

Generational differences in using social media for destination choice

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

Bachelor of Business Administration in

Tourism, Hotel Management and Operations

Submitted to Dr. Marion Garaus

Lara Schischlik

1711016

Vienna, 29 January 2021

Abstract

Social media has changed people's life and has become an important information source, when it comes to making decisions in their daily life. This research aims to identify whether there are generational differences in using social media as a destination choice. The study focuses only on two generations: Millennials and baby boomers. The literature review looks at how nowadays social media is used as a marketing tool and as a destination tool. Furthermore, the different generations that exist and their relationship to social media is being investigated. This paper also looks at the different advertisement appeals and the connection between it and cultural appeals, moreover it tries to identify whether there is a generational difference in the appeals of tourism advertisements. Different hypotheses have been developed by the author, in order to answer the research question. An online survey has been conducted, where respondents were asked questions related to their social media usage, their destination choice and last seen tourism advertisement. The survey was mostly multiple-choice questions, with only a few open-ended questions. Statistical analyses have been conducted in order to test the hypotheses and look at whether there are significant differences and if assumptions were met. The results proved that the older generation tend to spend less time on social media, share fewer personal photos on it. The statistical analyses showed that there are significant differences between both generation when it comes to the use of social media as a destination, but the frequency results also show that both generations seem to have similar opinions when choosing a destination, such as for example that many respondents of both generations would rather listen to the review of a person they know, than from online reviews made by 100 strangers. Regarding what appealed to the respondents of the last advertisement seen and their age, the assumptions were not met of there being a difference. Both generations mostly felt nostalgic when they saw the last tourism advertisement, due to the global pandemic of COVID-19. This study had also a few limitations, such as for example the target groups and the relatively small sample size. However, this study might serve as a basis for further studies, for example in the hospitality industry and on how to target the older generation better.