


Chapter 4

Meta Evolution: Digital Marketing in Tourism

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ABSTRACT

Meta marketing, considered an evolution of digital marketing in the tourism sector, holds great importance in enhancing customer experiences and brand loyalty. This chapter focuses on the necessity of developing and implementing meta-marketing strategies correctly to meet customer expectations. Furthermore, understanding customers' needs and preferences and shaping marketing strategies in alignment with meta-marketing practices are essential for sustaining a competitive advantage in the tourism sector. The chapter aims to assist stakeholders in effectively harnessing the power of digital innovations by comprehending how digital advancements can be utilized in the tourism sector. Moreover, it contributes to the creation of a futuristic discourse by providing innovative recommendations for the establishment of effective meta-marketing practices in the tourism sector.

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INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has recently seen a spectacular expansion of digital geography, mostly due to developments in virtualization technology. With the introduction of “smart tourism metropolises” in the digital sphere, this transformation has eased the restrictions on physical accessibility for tourists. Through virtual excursions to what is commonly referred to as the Metaverse, travelers can now fully immerse themselves in the content of a tourist location (Babür, 2022). The Metaverse is essentially a collection of vibrant virtual worlds that have been combined to create a collaborative and interactive reality that is akin to augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and mixed reality. Through real-time navigation and social interaction, this flawless macrocosm allows individuals to transcend the confines of space and time (Ball, 2021). The effects of the epidemic, which highlighted the need for parallel realities to counteract irrational passions and insulation, can only partially be blamed for the Metaverse’s increasing fashionability. This recently found virtual environment provides limitless opportunities for participation, enabling individuals from all over the world to join together without being constrained by geographical limits and experience various forms of conditioning in real-time (Gürsoy et al., 2022).

The Metaverse, which presents a three-dimensional virtual realm with a heavy emphasis on social relationships, has been significantly boosted by Internet 3.0. This feature makes the Metaverse especially alluring to the hospitality and tourist sectors since it enhances travelers’ sense of presence. Consequently, virtual hotels, destinations, and tours have revolutionized how people select accommodations, make reservations, and even participate in events like concerts, causing a disruptive impact on the hospitality and tourism sector (Gürsoy et al., 2022). The hospitality experience has evolved into a comprehensive journey encompassing the pre-visit, during the visit, and post-visit phases. Throughout this journey, consumers actively engage in creating, sharing, and consuming content, transforming into productive consumers (Buhalis et al., 2022). Before their actual visit, travelers dedicate considerable time to research, communication, and seeking information. During their stay, tourists not only consume pre-booked products and services, such as transportation and accommodation, but also dynamically choose from various on-site services, including food and beverage options, entertainment, and leisure activities (Buhalis & Foerste, 2015). Additionally, after their visit, tourists eagerly share their experiences with others through multimedia

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