

Chapter 64

Investigation of an Extended Typology for Marketing Destinations with YouTube

Arunasalam Sambhathan

School of Information Systems, Curtin Business School, Curtin University, Perth, Australia

Samantha Thelijagoda

Sri Lanka Institute of Information Technology, Malabe, Sri Lanka

Alice Good

Department of Computing, University of Portsmouth, Portsmouth, UK

Ada Scupola

Department of Communication, Business and Information Technologies, Roskilde University, Roskilde, Denmark

ABSTRACT

This article describes how YouTube has been evolving as an e-tool for marketing activities over the past decade. Utilizing YouTube for enhancing marketing endeavours is a strategy practiced by marketing professionals across a growing number of industries. The research documented in this article investigates virtual community-based destination marketing using an extended conceptualisation of a virtual community typology. A non-participant netnographic investigation of virtual communities through a content analysis has been applied in this article to investigate the research questions. The contribution includes the application of an extended typology of virtual communities to YouTube leading to a number of managerial implications for marketing practice on using YouTube as an effective marketing tool.

INTRODUCTION

The percentage of companies using social media for marketing is increasing day by day. Recent advances in social media related research shows a significant increase of social media in marketing different types of products. Research suggests that social media plays an important role in communicating information to customers, but as an antecedent enhancing salesperson behaviours to increase customer satisfaction rather than a direct factor (Agnihotri et al., 2016). Some recent documented studies such as Lohikoski *et al.* (2016), Sambhanthan and Potdar (2016) deals with virtual communities and parameter based evaluation respectively. YouTube, being a premier social media platform has more than 800 million users visiting each month (YouTube, 2013). Several studies have investigated YouTube from different approaches (Rotman & Preece, 2010). However, the role of YouTube in tourism related endeavours is still an under investigated area. Studies show that YouTube videos have the potential to substantially affect the experience of tourists (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). Further, this study show that these videos generate mental pleasure by stimulating the imagination of people as well as impart the feeling of travelling to destinations that the tourists have already visited in the past. To some extent, the above findings show the significance of further research on the use of YouTube platform in destination marketing. Evidently, the use of YouTube as a medium to market tourist destinations remains an open question for exploration in the context of rapidly emerging marketing models using web 2.0. Albeit, Sambhanthan et al. (2016) documented a research, which aims to extend the Virtual community typology, propounded by Porter (2005) into another five dimensions namely potential, participation, pattern of use, pollution and power. Hence, this research aims to investigate the following research questions.

1. What is the potential of YouTube in influencing destination marketing efforts of hoteliers?
2. How user perceptions in virtual communities relating to the extended typology could influence destination-marketing efforts of hoteliers?

LITERATURE REVIEW ON VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

The theoretical framework of this article relies on the extended typology of virtual communities outlined and published by Sambhanthan and Good (2016). The article discusses of five extended dimensions of the typology of virtual communities propounded by Porter (2004). The key theoretical dimensions and the sub constructs of the extended typology of virtual communities is depicted in Figure 1 in the Appendix.

POTENTIAL

A key contribution made by Tussyadiah and Fesenmaier (2009) reports that the YouTube videos have the “potential” to substantially affect the experience of tourists. Further, the study states that these videos generate mental pleasure through generating the imagination of people. In addition, the study states that these videos impart the feeling of travelling to the destinations that the tourists have already visited in the past. The potential of these videos to get tourists re-experiencing the past is the most notable effect highlighted throughout this study.

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