces the concept of integrating traditional and social media, offering a more comprehensive view of marketing strategies. Earlier studies often examined these approaches separately, whereas this study explores their synergy, offering insights into creating compelling, multi-faceted marketing campaigns.

Ethical Considerations and Emerging Platforms: The study also addresses ethical considerations in influencer collaborations, cross-cultural engagement, and the potential of emerging platforms like TikTok. This focus reflects a broader perspective on the evolving social media landscape, emphasizing the need for ethical practices and cultural sensitivity in digital marketing.

In the dynamic landscape of the hospitality industry, social media has ushered in a paradigm shift, transforming marketing practices and guest interactions. The synthesis of the literature underscores the significant role that social media platforms play in shaping brand identity, engaging customers, and managing reputation. As hotels navigate this digital terrain, it becomes evident that embracing omnichannel strategies can create seamless, interconnected guest experiences that foster loyalty.

Furthermore, the authenticity of influencer marketing and the persuasive power of user-generated content (UGC) emerge as pivotal factors in shaping guest perceptions and

preferences. Hospitality businesses are encouraged to strategically utilize visual storytelling to communicate their values and offerings, fostering emotional connections that resonate with audiences.

A proactive stance towards customer feedback and effective reputation management has become imperative, as positive reviews amplify trust while swift responses mitigate negative sentiments. Integrating traditional and social media efforts offers comprehensive marketing campaigns, while ethical influencer partnerships and culturally sensitive engagement strategies foster authenticity.

Addressing the identified research gaps can refine strategies, elevate guest experiences and enable businesses to thrive in the digital era. The complex interplay between social media and hospitality marketing underscores the need for continuous adaptation and innovation. By heeding the insights from this literature review, hospitality businesses can navigate this dynamic landscape and successfully engage the modern digital traveller.

While this literature review provides a comprehensive synthesis of current knowledge on social media's impact on the hospitality industry, it is not without limitations. The review is constrained by the selection criteria of the included studies, which may exclude recent research or emerging perspectives.

Additionally, the interpretative nature of literature reviews means that findings are subject to the biases of the selected sources and the reviewers' subjective interpretations. Future research should address these limitations by incorporating a broader range of studies and considering recent developments in the field.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In conclusion, this study builds upon existing research by offering a more integrated and strategic perspective on social media's role in hospitality marketing. Theoretical frameworks such as Social Proof Theory (Cialdini, 2009), Trust Theory (Mayer et al., 1995), and Engagement Theory (Broderick & Mueller, 2007) provide a robust foundation for understanding the impact of UGC and engagement metrics.

By bridging theoretical insights with practical implications, this research contributes valuable knowledge to the field, guiding hospitality businesses in adapting to the dynamic digital environment and enhancing their marketing strategies. Future studies should continue to explore these areas, focusing on omni-channel integration, long-term influencer impact, and ethical considerations to further advance our understanding of social media's role in shaping consumer behaviour and brand perception.

4.1 Research Gaps and Scope for Future Research

The literature review identifies several noteworthy research gaps that hold promise for future investigations into social media's influence on the hospitality industry. First, the concept of omni-channel strategies, widely discussed in the retail sector, remains underexplored in the hospitality context. To address this gap, future research could examine the effectiveness of omni-channel approaches in enhancing customer experiences, engagement, and loyalty in hotels,

shedding light on how the seamless integration of online and offline touchpoints affects guest perceptions.

Secondly, while the role of influencer marketing in attracting potential guests is recognized, there is a dearth of research focused on the enduring impact of influencer endorsements on long-term brand loyalty within the hospitality sector. Investigating the mechanisms that sustain influencer collaborations over time could provide insights into cultivating deeper, more meaningful connections with guests.

Thirdly, while user-generated content (UGC) is acknowledged as a powerful tool for building credibility and engagement, the nuances of customer trust in different types of UGC warrant further exploration. Future research could unravel the factors that shape customer trust in reviews, photos, and videos shared by fellow guests, thereby advancing a more nuanced understanding of UGC's persuasive influence.

Moreover, exploring how hotels can proactively leverage social media to enhance the overall guest experience remains an underexplored area. Investigating strategies that leverage social media to anticipate and fulfill guest needs could offer insights into creating a more personalized, exceptional stay.

The integration of traditional and social media efforts presents another research gap, necessitating a comprehensive exploration of methods to synergize these approaches for effective marketing campaigns. This area calls for research that uncovers strategies to maximize the impact of both traditional methods, like direct email marketing, and dynamic social media platforms.

Ethical considerations in influencer collaborations, cross-cultural implications of social media engagement, and the evolving impact of emerging platforms are areas ripe for exploration. Unravelling the ethical dimensions of influencer partnerships, understanding how cultural nuances influence engagement, and assessing the potential of emerging platforms such as TikTok and Clubhouse for hospitality marketing could yield valuable insights.

Addressing these research gaps could enrich our understanding of the intricate interplay among social media, hospitality marketing, and consumer behaviour. By delving deeper into these areas, researchers can guide the development of effective strategies that adapt to the evolving landscape, ensuring the industry remains dynamic and responsive to the needs of digitally engaged consumers.

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CRediT author statement

Term	Definition	Author 1
Conceptualization	Ideas; formulation or evolution of overarching research goals and aims	x
Methodology	Development or design of methodology; creation of models	x
Software	Programming, software development; designing computer programs; implementation of the computer code and supporting algorithms; testing of existing code components	x
Validation	Verification, whether as a part of the activity or separate, of the overall replication/ reproducibility of results/experiments and other research outputs	x
Formal analysis	Application of statistical, mathematical, computational, or other formal techniques to analyze or synthesize study data	x
Investigation	Conducting a research and investigation process, specifically performing the experiments, or data/evidence collection	x
Resources	Provision of study materials, reagents, materials, patients, laboratory samples, animals, instrumentation, computing resources, or other analysis tools	x
Data Curation	Management activities to annotate (produce metadata), scrub data and maintain research data (including software code, where it is necessary for interpreting the data itself) for initial use and later reuse	x
Writing - Original Draft	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically writing the initial draft (including substantive translation)	x

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Edgar D'Souza

Term	Definition	Author 1
Writing - Review & Editing	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work by those from the original research group, specifically critical review, commentary or revision – including pre-or post-publication stages	x
Visualization	Preparation, creation and/or presentation of the published work, specifically visualization/ data presentation	x
Supervision	Oversight and leadership responsibility for the research activity planning and execution, including mentorship external to the core team	x
Project administration	Management and coordination responsibility for the research activity planning and execution	x
Funding acquisition	Acquisition of the financial support for the project leading to this publication	x

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