

The Influence of Social Media Reviews on Consumer Decision-Making in Maharashtra's Tourism Industry

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Abstract: *Social media reviews have become a significant factor influencing consumer choices in Maharashtra's tourism sector. With the rise of platforms such as Google Reviews, TripAdvisor, Facebook, and Instagram, travellers are more and more depending on user-generated content to evaluate destinations, accommodations, and attractions prior to making booking choices. This study investigates the effects of social media reviews on tourist preferences, looking into both the beneficial impacts and challenges linked to online reviews. Employing a mixed-methods strategy, the research collects data from tourists and industry stakeholders throughout Maharashtra to assess behavioural trends and industry reactions. Results show that positive reviews boost consumer trust, enhance engagement, and lead to increased bookings, while negative reviews have the potential to dissuade possible visitors. Nonetheless, problems such as fraudulent reviews, biased evaluations, and issues of credibility pose difficulties for both consumers and businesses. The study suggests strategic online reputation management, consumer awareness, and transparency initiatives to maximize the advantages of social media reviews in tourism decision-making.*

Keywords: Social media, tourism, consumer behaviour, online reviews, Maharashtra

