



The Impact Of Social Media Marketing On Cognitive And Affective Destination Image Toward Intention To Visit Cultural Destinations In Vietnam

Dieu Thuy Vu¹, Thi Mai Le^{2*}, Trung Hien Nguyen³, Tuan Minh Nguyen⁴

¹Swinburne Vietnam Alliance Program, FPT University, Hanoi, Vietnam

²Faculty of Economics and Management, International School, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam

³Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam

⁴High school of education sciences, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam

*Corresponding author: mailt@vnui.edu.vn

Abstract

Research Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how social media marketing influences tourists' cognitive and affective perceptions of destination image and their subsequent intention to visit cultural destinations in Vietnam. The research explores how these marketing efforts shape tourists' mental and emotional engagement with destinations.

Research Motivation

With the emerging impact of social media on travel decisions, this research addresses a gap in understanding how social media marketing affects both cognitive (knowledge-based) and affective (emotion-based) destination images and ultimately influences tourists' intention to visit cultural destinations. This topic is particularly relevant given the increasing importance of social media in shaping tourism behaviors globally.

Research Design, Approach, and Method

The study utilizes a cross-sectional survey approach, employing convenience sampling to collect 208 valid data from social media users in Vietnam. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is used to examine the relationships between social media marketing, destination image (both cognitive and affective), and tourists' visit intentions.

Main Findings

The results reveal that social media marketing significantly improves both cognitive and affective perceptions of destination image, positively impacting tourists' intention to visit cultural sites. Additionally, the findings indicate a partial mediation effect, where social media marketing influences intentions through enhanced destination image.

Practical/Managerial Implications

Destination managers should leverage social media marketing to enhance both the knowledge and emotional appeal of destinations. By creating engaging and emotionally compelling content, destination managers can boost interest and visitation rates, offering a practical strategy for promoting cultural tourism in Vietnam.

Keywords: social media marketing, cognitive destination image, affective destination image, tourist intentions, cultural destinations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media is crucial in facilitating travellers in discovering their inspiration for their next trip. Over eighty percent of travellers in the Asia-Pacific region and up to 91% of Vietnamese travellers have made their travel arrangements based on

© The Author(s) 2025

D. Nguyen Van et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference on Emerging Challenges: Sustainable Strategies in the Data-driven Economy (ICECH 2024)*, Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research 320,

https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-694-9_21

the recommendations and reviews provided by online content creators. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and Youtube are the predominant social media platforms used by tourists in the Asia-Pacific area. The majority of Facebook users in this region are Vietnamese, accounting for 95%, whereas TikTok is used by 83% (baotintuc.vn, 2024).

The category of social media encompasses customer review platforms, social networking platforms, and virtual communities. For destination marketing organizations (DMOs), it is an effective approach in their marketing strategy to efficiently target worldwide consumers with little resources (Hays et al. 2013). While hotels.com and similar travel intermediary websites assist young visitors in finding hotel information, social media platforms like Tripadvisor enable them to make reservations (Sun et al., 2016). Moreover, social media significantly determines travel choices and the perceived functional quality (L.-H. Chang et al., 2015).

The travel desires of tourists are significantly shaped by the captivating images of places of interest (Kim et al., 2019). Visual representations can depict the cognitive and emotional involvement of travelers. Imagery can enhance cognitive engagement by facilitating travelers' awareness and comprehension of the characteristics of destinations. To enhance affective involvement, they enable tourists to experience and establish a connection with the destination through an emotional approach (WC Gartner, 1993; Baloglu et al., 1997a; Baloglu, 1999; Beerli A., 2004; Beerli and JD Martin, 2004). Moreover, destination images have an impact on travellers in making decisions related to travel purchases (Chu et al., 2022).

Initially, cultural tourism emerged in Europe and has continued to evolve up to the present day (Richards, 2007; Liu, 2012). The promotion of cultural heritage, including cultural assets such as museums and galleries, offers competitive benefits to this sort of tourism in comparison to other sorts of tourism (Richards, 2007). Moreover, Vietnam's many historical sites and enduring cultural values have contributed to the rise of cultural tourism in the country. Previous research on cultural tourism in Vietnam has examined the elements that impact its growth, as well as the perceptions and motivations of tourists towards cultural sites. C.H. Nguyen (2022) identifies six major elements that contribute to the growth of cultural tourism in the Mekong Delta region: tourism development policies, tourism infrastructure, human resources for tourism, tourism resources, geographical location, and tourism products and services. The objective of Nguyen & Cheung (2013) was to comprehend the tourists' impression of Hue, a renowned heritage site in Vietnam, as well as their reasons and intentions for learning about Hue cultural heritage, by categorizing various tourist profiles. A separate study undertaken by Ramkissoon et al. (2011) identified the influence of destination image on tourists' behavioural intention to consume cultural sites. However, there is a lack of research in this area specifically in the context of Vietnam. Moreover, social media has assumed a pivotal position in the tourism sector. This study aims to fill the existing gaps by examining the impact of social media marketing on tourists' perception of destinations and their likelihood to visit Vietnamese cultural tourism sites. Moreover, our objective is to determine if both the affective and cognitive perception of a destination image have varying levels of impact on these intentions, therefore revealing the intricate dynamics of this complex behaviour.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Cultural tourism

Tourism and culture have become a trending topic in research in recent years. Cultural tourism is a combination of these two aspects. Cultural tourism has become one of the most developing determinants of the regional economies of each country.

Cultural tourism represents a distinctive form of tourism that is particularly prevalent in Europe. This form of tourism also makes significant economic contributions to both urban and rural areas in this region (Richards, 2018). A considerable number of tourists visit countries such as Italy, Greece, Egypt, or the Holy Land of Israel specifically to engage in this type of tourism (Towse, 2003).

Cultural tourism is defined as an activity in which travelers are mainly driven by the desire to learn, explore, experience, and interact with both tangible and intangible cultural attractions and offerings at cultural sites. These attractions and products are closely connected to characteristics that embody the material, spiritual, and attributes of a community. What do these attractions encompass? They include forms of art and creative industries such as architecture, music, and literature, along with historical and cultural heritage, traditional and local cuisine, and vibrant cultures characterized by distinct lifestyles, values, beliefs, and customs. Zhang et al. (2023) highlight that cultural tourism is a key element of cultural heritage tourism, which integrates cultural tourism, heritage tourism, and developments in areas such as tourism, museums, and technology. Promoting destinations and their regional cultures is a highly effective way to foster the growth of both cultural tourism and cultural heritage tourism in a sustainable manner.

2.2 Social media marketing (SMM)

Social media marketing is a digital marketing approach that utilizes social media technology, channels, and software to enable organizations and Internet users to communicate, participate, and exchange products or services (Tuten & Solomon, 2018). A comprehensive grasp of each component enables a clear comprehension of the functioning of social

media marketing. Social media represents a digital platform that operates on the internet, serving as a network of interconnected information. Lacking this infrastructure, the functioning of social media platforms becomes unattainable (Tuten & Solomon, 2018; Tuten & Mintu-Wimsatt, 2018). As well as Tuten & Solomon (2018), social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, and social software functions like chatbots facilitate social media capabilities and interactions. Moreover, the utilization of various computing devices, such as tablet PCs, smartphones, laptops, mobile tablets, and even smart televisions, can enhance accessibility to social media platforms.

Specifically, the usage of social media platforms in SMM can prove advantageous for both enterprises and customers. Consumers exhibit higher levels of engagement with the brand, engage in wider information sharing, and establish a reciprocal relationship (Laroche et al., 2012; Githa Heggde & G Shainesh, 2018). Moreover, SMM can potentially enhance consumers' confidence, thereby boosting their inclination to purchase goods and services (Hajli, 2014).

Business enterprises employ social media platforms to establish an internet-based community where individuals have similar interests related to a certain product (Culnan et al., 2010). Effective management of an online community can facilitate progressive conversations among consumers, resulting in heightened brand loyalty, and enhancing the business (Stubbs & Cocklin, 2008; Teece, 2010).

Social media platforms are of paramount importance in the sector of tourism and hospitality. Multiple studies have proved the influence of SMM on traveller behaviours and the operation and management of tourism and hospitality enterprises (Park & Oh, 2012; Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Each trip and vacation requires passengers to actively search for extensive information, such as destinations, lodging, transportation, and more. Social media platforms play a crucial role in facilitating the acquisition of this information and influencing the decision-making process of travellers (Fotis et al., 2012; Singh & Yadav, 2018). In Vietnam, Truong et al. (2023) examined the impact of social media on the visit intentions of Vietnamese tourists belonging to generation Z. This group is characterized as digital natives and is well-versed in using social media, Internet, and smart devices (Turner, 2015). With respect to enterprises, social media provides a competitive edge for destinations, raises awareness of destinations, and improves the image and reputation of the destination. Moreover, it facilitates the communication between tourism firms and the target audience, provides them with chances to enter new and specialized markets, and assists travelers in selecting their desired destinations (Kiráčová & Pavlíčka, 2015).

Currently, Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) utilize social media platforms to promote destinations, in addition to traditional methods such as distributing brochures and participating in travel fairs (Shani et al., 2009). User-generated content (UGC) has become a vital element of social media marketing within the tourism sector (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). Incorporating visual content, such as photographs, into discussions about locations can significantly enhance tourists' perceptions of these destinations (Stepchenkova & Zhan, 2013). Xu et al. (2021) introduced two distinct types of UGC on social media: factual UGC and emotional UGC. Both are closely linked to the formation of destination image. Factual UGC contributes to cognitive engagement by providing information about events, transportation, and destinations, whereas emotional UGC fosters affective engagement through content forms like music and films.

Using the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) framework, Yamagishi et al. (2023) demonstrated that both factual and emotional UGC impact tourists' trust in UGC and their intention to visit destinations. Interestingly, while decisions to visit are more influenced by emotions than by logic, emotional UGC has a more significant effect on destination image compared to factual UGC.

Destination branding remains a critical focus for DMOs, as establishing a favorable and accurate perception among tourists is essential. Ruiz-Real et al. (2020), through bibliometric analysis, offered deep insights into the opportunities and challenges of destination branding. They discovered strong connections between destination branding and factors such as word-of-mouth, social media, customer-based brand equity, and destination loyalty. Social media and word-of-mouth are pivotal in promoting destinations. To build customer-based brand equity, each destination must craft unique experiences that allow tourists to differentiate it from others, thereby fostering loyalty to the destination.

Effective destination branding necessitates bilateral communication. Organizational-generated content (OGC), user-generated content (UGC), and social media are all essential components of this concept. Nevertheless, because of the ease with which individuals can express their opinions and recount their experiences through social media platforms, these platforms have the potential to portray both a favorable and unfavorable perception of the places. Hence, destination managers must possess strategies to handle the adverse aspects of UGC through effective control. OGC is crucial for effectively managing destination branding (Lim, Chung, & Weaver, 2012).

2.3 Destination image

The introduction of destination images by Gunn in 1972 established a fundamental concept that has been extensively researched in the field of tourism. The concept of destination image refers to the cognitive and affective approaches that travelers employ to incorporate value and emotions into images. Specifically, the perspective of cognition refers to the knowledge and beliefs that travelers possess about a location, whereas the emotional approach focuses on their emotions, attitudes, and feelings towards it (Walmsley & Young, 1998; Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Ryan & Cave, 2005).

Smith et al. (2015) assessed destination images at three distinct phases: before, during, and after the journey. Some modifications and refinements can be applied to the image both before and after the trip. Prior to embarking on a journey,

the destination image serves as the driving force that compels tourists to choose a place. Cognitive engagement can be maintained throughout the journey. Tourists want to ensure that their cognitive connection prior to arrival corresponds with their actual experiences. Nevertheless, occurrences such as traffic congestion can impact their emotional involvement, thereby affecting their general enjoyment of the journey. Hence, hotels, airlines, and restaurants strive to establish a favorable perception and unforgettable initial impact. Tourists at the post-trip stage want to keep up a good perception of the destination in order to prevent cognitive dissonance.

2.4 Hypothesis development

The relationship between social media marketing and destination image and behavioural intention

The concept of destination image refers to the comprehensive perception and emotional response of a traveller towards a certain destination. Individuals may acquire information and have emotions regarding the destination.

Tourism professionals regard social media platforms as valuable sources of knowledge regarding various places (Xiang & Gretzel, 2020; Kim et al., 2014). Social networking services, including Facebook, have the potential to elicit cognitive activities among Internet users. Visual representation plays a vital role in influencing the cognitive processes of travelers. Nevertheless, the study highlighted that the visual content found by travelers through spontaneous searches is more trustworthy than the ones they browse on Facebook. By analysing Facebook advertising campaigns and using the AIDAT model, an expansion of the AIDA model created by Charlesworth (2011), and Platon et al. (2014), elucidated the process of customer engagement when they interact with Facebook advertising. This process progresses through three primary stages: cognitive, affective, and behavioural. In the initial phase, the Cognitive phases encompass Attention, which pertains to the mechanism of capturing the appeal of visitors through the content. Based on the findings of this study, the initial hypothesis is as follows:

H1: SMM positively influences cognitive destination image.

Furthermore, a well-designed Facebook interface has the potential to enhance how users feel about places. Hence, Facebook not only stimulates cognitive processes but also shapes attitudes. (Kim et al., 2014).

Propose the AIDAT model, where the Affective stage comprises Interest (I) and Desire (D). At this stage, the message should assist customers in recognizing their interests and desires by substantiating them with advantages and inherent worth (Planton et al., 2014). Hence, the second hypothesis might be stated as:

H2: SMM positively influences affective destination image.

The utilization of social media has been immensely prevalent, and its influence on travellers' likelihood to visit tourist areas has been extensively examined. Anuar et al. (2021) established that the characteristics of travel sources and influencers, such as their attractiveness, quality, authenticity, and credibility of information, have an impact on the trust placed in these sources and influencers. Consequently, this trust affects the intention of their followers to visit. Gaffar et al. (2022) highlighted that social media platforms, particularly Facebook, have the ability to actively involve Internet users through interactive content sharing and communities, therefore impacting their intention to visit. Moreover, the Facebook profiles of destinations have the capacity to enhance the intention of their admirers to visit (Leung et al., 2019). The final step of the AIDAT model is the behavioural stage, encompassing Action (A) and Tell (T). During this phase, customers are prepared to take action upon obtaining the advantages and they have the ability to communicate their feedback and experiences to others by sharing them on their Facebook profile (Planton et al., 2014). Hence, the third hypothesis might be stated as:

H3: SMM positively influences visit intention.

The relationship between destination image and the intention to visit

The concept of destination image has become a key factor in shaping travel intentions. Most research on destination image emphasizes the correlation between cognitive and emotional components (Beerli & Martin, 2004; Lin et al., 2007; Agapito et al., 2013).

Baloglu and McCleary (1999) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the research and empirical data that demonstrates the interconnectedness of cognitive and affective components, and highlighted the significant influence of cognition on the outcome. Prior to making a decision to travel to a destination, tourists or consumers are initially drawn to the perception of the destination or organization. The models proposed by Pan et al. (2021), Wang and Hsu (2010), and Park and Njite (2010) have shown that the image of a tourist site can be utilized to forecast the future behavioural intention of tourists. Hence, two hypotheses are proposed as:

H4: Cognitive Destination Image positively influences the intention to visit cultural destinations.

H5: Affective Destination Image positively influences the intention to visit cultural destinations.

Based on the aforementioned hypothesis, the study model depicted in Figure 1 has been constructed to demonstrate the

five theoretical connections among variables.

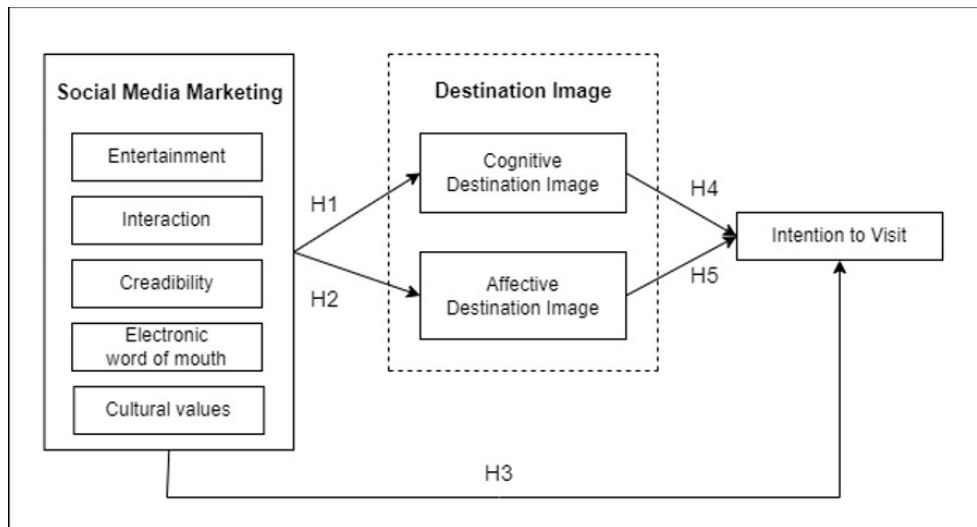


Fig.1. Proposed research model

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Samples and model

The data for this study was collected through a cross-sectional survey. Utilising the convenience sampling technique, this survey targeted social networking channel (Facebook) users in Vietnam aged 18 to over 25 years old. A total of 220 survey responses were gathered via this method. After excluding 12 responses because of missing answers to question items, we obtained a total of 208 valid and complete data. Table 1 shows demographic and behavioural features of these respondents.

Table 1. Profile of respondents (N = 208)

Features	Distribution of responses
Gender	Female (56.7%), male (43.3%)
Age	18-25 years old (89.9%), above 25 years old (10.1%)
Frequency of social networking platform usage	Very frequently (51%), frequently (39.9%), rarely (4.8%), sometimes (4.3%)
Social networking platform (most used)	Facebook (32.9%), Tiktok (25.8%), Instagram (20.5%), Youtube (18.4%), LinkedIn (2.3%)

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was applied to examine the connections between social media marketing (SMM), cognitive and affective destination image, and the intention to visit cultural destinations in Vietnam. SEM helped analyse the exogenous variables, such as social media and intention to visit, alongside the endogenous variables, which included cognitive and affective destination images.

3.2 Measurement design

The present study utilized a 5-point Likert scale, which is widely regarded as a reliable and straightforward method for assessing the attitudes of the participants. The rating scale ranges from negative to positive, where 1 indicates Strongly disagree, 2 indicates Disagree, 3 represents Uncertain, 4 indicates Agree, and 5 represents Strongly agree (Zikmund et al., 2020).

The Table 2 displays the quantitative measurements for each of the constructs examined in the study.

Table 2. Dimensions and indicators of conducted variables

Variable	Items	Indicators	Sources
Entertainment	ENT1	Fun and humorous	(Wijayaa et al., 2021)
	ENT2	Diverse and interesting	
	ENT3	Useful	

Variable		Items	Indicators	Sources
Social media marketing	Interaction	ENT4	Up to date	
		INT1	Actively uploaded	
		INT2	Discussion	
		INT3	Interact with followers	
		INT4	Sharing information	
	Credibility	CRE1	Clarity of facilities	
		CRE2	Trusted information	
		CRE3	Trusted consumer reviews	
		CRE4	Trusted answer	
	Electronic word of mouth	EWM1	Share with friends and family	
		EWM2	Recommend to friend	
		EWM3	Share to private social media	
		EWM4	Positive opinion	
	Cultural values	CLV1	Traditional values	
		CLV2	National identify	
		CLV3	Historical	
Cognitive Destination Image		CDI1	Know the attractiveness	(Kim & Yoon, 2003)
		CDI2	Know the facilities	
		CDI3	Know the detailed information	
		CDI4	Reputation	
Affective Destination Image		ADI1	Memorable experiences	(Baloglu & Brinberg, 1997)
		ADI2	Exciting experiences	
		ADI3	Comfortable place	
		ADI4	Safe	
Intention to visit		ITV1	Intend to Visit	(Ng, Lee, & Soutar, 2007)
		ITV2	Plan to visit	
		ITV3	Enjoy when visiting	

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability analysis

Cronbach (1951) introduced the Alpha value to measure the internal consistency of items within a scale. It is also one of the most utilized in the social sciences. Cortina (1993), Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), and Devellis (2016) suggest that Cronbach's α value should be above 0.65

Table 3 reveals that all variables varied from 0.866 to 0.963, with the lowest adjusted item-total correlation being greater than 0.30. Consequently, all variables demonstrated internal consistency and reliability, making them suitable for use in this study.

Table 3. Reliabilities among the variables

Variable	Total Items	Cronbach's alpha	Corrected Item-Total Correlation (lowest)	Corrected Item-Total Correlation (highest)
Social media marketing (SMM)				
Entertainment (ENT)	4	0.897	0.719	0.850
Interaction (INT)	4	0.896	0.760	0.778
Credibility (CRE)	4	0.893	0.742	0.789
Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM)	4	0.866	0.659	0.806
Cultural values (CLV)	3	0.927	0.831	0.861
Cognitive Destination Image (CDI)	4	0.941	0.839	0.874
Affective Destination Image (ADI)	4	0.916	0.775	0.846

Intention to visit (ITV)	3	0.911	0.811	0.834
--------------------------	---	-------	-------	-------

4.2 Comparing Mean Test

An independent sample T-test and one-way ANOVA were employed to compare the means across different gender groups, age categories, and frequencies of social media use.

Gender

Table 4. T-test results by gender

Demographic	Characteristics	N	Mean	Std	t	p-value
Gender	Female	118	3.7599	0.93663	0.203	0.420
	Male	90	3.7333	0.92974		

Table 4 indicates that the significance T-Test result for the quantitative variable ITV (intention to visit) is 0.420, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, no statistically significant difference was found between males and females in terms of their intention to visit cultural tourism sites in Vietnam.

Age Group

Demographic	Levene Statistic	Sig	F-value	p-value
Age	9.227	0.001	0.508	0.614

Table 5. ANOVA Test results by age group

The Sig Levene Test value in Table 5 is less than 0.05, indicating that the variance of the age value groupings is not uniform. The p-value (Sig Welch value) for the quantitative variable ITV is 0.614, which is more than the significance level of 0.05. In conclusion, there is no statistically significant difference in the average intention to visit Vietnamese cultural tourist destinations across various age groups.

Frequency (using social networks)

Table 6. ANOVA Test results by frequency

Demographic	Levene Statistic	Sig	F-value	p-value
Frequency	7.319	0.001	3.440	0.033

Table 6 indicates that the Sig Levene Test value is less than 0.05, suggesting that the variance among groups of social network usage frequency estimates is not consistent. Given that the p-value for the quantitative variable ITV is 0.033, which is less than the significance level of 0.05, we may infer that there exists an average disparity between the frequency of social network usage and the intention to visit Vietnamese cultural tourist sites. Presented below is a chart illustrating the disparity:

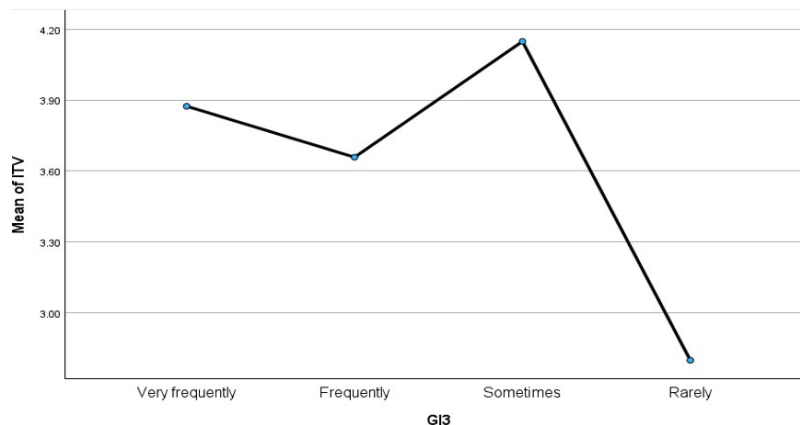


Fig. 2. Frequency chart result

The data shows that individuals with minimal social network usage display a significantly lower likelihood of visiting cultural tourism sites (a score of only 2.8). In contrast, those who use social networks occasionally, often, or very often demonstrate a higher inclination to visit Vietnamese cultural destinations, with scores exceeding 3.6. Based on this observation, it becomes evident that the frequency of social network usage exerts an important effect on the intention to visit cultural tourist sites in Vietnam.

4.3. Measurement model

Analysis of the measurement model is the initial step in processing quantitative data obtained from survey distribution findings. Conventionally, this stage is seen as an assessment of both reliability and validity. Assessment of validity was conducted by calculating the average variance extracted (AVE) (Cohen et al., 2018; dos Santos & Cirillo, 2021) and outer loading estimates. The assessment of reliability is conducted using the composite reliability value (CR) (Novick & Lewis, 1967; Tenko Raykov & Grayson, 2003)

Table 7. Standardized factor loadings, CR and AVE of the model.

Construct	Item	Standardized factor loading	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Social media marketing			0.964	0.600
Entertainment			0.900	0.764
Fun	ENT1	0.833		
Interesting	ENT2	0.923		
Useful	ENT3	0.857		
Up to date	ENT4	0.882		
Interaction			0.896	0.762
Actively uploaded	INT1	0.871		
Discussion	INT2	0.877		
Interact with followers	INT3	0.875		
Sharing information	INT4	0.870		
Credibility			0.894	0.758
Clarity of facilities	CRE1	0.854		
Trusted information	CRE2	0.881		
Trusted consumer reviews	CRE3	0.874		
Trusted answer	CRE4	0.873		
Electronic word of mouth			0.873	0.718
Share with friends and family	EWM1	0.852		
Recommend to friend	EWM2	0.900		
Share on private social media	EWM3	0.807		
Positive opinion	EWM4	0.827		
Cultural values			0.927	0.872
Traditional values	CLV1	0.927		
National identify	CLV2	0.937		
Historical	CLV3	0.938		
Cognitive Destination Image			0.941	0.849
Know the attractiveness	CDI1	0.931		
Know the facilities	CDI2	0.927		
Know the detailed information	CDI3	0.908		
Reputation	CDI4	0.919		
Affective Destination Image			0.918	0.799
Memorable experiences	ADI1	0.876		
Exciting experiences	ADI2	0.917		
Comfortable place	ADI3	0.912		
Safe	ADI4	0.869		
Intention to visit			0.911	0.849
Intend to visit	ITV1	0.918		
Plan to visit	ITV2	0.927		
Enjoy when visiting	ITV3	0.920		

Table 7 presents a concise overview of the study on the measurement model, encompassing estimates of average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR), and outer loading values. One specific requirement is that the loading factor should exceed 0.70 (Hair et al. 2019). Furthermore, all the standardized factor loadings exhibited statistical significance, with values ranging from 0.807 to 0.938. Composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) should both serve as indicators of convergent validity in the results of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). In accordance with Hair (Hair et al. 2019), the estimations for CR and AVE should exceed 0.700 and 0.500, respectively. The CR and AVE readings in Table 7 demonstrated a range of 0.873 to 0.964 and 0.600 to 0.872, respectively, surpassing their

recommended thresholds.

Table 8. The latent variable correlation matrix: discriminant validity

	ADI	CDI	CLV	CRE	ENT	EWM	INT	ITV	SMM
ADI	0.894								
CDI	0.806	0.921							
CLV	0.764	0.770	0.934						
CRE	0.744	0.691	0.732	0.871					
ENT	0.738	0.691	0.716	0.686	0.874				
EWM	0.752	0.690	0.760	0.785	0.671	0.847			
INT	0.744	0.654	0.713	0.717	0.774	0.705	0.873		
ITV	0.833	0.820	0.755	0.737	0.701	0.769	0.693	0.921	
SMM	0.847	0.791	0.883	0.889	0.873	0.886	0.886	0.827	0.775

In this study, the Fornell and Larcker criteria were employed to carry out further measures and confirm the validity and reliability. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), it is necessary to compare the squared correlation between the constructions of a certain construct and all other referents with the AVE value of each construct. Fornell and Larcker (1981) specified that the AVE square root of a construct should exceed its correlation value with other constructs. Diagonal symmetry refers to the condition where the values of all diagonal elements exceed the values of off-diagonal elements, therefore designating all structures as separate. In general, the outcomes of this measurement model exhibited full validity and reliability, and the data can be further analyzed by utilization of structural modeling.

4.4. Structural Equation Modeling

At this point, social media marketing variables of second order need to be constructed. The constitutive variables of social media marketing are credibility, entertainment, electronic word-of-mouth, cultural values, and engagement. The model incorporates measures such as the value of determination (R²), predictive relevance (Q²), effect magnitude (f²), and path analysis (Hair et al. 2019).

Table 9. The Structural Model Analysis Result

Construct	R ²	Q ²
Social Media Marketing (SMM)		
Cognitive Destination Image (CDI)	0.626	0.616
Affective Destination Image (ADI)	0.717	0.715
Intention to Visit (ITV)	0.780	0.685

The table 9 displays the significance of R² as a parameter for assessing the extent to which the independent variable influences the dependent variable (Ullman & Bentler, 2012; Bowen & Shenyang Guo, 2012). Based on the R² estimate, social media marketing influences cognitive and affective destination image by 62.6% and 71.7% respectively. The R² intention-to-visit value of 0.780 indicates that social media marketing, cognitive destination image, and affective destination image together influenced the intention-to-visit variable by 78%. Nevertheless, the remaining outcome is impacted by other variables that were not considered in this research. Furthermore, the projected significance value of each variable (Q²) exceeds 0. The predictive power of affective destination image (0.715), visit intention (0.685), and cognitive destination image (0.616) is sufficiently high. Hence, this study model is suitable and optimal.

Table 10. Effect Size Analysis Result

Path	F ²	Interpretation
SMM -> CDI	1.670	Large
SMM -> ADI	2.539	Large
SMM -> ITV	0.105	Small
CDI -> ITV	0.153	Medium
ADI -> ITV	0.101	Small

The statistical significance of social media marketing on cognitive destination image, affective destination image, and intention to visit is shown in Table 11, with values of 1.670, 2.539, and 0.105 for each path. Based on an F² value of 0.153, the cognitive destination image has a moderate influence on the travel intention of visitors. Furthermore, the impact of the effective destination image, which has a value of 0.101, on the intention to attend is minimal.

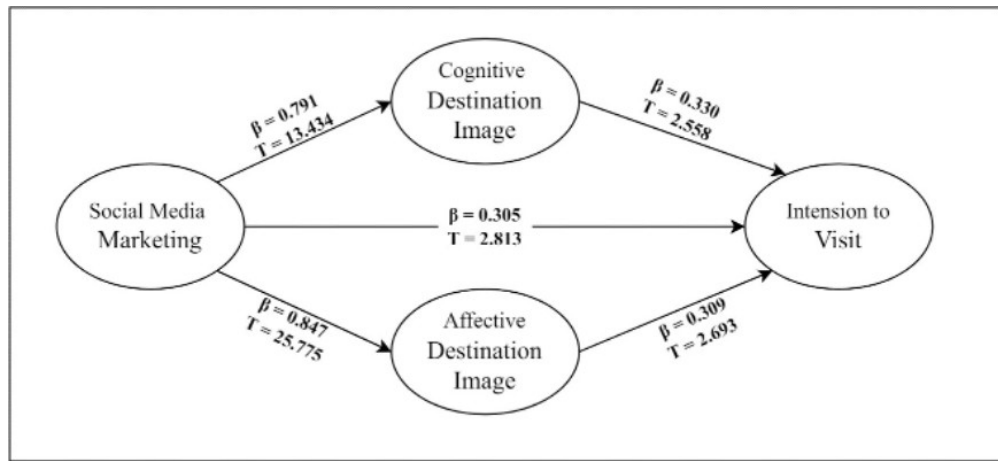
Table 11. Results for Structural equation model

Variables	Coefficients	T - values	P - values	Hypothesis	Hypothesis support
SMM -> CDI	0.791	13.434	0.000	H1	Accepted
SMM -> ADI	0.847	25.775	0.000	H2	Accepted
SMM -> ITV	0.305	2.813	0.005	H3	Accepted
CDI -> ITV	0.330	2.558	0.011	H4	Accepted
ADI -> ITV	0.309	2.693	0.007	H5	Accepted

The table above demonstrates that all proposed hypotheses can be readily accepted. The analysis findings indicate that social media marketing has a statistically significant and favorable influence on both cognitive destination image (β : 0.791; T: 13.434) and affective destination image (β : 0.847; T: 25.775). Thus, both **H1 and H2 are accepted**.

Furthermore, the study findings indicated that social media marketing (β : 0.305; T: 2.813), cognitive destination image (β : 0.330; T: 2.558), and affective destination image (β : 0.309; T: 2.693) have a substantial impact on tourists' intention to visit. Thus, the hypotheses **H3, H4, and H5 are accepted**.

Figure 3 presents the summary of the comprehensive model and the outcomes of the hypothesis testing conducted in the study.

**Fig. 3.** Research conceptual framework

4.5. Findings

This research examines the impact of social media marketing on tourists' perceptions and intentions regarding Vietnamese cultural destinations. The research findings elucidate that social media marketing, cognitive destination image, and affective destination image significantly influence the intention to visit these destinations, with respective impact values of 0.305, 0.613, and 0.550.

The study supports the hypothesis that social media marketing enhances the cognitive destination image, using metrics such as entertainment, credibility, word of mouth, engagement, and cultural value to measure marketing efforts. The content on social media platforms for cultural tourism in Vietnam primarily offers useful information, aiding tourists in their decision-making process.

Further, the research confirms that social media marketing positively affects the affective destination image, which is pivotal as the emotional appeal of Vietnamese cultural destinations significantly correlates with tourist attraction. This positive emotional framing on social media platforms is essential for attracting tourists.

The study also reveals an indirect relationship between social media marketing and tourists' intentions, indicating that social media partially mediates the appeal of cultural tourism destinations. Moreover, the significant relationship between cognitive destination image and tourist interest suggests that knowledge about the destinations plays a crucial role in shaping tourists' intentions.

Finally, the research underscores the importance of affective destination image, affirming that a positive emotional depiction of destinations on social media notably increases the likelihood of visits. This highlights the critical role of emotional elements in shaping tourists' intentions to visit Vietnamese cultural sites.

5. CONCLUSION

The results of data analysis indicate that Social Media marketing, cognitive destination image, and affective destination image are significant factors influencing the intention to visit cultural destinations in Vietnam. These factors stem from the

exogenous variable, which includes social media (including entertainment, interaction, credibility, EWOM, cultural values), and the endogenous variable, which includes the destination image (including cognitive and affective destination image). The findings of the data analysis conducted in chapter four are shown in Table 12.

Table 12. The Hypothesis Analysis Results

Hypothesis	Finding
H1: Social media marketing positively influences cognitive destination image.	Supported
H2: Social media marketing positively influences affective destination image.	Supported
H3: Social media marketing positively influences visit intentions to cultural destinations.	Supported
H4: Cognitive destination image positively influences the intention to visit cultural destinations.	Supported
H5: Affective destination image positively influences the intention to visit cultural destinations.	Supported

Practical implications for Destination Management Organizations

Based on the findings of the study, managers may contemplate the adoption of social networking platforms such as Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, and Youtube as a means to effectively engage the intended demographic. Organizations can build partnerships with influencers to generate educational and captivating material that will motivate and inspire individuals to visit cultural locations.

To enhance destination appeal, DMOs should develop a content strategy that includes both cognitive elements, such as historical facts and cultural significance, and affective elements, like emotional experiences. Engaging content formats, such as short videos, behind-the-scenes tours, and personal stories from influencers or tourists, can strengthen the destination's image. Collaborating with influencers, especially those passionate about cultural and heritage tourism, expands reach and credibility. DMOs can also encourage user-generated content, such as reviews and photos, to build trust and provide authentic information. Monitoring electronic word-of-mouth and engaging with feedback further helps shape positive perceptions of the destination. By integrating these strategies, DMOs will be able to connect with target audiences more effectively and create more meaningful and engaging cultural tourism experiences. Monitoring analytics and performance metrics on social media platforms will allow tourism managers to adjust their campaigns to better align with visitor preferences and behaviors, thus improving overall effectiveness.

Study limitations and future research

The present study has certain drawbacks. The research was carried out using a sample size of over 200 participants, which may not accurately reflect the entire population. The survey sample was restricted in terms of respondents due to the predominant representation of individuals aged 18–25. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure an equitable distribution of participants across different age groups. While convenience sampling offers ease of access and practicality, it may compromise the representativeness of the findings. To improve the accuracy and generalizability of the study, adopting a stratified random sampling approach could be a more effective alternative. Furthermore, this study utilizes four factors, with the possibility of incorporating other pertinent variables to enhance future research improvement. Ultimately, self-reported data, which is derived from data provided by respondents themselves, has the potential to be biased or inaccurate. Notwithstanding these constraints, qualitative research can be employed in future studies to attain intriguing discoveries and novel perspectives.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors would like to thank the International School, Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam. The authors affirm that they bear no conflicts of interest in relation to the research, authorship, and publication of this paper.

7. REFERENCES

- Agapito, D., Oom do Valle, P., & da Costa Mendes, J. (2013). The Cognitive-Affective-Conative Model of Destination Image: A Confirmatory Analysis. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(5), 471–481.
- Anuar, F. I., Zaid, A. A. A., Zabidi, I. Z., & Kamal, S. N. J. (2021). Young Tourists' Trust in Instagram Travel Influencers

and their Intention to Visit Travel Destinations. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(16).

Baloglu, S., & Brinberg, D. (1997). Affective Images of Tourism Destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 35(4), 11–15.
 Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. W. (1999). A model of destination image formation. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26(4), 868–897.

baotintuc.vn. (2024, January 14). Mạng xã hội tác động đến xu hướng du lịch của giới trẻ. Retrieved August 28, 2024, from baotintuc.vn website: <https://baotintuc.vn/du-lich/mang-xa-hoi-tac-dong-den-xu-huong-du-lich-cua-gioi-tre-20240112151817882.htm>

Beerli, A., & Martín, J. D. (2004). Factors influencing destination image. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 31(3), 657–681.

Beerli, A., & Martín, J. D. (2004). Tourists' characteristics and the perceived image of tourist destinations: a quantitative analysis—a case study of Lanzarote, Spain. *Tourism Management*, 25(5), 623–636.

Bowen, N. K., & Shenyang Guo. (2012). *Structural equation modeling*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Chang, L.-H., Tsai, C.-H., Chang, W.-C., & Hsiao, U.-U. (2015). Social Media and Travel Behaviors. *Advances in Hospitality and Leisure*, 137–152.

Charlesworth, A. (2011). *Internet Marketing: a practical approach*. Routledge.

Chu, Q., Bao, G., & Sun, J. (2022). Progress and Prospects of Destination Image Research in the Last Decade. *Sustainability*, 14(17), 10716.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). New York: Routledge.

Cortina, J. M. (1993). What is coefficient alpha? An examination of theory and applications. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(1), 98–104.

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297–334.

Culnan, M. J., McHugh, P. J., & Zubillaga, J. I. (2010). How large US companies can use Twitter and other social media to gain business value. *MIS Quarterly Executive*, 9(4).

Devellis, R. F. (2016). *Scale Development : Theory and Applications* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

dos Santos, P. M., & Cirillo, M. Â. (2021). Construction of the average variance extracted index for construct validation in structural equation models with adaptive regressions. *Communications in Statistics - Simulation and Computation*, 52(4), 1–13.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating Structural Equation Models with Unobservable Variables and Measurement Error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39–50.

Fotis, J., Buhalis, D., & Rossides, N. (2012). Social Media Impact on Holiday Travel Planning. *International Journal of Online Marketing*, 1(4), 1–19.

Gaffar, V., Tjahjono, B., Abdullah, T., & Sukmayadi, V. (2021). Like, tag and share: bolstering social media marketing to improve intention to visit a nature-based tourism destination. *Tourism Review*, ahead-of-print(ahead-of-print).

Gartner, W. C. (1994). Image Formation Process. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 2(2-3), 191–216.

Githa Heggde, & G Shainesh. (2018). *Social media marketing : emerging concepts and applications*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Gunn, C. A. (1972). *Vacationscape: Designing Tourist Regions*. Bureau of Business Research, 1(3), 238.

Hair, J. F., Risher, J. J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review*, 31(1), 2–24.

- Hajli, M. N. (2014). A study of the impact of social media on consumers. *International Journal of Market Research*, 56(3), 387–404.
- Hays, S., Page, S. J., & Buhalis, D. (2013). Social media as a destination marketing tool: its use by national tourism organisations. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 16(3), 211–239.
- Kim, S., Lehto, X., & Kandampully, J. (2019). The role of familiarity in consumer destination image formation. *Tourism Review*, 74(4), 885–901.
- Kim, S., & Yoon, Y. (2003). The Hierarchical Effects of Affective and Cognitive Components on Tourism Destination Image. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 14(2), 1–22.
- Kim, S.-B., Kim, D.-Y., & Wise, K. (2014). The effect of searching and surfing on recognition of destination images on Facebook pages. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 30, 813–823.
- Kiráľová, A., & Pavlíčka, A. (2015). Development of Social Media Strategies in Tourism Destination. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 175, 358–366.
- Laroche, M., Habibi, M. R., Richard, M.-O., & Sankaranarayanan, R. (2012). The effects of social media based brand communities on brand community markers, value creation practices, brand trust and brand loyalty. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 28(5), 1755–1767.
- Leung, X. Y. (2019). Do destination Facebook pages increase fan's visit intention? A longitudinal study. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 10(2), 205–218.
- Lim, Y., Chung, Y., & Weaver, P. A. (2012). The impact of social media on destination branding. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 18(3), 197–206.
- Lin, C.-H., Morais, D. B., Kerstetter, D. L., & Hou, J.-S. (2007). Examining the Role of Cognitive and Affective Image in Predicting Choice Across Natural, Developed, and Theme-Park Destinations. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46(2), 183–194.
- Liu, Y.-D. (2012). Cultural Events and Cultural Tourism Development: Lessons from the European Capitals of Culture. *European Planning Studies*, 22(3), 498–514.
- Ng, S. I., Lee, J. A., & Soutar, G. N. (2007). Tourists' intention to visit a country: The impact of cultural distance. *Tourism Management*, 28(6), 1497–1506.
- Nguyen, C. H. (2022). Factors Affecting the Development of Cultural Tourism in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam Factors Affecting the Development of Cultural Tourism in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. *Journal of Asian Finance, Economics and Business*, 9(3), 123-0133.
- Nguyen, T. H. H., & Cheung, C. (2013). The classification of heritage tourists: a case of Hue City, Vietnam. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 9(1), 35–50.
- Novick, M. R., & Lewis, C. (1967). Coefficient alpha and the reliability of composite measurements. *Psychometrika*, 32(1), 1–13.
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Ed.
- Pan, X., Rasouli, S., & Timmermans, H. (2021). Investigating tourist destination choice: Effect of destination image from social network members. *Tourism Management*, 83, 104217.
- Park, J., & Oh, I.-K. (2012). A Case Study of Social Media Marketing by Travel Agency: The Saliency of Social Media Marketing in the Tourism Industry. *International Journal of Tourism Sciences*, 12(1), 93–106.
- Park, Y., & Njite, D. (2010). Relationship between Destination Image and Tourists' Future Behavior: Observations from Jeju Island, Korea. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 15(1), 1–20.
- Platon, O.-E., Iosub, I., & Ditoiu, M.-C. (2014). An Analysis of the AIDAT Model Based on Facebook Promotional Contests. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 15, 1570–1577.

- Ramkissoon, H., Uysal, M., & Brown, K. (2011). Relationship Between Destination Image and Behavioral Intentions of Tourists to Consume Cultural Attractions. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 20(5), 575–595.
- Richards, G. (2007). *Cultural tourism : global and local perspectives*. New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.
- Richards, G. (2018). Cultural tourism: A review of recent research and trends. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 36, 12–21.
- Ruiz-Real, J. L., Uribe-Toril, J., & Gázquez-Abad, J. C. (2020). Destination Branding: Opportunities and New Challenges. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 17(1), 100453.
- Ryan, C., & Cave, J. (2005). Structuring Destination Image: A Qualitative Approach. *Journal of Travel Research*, 44(2), 143–150.
- Shani, A., Chen, P.-J., Wang, Y., & Hua, N. (2009). Testing the impact of a promotional video on destination image change: application of China as a tourism destination. *International Journal of Tourism Research*.
- Singh, N., & Yadav, P. (2018). Social Media Influences Holiday Travel Decisions : A Rationale for Profound Analysis. Prabandhan: *Indian Journal of Management*, 11(2), 40.
- Smith, W. W., Li, X. (Robert), Pan, B., Witte, M., & Doherty, S. T. (2015). Tracking destination image across the trip experience with smartphone technology. *Tourism Management*, 48, 113–122.
- Stepchenkova, S., & Zhan, F. (2013). Visual destination images of Peru: Comparative content analysis of DMO and user-generated photography. *Tourism Management*, 36, 590–601.
- Stubbs, W., & Cocklin, C. (2008). Conceptualizing a “Sustainability Business Model.” *Organization & Environment*, 21(2), 103–127.
- Sun, S., Fong, L. H. N., Law, R., & Luk, C. (2015). An Investigation of Gen-Y’s Online Hotel Information Search: The Case of Hong Kong. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*, 21(4), 443–456.
- Teece, D. J. (2010). Business Models, Business Strategy and Innovation. *Long Range Planning*, 43(2-3), 172–194.
- Tenko Raykov, & Grayson, D. (2003). A Test for Change of Composite Reliability in Scale Development. *Multivariate Behavioral Research*, 38(2), 143–159.
- Towse, R. (2003). *A Handbook of Cultural Economics*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Trinh, T. T., & Ryan, C. (2015). Heritage and cultural tourism: the role of the aesthetic when visiting Mỹ Sơn and Cham Museum, Vietnam. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 19(6), 564–589.
- Trương, T. T., Hồ, T. B., & Lê, T. D. (2023). Ảnh hưởng của truyền thông mạng xã hội đến ý định du lịch của du khách thế hệ Z ở Việt Nam. *Tạp chí Khoa học Đại học Đồng Tháp*, 12 (4), 82-92.
- Turner, A. (2015). Generation Z: Technology and Social Interest. *The Journal of Individual Psychology*, 71(2), 103–113.
- Tuten, T. L., & Solomon, M. R. (2018). *Social Media Marketing* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Tuten, T., & Mintu-Wimsatt, A. (2018). ADVANCING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING: INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL ISSUE. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 26(1-2), 1–3.
- Ullman, J. B., & Bentler, P. M. (2012). Structural Equation Modeling. *Handbook of Psychology*, Second Edition, 2(1).
- Walmsley, D. J., & Young, M. (1998). Evaluative Images and Tourism: The Use of Personal Constructs to Describe the Structure of Destination Images. *Journal of Travel Research*, 36(3), 65–69.
- Wang, C., & Hsu, M. K. (2010). The Relationships of Destination Image, Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intentions: An

Integrated Model. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 27(8), 829–843.

Wijayaa, O. Y. A., Sulistiyani, S., Pudjowati, J., Kartikawati, T. S., Kurniasih, N., & Purwanto, A. (2021). The role of social media marketing, entertainment, customization, trendiness, interaction and word-of-mouth on purchase intention: An empirical study from Indonesian smartphone consumers. *International Journal of Data and Network Science*, 5(3), 231–238.

Xiang, Z., & Gretzel, U. (2020). Role of Social Media in Online Travel Information Search. *Tourism Management*, 31(2), 179–188.

Xu, H., Cheung, L. T. O., Lovett, J., Duan, X., Pei, Q., & Liang, D. (2021). Understanding the influence of user-generated content on tourist loyalty behavior in a cultural World Heritage Site. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 48(2), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2021.1913022>

Yamagishi, K., Danzel Canayong, Domingo, M., Kim Nieva Maneja, Montolo, A., & Arabelle Siton. (2023). User-generated content on Gen Z tourist visit intention: a stimulus-organism-response approach. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights*, 7(4).

Zeng, B., & Gerritsen, R. (2014). What do we know about social media in tourism? A review. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 10(1), 27–36.

Zhang, S., Liang, J., Su, X., Chen, Y., & Qi, W. (2023). Research on global cultural heritage tourism based on bibliometric analysis. *Heritage Science*, 11(1).

Zikmund, W. G., Lowe, B., Winzar, H., D'alessandro, S., & Babin, B. J. (2020). *Marketing research* (5th ed.). South Melbourne: Cengage Australia.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

