

# Impact of Social Media in Rebuild Destination Image

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**Abstract:** *The growth in the use of social media allied with increasing ownership levels of smart phones indicates that destination marketing organizations of small regional destinations need to pay greater attention to social media and its delivery systems including smart phones. Implications are discussed for managers and stakeholders of small regional destinations, who may find this study valuable in guiding their future social media marketing effort. Social media play a significant role both on the demand and on the supply side of tourism allowing destinations to interact directly with visitors via various internet platforms and monitor and react on visitors' opinions and evaluations of services. The paper defines how social media and communications can be utilized for the destination image rebuilding. It summarizes the main characteristics of social media with implication to destination communication strategy and it deals with changes in visitor's behaviour affecting the destination image. The main objective of the paper is to show that social media as a tool that can help destinations image rebuilding and to remain competitive.*

**Keywords:** Social Media

## I. INTRODUCTION

Though there is a vast amount of information (text, images, audio and video sequences) running fast across the online environment, this information is also easy to access. More than ever before, the social media, characterizing nowadays online communication systems, empower people to acquire and give information, to promote or to negatively influence other people's opinions regarding brands, products, services, places, environment, political, economic and social events. Generally, in social media the communication is non-formal, therefore the messages transmitted need to be perceived as such, so that the user may feel that he/she is truly discussing with someone friendly, with someone on the same wavelength who experiences the same perspective, who truly listens to his/her points of view and wishes. However, though apparently simple and easy to do, the communication through social media, in order to be effective, has to be based on deep research and careful planning, it must follow a strategy.

Initiating and stimulating social media users behaviours would have the direct impact on creating of the destination image. In the scientific literature few studies concerning the topic of social media content management are appearing in the context of strengthening user's engagement for the purposes of building the image of the region. The essence of the work was therefore to develop theoretical cause-effect relationships in the system: destination image, while maintaining the broad context of the themes of content items shared in the Social Media and their management. Having regarded the statements quoted above it is possible to build the research question: is the strengthening of the engagement of social media users through innovative content management could be the contribution to the creation of positive image of tourist destinations in social media? Individual components of the proposed assumptions of the theoretical model were developed on the basis of: a. the concept of the image of destination by Baloglu and McCleary (1999); b. the AIDAT model of the behaviour of social media users (Charlesworth, 2012), and the typology of consumers' online corporate-related activities (Muntinga et al., 2011); c. the behaviour-aware user response modelling in social media (Chen et al., 2015).

Using the internet, social media, mobile apps, and other digital communication technologies has become part of billions of people's daily lives. For instance the current rate of internet use among American adults is about 87% and is closer to 100% for demographic groups such as college-educated and higher-income adults. Younger people—the next generation of mass consumers—have similarly high levels. People also spending increasing time online. For example, in the UK, over the last decade the number of hours spent online by adults has more than doubled, and now averages 20.5 hours per week. Social media has fueled part of this growth: worldwide there are now more than 2 billion people using social media and

Facebook alone now has approximately 1 billion active users per day. Clearly, people are exposing themselves to more and more digital and social media.

This is for many purposes, including in their roles as consumers as they search for information about products one purchases and/or consume them, and exchange a few words with others about their experiences. Marketers have responded to this fundamental shift by increasing their use of digital marketing channels. In fact, by 2017 approximately one-third of global advertising spending is forecast to be in digital channels. Thus, future consumer marketing will largely be carried out in digital settings, particularly social media and mobile. It is therefore necessary for consumer research to examine and understand consumer behaviour in digital environments. This has been happening over the last decade, with increasing amounts of research focusing on digital consumer behaviour issues. The literature is still moderately emerging, however, and more research is of course needed—particularly given the ever-changing nature of the digital/social media/mobile environments in which consumers are placed and interact with brands and each other.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In order to better understand the focus of this topic, an overview of the concept of social media is given in the following section. There are various books, articles and online sources that try to define social media, but each has a different perspective on it. A.M. Kaplan, M. Haenlein (2010) offer a more technology savvy definition, stating that "Social Media is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content". "Web 2.0 refers to the principles and practice of facilitating information sharing and social interaction by users generating, altering and uploading web-based content" (Liburd, 2012). Mashable.com (2010) states, "social media is real life." Levinson and Gibson (2010) define social media from a marketer point of view as "a set of tools that are free or nearly free and allow marketers and the community to create content and meaningful conversation online". Some examples of social media are "blogs, photo-sharing sites, video-sharing sites, social networks, audio podcasts, Internet, radio, mobile social sharing and communication tools" (Levinson & Gibson, 2010). Sterne (2010) explains social media in a clear and uncomplicated way – "That which allows anybody to communicate with everybody and consumer generated content distributed through easy-to-access online tools".

According to Buhalis (2003), ICTs include "the entire range of electronic tools, which facilitate the operational and strategic management of organisations by enabling them to manage their information, functions and processes as well as to communicate interactively with their stakeholders for achieving their mission and objectives."

The cooperation resulting from the use of these systems effectively mean that information is widely available and accessible through a variety of media and locations. In addition, users can use mobile devices such as laptops, mobile phones as well as digital television and self-serviced terminals/kiosks to interact and perform several functions and avail several services. This convergence of ICTs effectively integrates the entire range of hardware, software, groupware, network and human ware as a result which blurs the boundaries between equipment and software.

The application of ICTs on the tourism industry suggests that e-tourism reflects the digitization of all processes and value chains in the tourism, travel, hospitality and catering industries. The tactical level includes the concept of e-commerce and applies ICTs for maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the tourism organization. At the strategic level, e-tourism revolutionizes all business processes, the entire value chain as well as the strategic relationships of tourism organizations with all their stakeholders.

The decisions and steps involved during the time of traveling have high risk to the travellers therefore they collect the detailed information before hand and thoroughly map through the GPS which decreases the uncertainties which arises because of travel. The E-tourism served the tourists in various ways like access to information or purchasing of any service, which were available only through the intermediaries earlier.

### **2.1 Statement of the Problem**

Social media is most effective tool for the development of the tourist destinations, and its image. The current tourism scenario of Kerala can be spread through the social media and many people getting awareness about the situation and may feel they can travel towards Kerala. Through social media people are making effective communication for relief/help. At the time of flood also social media played an effective roll for the rescuing activity also. In many ways the social media has given the effective support for the public issues. Social media is able to spread news to many people at a time.

Even it has the power to change the decisions of the government orders. Now a day's almost 2/3 of the people is connected with the social media. The 70% of people are much more active in social media. The following researchable issues are identified after a thorough literature review.

- How social media can be used as effective promotion tool for destination image rebuilding?
- What is the role of social media in resolving destination image?
- What is the role of social in tourism destination for its feature developments?

## **2.2 Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is:

- To know how effectively the rebuild image of destination can spread through social media
- To give information about the destination safety and security, and providing full fledged data essentials for the tourists.
- To explore or collect the recommendations or from the tourist can be taken through the help of social media

## **III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research is designed on the basis of descriptive method here the study will investigate Information and communication technology applications in Tourism industry and the secondary data from the internet, journals, articles, books on related topic data to process the study. The information gathered from various authentic sources are analysed and reported in the study.

### **3.1 Kerala – God's own Country: An Overview**

The name Kerala has an uncertain etymology. One popular theory derives Kerala from Kera Which means coconut tree in Malayalam and alam means land, thus "land of coconuts", which is a nickname for the state, used by locals, due to abundance of coconut trees. The word Kerala is first recorded as Keralaputra in a 3rd-century BC rock inscription left by the Ashoka (274–237 BCE), one of his edicts pertaining to welfare. According to Hindu mythology, the lands of Kerala were recovered from the sea by the axe-wielding warrior sage Parasurama, the sixth avatar of Vishnu (hence, Kerala is also called ParasuramaKshetram ("The Land of Parasurama"). Parasurama threw his axe across the sea, and the water receded as far as it reached. According to legend, this new area of land extended from Gokarnato Kanyakumari.

At least 10 lakh people are currently taking shelter at relief camps across Kerala, which has been ravaged by floods following torrential rains in the state, at least 50,000 houses are either fully or partially damaged by the floods and landslides witnessed across the state. Kerala is facing its worst flood in 100 years as water from 80 dams were released, leaving 13 of the 14 districts submerged. Sudden release of excess waters from Mullaperiyar dam was also reasoned as one of the reasons for the floods. Idukki reservoir, which was forced to open all five gates a development that took place for only third time in history - to control the water level. After the catastrophic floods in Kerala over the past month, the rehabilitation and reconstruction work that is required now are the biggest developmental challenges the state has ever had to face.

According to Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), "social media is a group of internet based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundation of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content". Tourism is information based and information intensive industry, hence Web 2.0 offered many new technologies which created a good medium of communication. The users got a chance to promote and share their ideas and opinion to a millions of audience. This information is known as user generated content.

Universal McCann in the year of 2008 considered ten important platforms of social media, which enables the users and travellers to post and share their travel experiences, comments, opinions. This serves as a source of information for other users as well as travellers.



We can find a huge number of sources through which the user can get information related to travel like from Blogs, Wikipedia, videos, photos etc. The photos and videos serve as authentic and actual visual aspect of a particular place. E-commerce brought elasticity in tourism as the travellers can beforehand collect all the travel related information. Social media became a hub of information to render to the consumers who are involved in the tourism industry. Many of the social media sites like Facebook twitter etc. give the consumer a change to interact directly with the local people. The traveller can make friends beforehand, before reaching to the destination.

The social media is also responsible for the promotional work of e-tourism. Now-a-days in many websites we can find various travel related stuffs which side by side promote tourism too. In case any new trend in E-tourism, the social media are the first to popularize it. Through social media a single message can reach a millions of individuals at a time. If the consumer wants to get detailed information about the advertisement given in social media related to tourism, by clicking the link, the consumer is directly redirected to the actual vendor of that particular information who can provide very authentic information and data related to the matter.

### 3.2 Destination Image Rebuilding Through Social Media

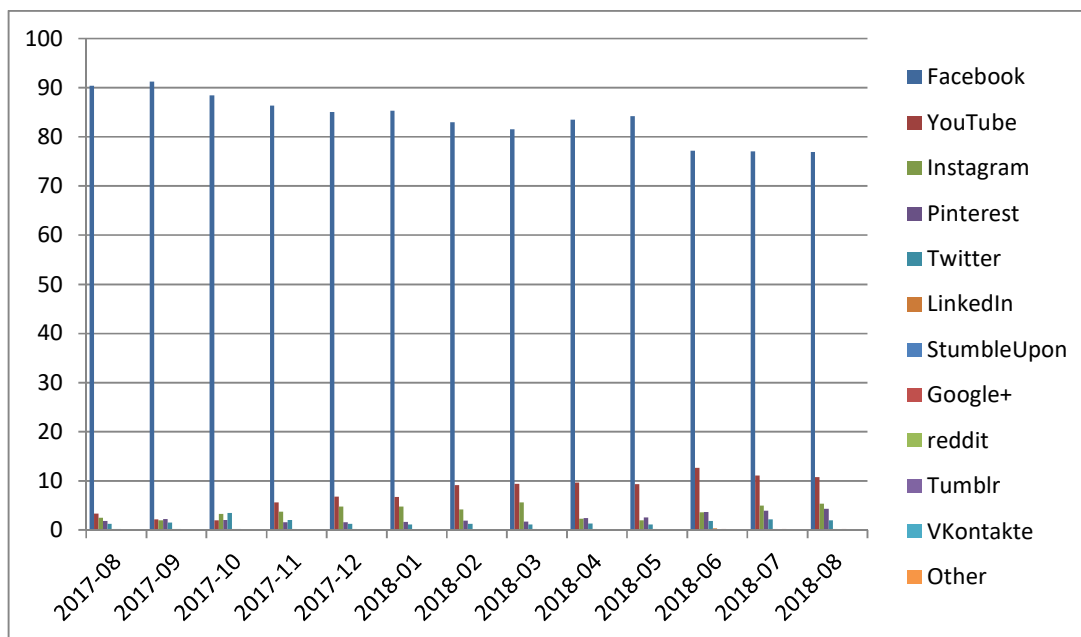
The Internet age has brought about a transformation in the Indian society and the effect has been apparent in the rising figures of Internet usage in India which moved up from third in 2014 to second in 2016 in the ranking of countries in Internet usage (internetlivestats.com, 2017). Digital services have caught up in India more so now with increasing figures of adoption by citizens for convenience. With the recent demonetization an additional push towards digitization was inevitable for the rural regions as well. However, it is also a fact that though increases in internet users in a year are the highest for India, it lags behind in penetration than many other countries at 34.8% (internetlivestats.com, 2017). While internet access in India's likely to double by 2020. There are major roadblocks in realizing the vision of Digital India according to a joint study by Assocham India (India's Internet population likely to touch 600million by 2020). India is the second largest mobile phone market globally with over 1 billion mobile subscriptions. Of this, smart phone users account for approximately 240 million subscriptions which is expected to grow to 520million by 2020

Bharat Net was implemented in Kerala as a part of the Digital India initiative. Two Grama Panchayat Aymanam in Kottayam District and Nedumbasery in Ernakulum District were selected out of 30 Grama Panchayat for Video conferencing to the Venue at India Gandhi Indoor stadium. Panchayat president, members and other audiences witnessed the inaugural function at the GP's, through Bharat Net connectivity and Video Conferencing software by NIC (National Informatics Center). Around 200 people attended the function at Aymanam and 150 people attended the function at Nedumbasery. In Kerala State all the 977 Gram Panchayat and Block Headquarters have been connected with Hi speed Broadband under the Digital India program.

The concept of Tourism and social media runs parallel. It is the contribution of the social media that tourist destination has been promoted and adopted by many individuals through the awareness created in the social media about tourist attractions which leads towards destination image building. The combination of ICTs and internet rendered a lot to the process that the social media started replacing the traditional and outdated sources of information. Even the perception of the consumers has changed a lot. The consumers are becoming more sophisticated; hence they demand more specialized media

Table: Social Media Usage in India 2017 August to 2018 August (in Millions)

Date	FB	YouTube	Instagram	PI	Twitter	LinkedIn	Google+	Tumblr	Other
2017-08	90.36	3.33	2.54	1.82	1.23	0.18	0.13	0.09	0.01
2017-09	91.21	2.14	1.97	2.23	1.57	0.22	0.16	0.09	0.01
2017-10	88.38	1.97	3.28	2.05	3.53	0.22	0.16	0.08	0.01
2017-11	86.37	5.64	3.76	1.59	2	0.24	0.09	0.06	0.01
2017-12	85.02	6.82	4.78	1.62	1.21	0.19	0.08	0.06	0
2018-01	85.3	6.73	4.8	1.64	1.09	0.12	0.07	0.05	0.01
2018-02	82.98	9.15	4.2	1.89	1.26	0.14	0.09	0.07	0
2018-03	81.52	9.38	5.66	1.74	1.13	0.17	0.11	0.07	0.01
2018-04	83.49	9.7	2.33	2.43	1.34	0.25	0.14	0.07	0.01
2018-05	84.2	9.34	1.97	2.61	1.12	0.28	0.15	0.08	0.01
2018-06	77.2	12.63	3.61	3.71	1.84	0.4	0.18	0.15	0.01
2018-07	77.08	11.11	4.95	3.92	2.14	0.27	0.18	0.1	0.01
2018-08	76.87	10.8	5.36	4.3	1.97	0.23	0.19	0.09	0.01



Source: The Statistics Portal. <https://www.statista.com> > Internet > Social Media & User-Generated Content.

From the above shown diagram it is clear that the social media use in the country is increasing day by day so the social media is the perfect tool for the image rebuilding of the tourist destination. Face book is the one which mainly the people where using commonly and after that whats up and YouTube is given importance in India. So Kerala should get more tourist from another states and as well as foreign traveller, more face book sharing tagging etc will reaches many people in the same time. And same time form one person it is reaching to the many people within a short span of time .The result for the promotional work through the social media will get effect in destination and through that image of the destination can be developed. The same social media can be also a referral point as well suggestion or complaint management system also. For the feature also it can be used as a continues tool for marketing the destination

Social media can be used as a promotional tool for the destination image rebuilding of a destination which can be so fast, social media effective because the area that the social media covering is more. And the usage of social media is increasing day by day also. Sharing of the photos, videos, status etc will help the tourist to know the present status of destination. And suing off different features of face book (Eg)- marking the destination, righting of the review and comments by another people will also helpful for the image rebuilding. The active people in social media who are tourism professionals in Kerala can be the best promote news Kerala is back in tourism activity. So than social media will help full for image rebuilding of a destination. Through the social media the more destination adds, videos clips, photo, packages with attractive price all can be given so that will catch the attention of the willing customers and it will generate more demand and number of tourist will also increases. Through using social media the current situation in Kerala tourism the phase after the flood can be show to the world, social media can figure out many destination throughout the territory of Kerala and it can be clearly stated that the Kerala is safe and secure to travel. More over the data of past year travellers can be collected and through mails and message we can promote the destination, so the reaching to the tourist and passing the information will be efficient

#### **IV. FINDINGS**

- Social media can be a effective tool for destination image rebuilding through promoting destination
- Social media can be also use as a promotional tool for tourism activities
- The information is spreading in a short span of time through social media and world wide it helps unexplored destination to grow

#### **V. SUGGESTIONS**

- Make rules and regulation very tight miss using of social media in name of tourism activity
- From the ministry level to last level, the use of social media use should implemented
- Active social media support should be there for each and every destination

#### **VI. CONCLUSION**

The image rebuilding of a destination can be done through social media because the people want to feel that it is safe and secure place to travel. Through social media it is very simple to gave a information and at a same time to many people it was passing so it is easy and less expensive one also. So every things are transparent in social media and it very effective tool for problem solving for eg- jallikeattu issue in tamil nadu , through social media only they made mass movement against the low and order. So for the development or image rebuilding also its applicable, so social media can be use for the destination image rebuilding in Kerala

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