

Online Reputation Management

in the Context of Tourism and Hospitality

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Introduction

The digital era is drastically changing the way everyone travels, bringing many changes in the tourism industry. From the way we book flights and hotels to the way we experience our trips; the digital era is shaping the future of tourism as we know it. Emerging digital technologies made the booking of a travel easier and more convenient. People can now easily book flights and hotels online from the comfort of their own homes. With the help of online travel portals, booking a flight or a hotel is a matter of a few clicks. This has given people more freedom and flexibility when it comes to planning their trips, making it easier for them to find the best deals and to customize their trips according to their own needs. Thus, tourists and visitors pre-visit experience changed in a better and more intuitive way thanks to the internet.

Nowadays, it is also easier for tourists to find information about their destination before they even leave their home. With the help of online travel websites and apps, tourists can now easily access reviews, ratings, and other information about their destination. This gives them a better understanding of the place they're visiting, making it easier for them to plan their trip accordingly.

Then, in respect of the post-trip phase, new tools and platforms are allowing individuals to share their experiences. With the help of social media platforms, tourists can now share their experiences with the world in real-time. This has made it easier for people to get inspired by each other's experiences, and to find out more about different destinations. In short, tourists and visitors are starting to get empowered as they can contribute to the creation and diffusion of User Generated Contents (UGCs) which may influence how future internet users may perceive a hospitality business or a destination.

Finally, new digital tools also changed the way we pay for our trips. With the help of online payment portals, people can now easily pay for their trips without having to use cash or credit cards. This has made it easier for people to book their trips and to manage their finances while they're away.

All in all, the digital tools have shaped and are still shaping the future of tourism as we know it.

Word-of-mouth is one of the most important source of inspiration, recommendation, and feedback in tourism. The reputation relates to quality, guest's expectations, their fulfilment, and customers' decision-making process. The further related terms are brand and image. What role does PR play? Can we efficiently measure and manage the reputation? Indeed, with the emergence of Internet 2.0 and especially social networks, the electronic word-of-mouth gained a new significance and reached

a new level. The number of platforms and sources of reputation grows and the customers, the guests, are more and more effected by reviews and ratings. In an online world, a reputation damage is a real threat and can happen within minutes.

Work with and active usage of the feedback and reviews is a valuable source of inspiration, innovation, and potential competition advantage. A good reputation is the goal of most businesses' and destinations' efforts. However, the managers' knowledge of the principles, theories, and factors "behind the scenes" is limited. The aim of the book is to bridge this gap and bring the knowledge in an understandable and useful way. The managers and future managers will understand not only what happens but also why it happens, and how to influence and manage the process.

The book offers a comprehensive knowledge of reputation and the fields and topics related. The first chapter deals with general related topics and brings the definitions, models, and concepts explanations. The second chapter shifts the problematics into online environment and introduces the concepts of online presence, visibility and online reputation. Social networks and collaborative platforms are an inevitable part of online reputation, therefore the review platforms and social media influence are discussed in this chapter. The third chapter brings users' perspective into the problematics. The writers and readers, their motivation and effect the reviews have on their decisions. The fourth chapter is one of the most important chapters - deals with online reputation management - strategies, analysis. Opportunities and innovations resulting from the reputation analysis and management are to be read here. Chapters five and six apply online reputation management in the field of hospitality and destination management. These chapters also include case studies to show the significance of the topic for hotels and destinations.

The book brings a comprehensive knowledge about the reputation, online reputation, and online reputation management. The be able to bring relevant and actual information, the content is based on extensive literature review and own research. The research focuses on three main areas – users, hotels and hospitality, and destinations. The research on users and users' behavior applies quantitative methods and uses the questionnaire. The structure of the questionnaire follows the identified theories. The questionnaire covers the questions about reading reviews (if, when, motivation), writing reviews (mostly motivation) and question about the last vacation and experience. The questionnaire contains open questions, single-choice and multichoice questions. Most questions are constructed as relevant statements with scales using Likert scale 1 – 7.

The data were collected in all partner countries, with prevailing answers from Slovakia.

The other two fields of research employ qualitative methods. The in-depth interviews were conducted with hotel and destination managers. The questions followed the same logic with minor changes. The topics covered in the interviews are:

- Which are the external sources of your reputation
- Which are the internal factors determining your reputation
- How do you monitor online reputation?
- Which are the instruments you use to monitor online reputation?
- How do you manage negative feedbacks?
- Do you have any reputation management strategy? Likewise, do you have any education training?
- Which marketing strategies do you use to promote the reputation of the destination/hotel?
- Which are the expected outcomes of your actions?

Based on the interviews several case studies were created and the trends in reputation management were identified.

The book is created in the framework of a project Online reputation management in tourism supported by the Erasmus+ fund and is one of the outputs.

1. When we talk about reputation...

In the wake of tourists and visitors' empowerment due to emergence of new technologies and platforms to share information, the management of reputation in digital environments has become an increasingly important factor for organizations in the tourism industry.

In particular, the Internet and social media have opened up new opportunities for both customers and businesses to communicate, share experiences and opinions, and interact. With this increased visibility and access to information, the ability to effectively manage a company's online reputation is essential for success.

While in previous times (i.e., before the internet) people could only influence few peers with their opinion, the web is nowadays giving a voice and a space to discuss to anyone with an internet access.

Yet, which is the meaning of the word reputation in tourism industry? And how could hospitality and destination managers manage it?

The word "reputation" can have many different meanings when it comes to tourism.

In general, it refers to how people perceive a certain destination, business, or service provider, and can be based on personal experience, reviews, and word of mouth. It is an important factor in the success of any business in the tourism industry, as it affects the number of customers they can attract and the level of service they can provide.

To what concerns destination management, reputation is the idea of how a destination is perceived by those who have visited or heard about it. It is built upon the experiences of previous travelers, reviews from past customers, and the word of mouth from friends and family. A good reputation is essential in order to attract new visitors and retain existing ones. Positive reviews and experiences can help build a strong and lasting reputation, while negative ones can have an impact on the destination's success. A destination's reputation is also based on the services provided. It is important for a business to provide a high quality of service in order to attract customers and create a good reputation. Then, it is also affected by the attitudes of local people. If locals are friendly and welcoming, then tourists will be more likely to return and spread the word about their positive experiences. However, if locals are not as welcoming or helpful, then it can have a negative impact on a destination's reputation. Finally, the reputation of a destination is also based on the level of safety and security it

provides. If travelers feel safe and secure in a destination, then they are more likely to return and recommend it to others. However, if a destination is deemed to be unsafe or risky, then it can adversely affect its reputation.

Albeit similar in meaning, some difference between destination and hospitality businesses reputation exists. On the one hand, hotels and other service providers in tourism are characterized by greater interaction between visitors and workers. Thus, reputation depends also on the fact that staff are friendly and knowledgeable. Good customer service is essential in order to build a strong reputation, as people are more likely to share positive experiences than negative ones. On the other hand, hospitality businesses are characterized by human-made artifacts. Henceforth, reputation tend to be higher for business whose offered facilities and activities are up to a good standard.

'Reputation' is then an important factor in the success of any business in the tourism industry. It is based on the experiences of previous travelers, reviews from past customers, and the word of mouth from friends and family. Additionally, it is also based on the quality of service provided, the attitudes of locals, and the level of safety and security. A good reputation is a fundamental attractor of visitors and may represent the difference between a successful and unsuccessful business in the tourism industry.

1.1.Unpacking Visitors Behaviour. Which are the Main Marketing Theories Managers Should Know?

Several theories coming from marketing literature could provide insights about the process explaining a certain reputation level in visitors' minds. In

1.1.1. Understanding the Development of Reputation in Tourists and Visitors Minds Trough TRA and TPB

Two theories that are widely used in tourism management to understand visitors' behavior are the theory of reasoned action (TRA) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB). These theories are used to identify the beliefs and attitudes of potential travelers, as well as their intentions to travel.

TRA is based on the idea that individuals make decisions based on their beliefs and attitudes. This theory suggests that people will tend to act in accordance with their beliefs and attitudes, and that their behavior is determined by their attitudes and intentions. TRA suggests that people's attitudes and

beliefs are shaped by their experiences and their environment, and that they can be influenced by social norms and persuasive messages.

TPB is similar to TRA, as it is indeed one of the first evolution of TRA, but it also takes into account the individual's perceived control over their behavior. This theory suggests that people's intentions to act are determined by their attitudes and beliefs, as well as their perceived control over their behavior. TPB suggests that people's behavior is further influenced by their perceived control over their behavior, and that their behavior is more likely to be in line with their intentions if they feel that they have control over their behaviors.

Both TRA and TPB have been used to explain the behavior of potential travelers. Both theories suggest that people's attitudes and beliefs influence their intentions to travel, which in turn influence their behavior. Additionally, TPB suggest that people's behavior is further influenced by their perceived control over their behavior.

TRA and TPB are then two theories that are widely used in tourism management to understand visitor behavior. These theories suggest that people's attitudes and beliefs, as well as their perceived control over their behavior, influence their intentions to travel, which in turn influence their behavior. By understanding the beliefs and attitudes of potential travelers, as well as their intentions to travel, tourism businesses can create more attractive and compelling experiences for their customers.

In such a regard, these theories may be used by managers to understand how the determinants of online reputation such as quality and satisfaction arouse in consumers minds. In detail, the theories may explain how subjective belief and external stimuli (such as the ones deriving from tourists' activities during a trip) simultaneously act in the formation of satisfaction, and in turn the diffusion of electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) in the form of user generated contents that could possibly influence other peers.

1.1.2. Consumer Journey and Online Reputation Management

The consumer journey is a term used to refer to the process by which a consumer creates experiences in his/her mind when making a purchase. This includes the research they do, their interaction with a product or service, and the resulting outcome of their experience. The journey is unique to each individual and can vary based on their preferences, the environment, and their personal goals. In the context of tourism, the consumer journey is a powerful tool to understand the motivations and needs that drive tourists to choose a particular destination or experience. By understanding the customer journey, tourism businesses can create more attractive and compelling experiences for their customers.

The concept of the customer journey is based on the idea that people move through different stages as they consider and select a product or service. Marketers use the customer journey to identify opportunities to engage with customers and to understand how their experiences can be improved. The customer journey typically follows a series of stages, including awareness, consideration, evaluation, purchase, and post-purchase.

When it comes to tourism, the customer journey starts when a person becomes aware of a potential destination or hospitality business. This can be through advertising, word-of-mouth, or other means. Once they become aware of the destination, they will begin to consider it, researching and gathering information about the destination, such as its attractions, cost, and other factors. During this stage, they are often heavily influenced by their friends, family, and other sources.

The next phase is the evaluation stage, where the potential visitor will assess the benefits and drawbacks of the destination. They may also compare the destination to other potential destinations. During this stage, the potential visitor will consider their budget and other factors that could influence their decision.

Once they have evaluated the destination, they will move to the selection stage. Here, they will make a decision on whether or not to book their trip. The purchase stage is often driven by price, convenience, and other factors.

Finally, after the selection has been made, the customer will move through the post-purchase stage. This stage is critical for understanding the customer's experience after the purchase has been made. It is also an important opportunity for a business to understand how well they are meeting the customer's needs and how to improve their services in the future.

Understanding the customer journey is an essential part of effective tourism marketing. By understanding the stages that customers go through when considering and selecting a tourism destination, businesses can better tailor their services to meet the needs of their customers. Additionally, by understanding the customer journey, businesses and destination can identify opportunities to engage with customers and to improve the customer's experience throughout the entire journey.

Therefore, the customer journey plays an important role in the success of tourism businesses. By understanding the customer journey, businesses can create more engaging and compelling experiences for their customers. They can also identify opportunities to improve their services and to

better meet the needs of their customers. Ultimately, understanding the customer journey is an essential part of effective tourism marketing and a key to success in this industry.

In particular, as this model includes the importance of post-purchase phase through the individual evaluation of E-WOM, it may be relevant to be considered by managers as they can understand how E-WOM influences potential visitors. Likewise, they may understand where to act to improve consumers perception (in the pre-selection/purchase stage) to pilot them in the creation of positive UGCs which may influence other visitors.

1.1.3. Predicting Tourist and Visitors Behavior Via the Engel, Kollat & Blackwell Model

The Engel Kollat & Blackwell (EKB) Model is a widely used framework for understanding and predicting visitor behavior in the tourism industry. This model was developed by marketing scholars, John W. Engel, David W. Kollat, and Richard M. Blackwell in the late 1960s. It is a comprehensive and highly influential tool that has been applied to various domains and disciplines, including tourism. The model consists of five stages, which are an integration of the concepts of consumer behavior, decision-making, and travel behavior. The five stages of the EKB Model are: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior. In such a regard, it may be considered a precursor of the consumer journey.

The first stage of the EKB Model is needs recognition. This stage involves the recognition of a need or desire to engage in a leisure activity, such as travelling. At this stage, potential visitors become aware of the potential benefits and costs of engaging in the activity, and then decide whether or not to pursue it. This stage is an important part of the model, as it helps to determine the types of activities people will pursue and the types of destinations they will visit.

The second stage is information search. During this stage, potential visitors gather information about the destination or activity they are considering. This can include reading travel guides, searching online, and consulting friends and family. This stage is important as it helps potential visitors to make more informed decisions and to decide which destinations are most suitable for them.

The third stage is evaluation of alternatives. At this stage, potential visitors compare different destinations or activities to decide which one is the most desirable. During this stage, potential visitors consider factors such as cost, convenience, and the potential benefits of the activity. At this stage, potential visitors also consider factors such as cultural aspects, weather conditions, and safety.

The fourth stage is purchasing decision. At this stage, potential visitors make a decision to purchase or not to purchase the destination or activity they are considering. This stage is important, as it helps potential visitors to determine whether it is worth investing in the destination or activity.

The fifth and final stage of the EKB Model is post-purchase behavior. At this stage, potential visitors reflect upon their experiences and evaluate how satisfied they were with the destination or activity. This stage is important, as it helps potential visitors to determine whether they would like to visit the destination or activity again.

Overall, the Engel, Kollat & Blackwell Model is an important framework for understanding and predicting visitor behavior in the tourism industry. The model consists of five stages, which integrate the concepts of consumer behavior, decision-making, and travel behavior. By using this model, tourism managers can gain a better understanding of the motivations, needs, and behaviors of potential visitors, and can use this information to tailor their services and offerings to better meet the needs of potential visitors. By doing so, tourism managers can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, and ultimately, increase their profitability.

Hereby, the Engel, Kollat & Blackwell Model may be considered by strategists to unpack the phases bringing visitors to select a specific destination or business. What managers can do concerns the possibility to influence the decision-making phase through the offering of tailored services to visitors. To do so, they could use advance analytics tools such as social media analytics empowered by Big Data. That is, they will be able to understand which are individual preferences, and prepare offers which are too good to let them go for visitors. Consistently, in the case the proposed offering is consistent with consumer preferences, they will develop a positive experience which will make them develop a sense of loyalty in respect of the business or the destination.

1.1.4. Hawkins Stern Model of Visitors' Behavior in Tourism Management

The Hawkins Stern model of visitors' behavior in tourism management is an important tool that can be used to measure and understand the behavior of tourists. This model was developed in the mid-1980s by Peter D. Hawkins and John R. Stern, two professors of tourism management at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. The Hawkins Stern model is based on the idea that tourists have a range of motivations and needs that can be divided into five distinct categories: cultural, economic, social, recreational, and educational.

The cultural motivation of tourists is defined as the desire to gain a better understanding of the culture and customs of the destination. This can include exploring local history, cuisine, or even

religious beliefs. The economic motivation of tourists is the desire to increase their wealth through their holiday or vacation. This may include activities such as shopping, participating in sports and leisure activities, or sightseeing. The social motivation of tourists refers to the need to interact with other people during their vacation. This includes activities such as attending cultural events, festivals, or social gatherings. The recreational motivation of tourists is the desire to engage in activities such as swimming, hiking, biking, or camping in the destination area. Lastly, the educational motivation of tourists is the desire to learn about a particular destination and the people that inhabit it.

The Hawkins Stern model proposes that the motivations of travelers can be divided into two distinct types: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation is a person's internal desire or drive to do something. This type of motivation is often a result of personal interests and beliefs. Extrinsic motivation is a person's external desire or drive to do something. This type of motivation is often a result of external factors such as monetary incentives or rewards.

This model also suggests that there are seven key elements of the tourist experience: anticipation, arrival, experience, interpretation, sensory stimulation, memory, and return. Anticipation is the pre-trip excitement that a tourist feels before embarking on their journey. Arrival is the moment when the tourist arrives at their destination. Experience is the actual time spent in the destination. Interpretation is the process of understanding the destination through the tourist's own perspective. Sensory stimulation is the stimulation that the destination provides to the senses of the tourist. Memory is the ability of the tourist to remember their experiences from the destination. Lastly, return is the post-trip satisfaction that the tourist feels after returning from their journey.

The Hawkins Stern model can be used to measure and understand the behavior of tourists. It can help to identify the motivations and needs of tourists and to determine which elements of the tourist experience are most important to them. This model can also be used to develop marketing strategies for tourism destinations and to create better experiences for tourists. Furthermore, this model can be used to create policies and regulations that promote sustainable tourism practices.

In conclusion, the Hawkins Stern model of visitors' behavior in tourism management is an important tool that can be used to measure and understand the behavior of tourists. It can help to identify the motivations and needs of tourists and to determine which elements of the tourist experience are most important to them. This model can also be used to develop marketing strategies for tourism destinations and to create better experiences for tourists. Furthermore, this model can be used to create policies and regulations that promote sustainable tourism practices.

Henceforth, the use of this model could provide a useful framework for tourism managers as it may allow to develop promotional strategies consistent either with the available resources and the possible target visitors. Through this model, managers may advertise the right offering to the right tourist, and may attract new visitor by stimulating triggers in their minds.

1.1.5. General Buyer Behavior Models and Online Reputation Management in Tourism and Hospitality

Buyer behavior in tourism management is an area of study that has been gaining in importance in recent years. Buyer behavior refers to the way in which people make decisions about purchasing products and services. Buyers are influenced by a variety of factors, including their personal preferences, the availability of certain products and services, the prices of those products and services, and their perception of the destination. Understanding buyer behavior is essential for tourism managers to create effective marketing strategies and to ensure that their customers have a positive experience.

The term “buyer behavior” is used to describe the decision-making process that consumers go through when they purchase a product or service. It includes factors such as the consumer’s needs, wants, and values, their attitudes, and the environmental influences that affect their decisions. In the context of tourism management, it is important to understand the motivations behind a buyer’s decision to visit a particular destination. For example, a person may choose to visit a certain destination because of its historical or cultural attractions, its natural beauty, or its recreational activities.

The buyer’s decision-making process can be broken down into four stages: awareness, interest, evaluation, and purchase. Awareness is the first stage in the buyer’s decision-making process. It is the stage in which the buyer becomes aware of the destination and its attractions. Interest is the second stage in the process, and it is when the buyer begins to form an opinion of the destination and its attractions. Evaluation is the third stage in the process and it is when the buyer assesses the benefits and risks associated with the destination and its attractions. Finally, purchase is the fourth stage in the buyer’s decision-making process and it is when the buyer actually makes the purchase.

In order to effectively understand and influence buyer behavior, it is important to understand the various factors that affect the buyer’s decision-making process. These factors include the buyer’s personal needs, wants, and values; the availability of certain products and services; the prices of those products and services; and the buyer’s perception of the destination. Additionally, the buyer’s decision-making process is also affected by environmental influences, such as the availability of information, the level of competition, and the presence of any cultural or social norms.

To effectively influence buyer behavior, it is essential to understand the motivations behind the buyer's decision to visit a particular destination. Additionally, it is important to create marketing strategies that are tailored to the buyer's needs and interests. For example, a tourism manager may use targeted advertising to promote the destination to certain buyers or offer discounts for certain services or attractions. Furthermore, it is important to create a positive customer experience by providing excellent customer service and ensuring that the customer has a pleasant and enjoyable experience.

Understanding buyer behavior is essential for tourism managers to create effective marketing strategies and to ensure that their customers have a positive experience. It is important for tourism managers to understand the motivations behind the buyer's decision to visit a particular destination, as well as the various factors that influence the buyer's decision-making process. Additionally, it is essential to create marketing strategies that are tailored to the buyer's needs and interests, as well as to create a positive customer experience. By understanding buyer behavior, tourism managers can create effective strategies that will help to ensure that their customers have a positive experience, which will in turn lead to more repeat customers and more revenue.

1.1.6. What do the models teach us?

The several models about visitors' behavior teach us how through the use of the right toolbox and the stimulation of the right triggers it is possible to influence visitors' minds.

Therefore, it is possible to make them select a business or a destination in respect of others, and make them advocate for them in the future. This phenomenon may generate a virtuous circle in which with low efforts it is possible to attract new visitors, much to the benefit of the business and the destination. Previous visitors' feedbacks are then one of the most relevant marketing tools for any business, as peers' influence is fundamental in the attraction of new consumers.

To do so, marketing managers have to always keep in mind the relationship between their marketing strategies, perceived quality, experience, loyalty and E-WOM.

In fact, the right communication strategy may make visitors perceive a higher quality level, which is fundamental to attract consumers. If the quality expectations developed in consumer minds are maintained, they will have positive experiences, as they will perceive that they have spent the right

amount of money for the desired service. Likewise, visitors will develop positive memories about the place and the business, which will make them prone to visit them again, thus developing loyalty. Finally, loyal visitors will advocate online and with their peers, thus generating E-WOM capable to influence others.

This loop is the essence of reputation building. If marketing managers start to get aware of that, they will develop strategies capable to create sustainable competitive advantages built on reputation.

1.2.Satisfaction of the client

The client in the tourism industry currently has a large selection of products on the market and much more information, options, and often experience compared to the past. It is therefore more demanding. If a company wants to succeed in the market, it must necessarily monitor client satisfaction. The client is a motivation that is used to enable enterprises to produce services efficiently and without losses through their choices, activities, and purchases (Gúčik, Gajdošík & Lencsésová, 2016).

At the theoretical level, attention has been paid to client satisfaction since the second half of the 20th century. Academics have been paying attention to client satisfaction in the tourism industry since the 1980s.

Table 1: Client satisfaction in the tourism industry

Authors exploring satisfaction in the 20th and 21st centuries	The results of the authors' research
Januška (1981)	He developed a methodology for researching client satisfaction in the tourism industry, and defined a satisfaction coefficient (in the interval 0-1). He emphasized that when examining satisfaction, independent variables (accommodation, food, drinks, dining, attractiveness in the destination) and dependent variables that affect them (mental and physical health, recovery, rest, etc.) must be taken into account.
Peters & Waterman (1982)	They consider client satisfaction an important factor in the company's economic success (and the destination).

	They claim that satisfaction is mainly influenced by the company's employees because they create a service experience and relate satisfaction to customer loyalty.
Gayler & Unger (1986)	They investigated young people's satisfaction with vacations and found that it was positively influenced by a sense of freedom and independence, lower education and previous travel experience. At the same time, they found a connection between the number of friends and young people's relationship with their parents and experiencing satisfaction with the vacation.
Van Raaij & Francken (1990)	They investigated clients' satisfaction with vacations and pointed to the connection between education and income, which increases clients' expectations according to the authors.
Kozak & Rimmington (2000):	Client satisfaction was related to the quality of services, the provision of information, and the behavior of the staff.
Paraskevas & Arendell (2007):	The authors confirmed that the satisfaction of clients in the tourism industry is influenced by the quality of services, the price of services, and the behavior of staff.
Ryu & Han (2010); Fuchs & Reichel (2011):	Their research showed that client satisfaction is influenced not only by the quality of services but also by the atmosphere of the destination and the price-quality ratio.
Han & Hyun (2015):	They considered the quality of services, the physical environment, and the emotional reactions of the people involved to be the key factors influencing client satisfaction.

Jeong & Kim (2019):	In addition to the quality of services and the perceived value of the product for clients, they emphasized the image of the destination and the positive influence of social media.
Zhao, Zhang, & Lu (2020):	They supplemented the known factors of influence on satisfaction with client engagement, client loyalty, and repeat purchase intention.
Jia, Cheng, Lu, & Lin (2021):	In addition to the quality of services, they understood the perceived value of the product and the trust of clients as the dominant factors influencing client satisfaction. In addition, they addressed the impact of social media on client satisfaction.

Source: Own literature review

Client satisfaction expresses the level to which the client's requirements were met. This level is subjectively assessed by the client. The concept of satisfaction affects the psychological level, because a comparison process takes place in each client, which affects a number of different factors, often also of a psychological nature. Client satisfaction in the tourism industry cannot be estimated with certainty in advance. The same product satisfies different clients to different extents. While one is excited about the product, another feels disappointed and dissatisfied. Satisfaction expresses whether the service provider fulfilled or exceeded the client's expectations with its activities, products, processes, or whether they remained unfulfilled. It is always connected with the client's emotions, with feelings of joy and disappointment. Satisfaction is caused by comparing perceived and expected reality. Expectations are influenced by a number of factors that the company does not always have a direct influence on (for example, cultural, subcultural factors, experience, the client's environment, etc.), but some of them are related to the quality of the services provided. Clients' expectations are also shaped by the bearers of public opinion - opinion-forming media, publicity, the Internet, and social media, which currently dominate. At the same time, control authorities in individual countries are also influential, publishing the results of their controls and drawing attention to deficiencies in the quality of services provided. Clients' expectations are also influenced by consumer organizations and the company's reputation in the market. The goal of companies is to exceed client expectations and achieve high client satisfaction. The client does not have to show satisfaction or dissatisfaction automatically. If the client does not complain, the enterprise cannot automatically assume that he was satisfied. Achieving client satisfaction is one of the goals of the business in the tourism industry.

Satisfaction is a process that takes place internally "in one's head". For different people, the same service may evoke different levels of satisfaction. That is why consumer behavior is always associated with a lot of question marks, unsolved problems, tasks, etc. The reason is the fact that the key role is always played by the consumer himself with his own mental world. That is why academics refer to the most important part of purchasing behavior as a black box. In the black box, stimuli are transformed into a set of observable reactions of the client (choice of service, brand, service provider, time, and amount of purchase). Each client is different, behaves differently, and acts differently. He has individual needs that he tries to satisfy as much as possible. Everyone grows up in a certain environment, surrounded by certain people who guide us. They influence our dreams, ideals, interests, rules, and attitudes. However, the black box model expresses the individual influence of various factors on the perception and consumer behavior of clients in the market. While the same factor may have a strong influence on one client (for example, the religious beliefs of family members and the preference for products related to it), they may have almost no effect on another client. That's why marketers solve important issues related to consumer behavior and client satisfaction. It is simply impossible to flawlessly assume and predict the client's consumer behavior and to be able to estimate his future satisfaction.

The company can influence a number of factors that affect satisfaction. It can increase satisfaction by reducing prices, expanding provided services, modifying services, and modifying processes that affect the provided services. The company can make better use of marketing research and systematically monitor satisfaction. It must necessarily follow up on the results of the research with measures that can positively influence it. An enterprise can positively influence client satisfaction by carefully following the latest trends in demand and adapting its offer to them. Client satisfaction is the basis of the company's prosperity on the market.

1.2.1. Models of client satisfaction in tourism

In both theory and practice, we can encounter different models of client satisfaction. It is primarily a) a differentiation model, b) a model of possible reactions, and c) Kan's model. In the following text, we explain the essence of individual models.

a) The differentiation model compares the customer's expectations and the real experience gained, which is related to the provision of the service. We understand it as a theoretical framework

used to investigate customer satisfaction with services. According to this model, clients evaluate satisfaction with the services provided based on a subjective internal process that expresses how well the services met their expectations. We can understand it as an analytical tool. It tries to identify the key factors that affect customer satisfaction with the service provided and then analyze them. It focuses attention on two main elements: 1) the importance of factors that influence client satisfaction (we can ask the client questions such as: "To what extent is it important for you that the service be provided in a certain way?") and 2) on the evaluation of factors that determine how the service satisfies the client's requirements (we can ask the client questions like: "To what extent does the service meet your requirements for...?")

From the results of the research, it is possible to identify key factors of client satisfaction, which can be analyzed more deeply, leading to the improvement of the service provision process and to increasing client satisfaction.

If the service delivery method exceeds the client's expectations, the client is very satisfied. If the service is provided to the customer in exactly the quality that the client expected, the client is satisfied, but not enthusiastic. The worst alternative is to provide a service that cannot meet the client's expectations. If the service cannot meet the client's expectations, the client is very dissatisfied.

The differentiation model of client satisfaction was first introduced in 1985 by Oliver, Rust & Varki. Since then, his concept has been developed and modified by many other authors. They include e.g. Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry (1990) or the authors Anderson & Fornell (1994).

Despite the fact that this model was introduced already in the 80s of the 20th century, it is still considered important and relevant in the 21st century. Academics and researchers use it to investigate client satisfaction in a variety of sectors and contexts. They monitor which factors influence client satisfaction and how enterprises influence these factors.

The authors Wiedmann, Hennigs & Siebels (2009) are devoted to the evaluation of luxury products and services by clients and the influence of their expectations on the resulting satisfaction. Authors Jain & Singh (2002) investigate the impact of the result, but also the process of service provision, on overall client satisfaction. Authors Wu, Chang & Wang (2011) compare client satisfaction with products and services provided in traditional, brick-and-mortar stores versus their satisfaction with those provided through online distribution and communication channels.

Researchers focus on various aspects of the differentiation model, such as measuring customer satisfaction, how clients form expectations, and what influences them. At the same time, they examine how the differentiation model of client satisfaction is related to client loyalty and company profitability.

The authors Homburg, Jozić & Kuehnl (2015) explain that an important contribution of the differentiation model is precisely its ability to reveal important factors that influence client satisfaction. The authors emphasize that it is important to include in the measurement of satisfaction also the current emotions of clients, which can influence their perception of service quality.

Lee & Park (2018) emphasize that depending on the standard of the enterprise and the expected quality of the service provided, the relationship between the perceived quality of the service actually provided and the client's satisfaction may differ. In the case of a lower standard enterprise and the client does not expect quality service, perceived quality is a critical factor affecting customer satisfaction. However, if it is a company of a higher standard, the impact of the quality of the provided service on the client's satisfaction is reduced, but the staff and the atmosphere that can be felt in the company become an important factor of satisfaction.

Therefore, the differentiation model of client satisfaction still remains a useful model for research and management of client satisfaction. Its further application on the market and in practice can be influenced by new research and approaches to its investigation.

b) The model of possible client reactions belongs to the well-known models from the 70s and 80s of the 20th century. Among the most important authors who devoted themselves to the concept of a model of possible client reactions are the authors Kotler & Keller (2007), who devoted themselves to the modeling of client behavior. They claim that predicting the client's reactions is crucial to the success of the company's marketing activities in the market. Berry (1983) focuses on the analysis of the client's reactions and claims that the more the client is satisfied, the more intense and powerful his reaction is (Gúčík, Gajdošík & Lencséssová, 2016). Green, Srinivasan & Wind (1978) are among the first authors who significantly contributed to the development of the model of possible client reactions. The model emphasizes that it is important to examine the level of client satisfaction, because not every client will express their dissatisfaction. It follows that if the company monitors the degree of satisfaction only on the basis of complaints and claims, it cannot accurately determine the real satisfaction of clients with its provided services.

We understand the model of possible client reactions as an analytical tool. It is used to predict the behavior of the client in a certain situation, for example in his reaction to the service provided. This

model tries to predict what actions or reactions the enterprise can expect from the client in different situations. It usually involves the following steps:

- identifying the situation (e.g. purchase process, support service, etc.),
- identification of the client's possible reaction (negative, positive comment, order cancellation, preference for a substitute product on the market, etc.),
- identification of key factors that influence the potential satisfaction/dissatisfaction of the client (price, product quality, level of product support, processes used, personnel serving the client, etc.),
- analyzing and predicting the client's actions, including analyzing information based on identified factors and reactions.

The information obtained and processed in this way can be used to increase the quality of the services provided, increase client satisfaction and achieve the company's goals.

In practice, the model can be used to predict clients' reactions to various scenarios, which it assumes to be realistic. Their reactions can be different - from positive reactions (enthusiasm of clients, which results in their increase, increase in profit, but also, for example, loss of clients and decrease in profit). It can be useful for tourism enterprises because it allows predicting the consequences of certain decisions the enterprise is facing. Thus, it enables companies to better plan and manage their activities and minimize the risk of losing customers and profit.

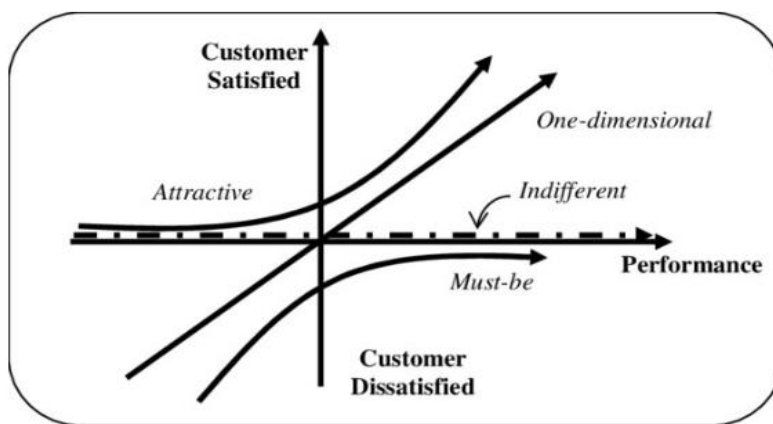
Currently, many authors and research teams in various fields, including not only marketing but also psychology and economics as a science, are working on the model of possible customer reactions. Among the renowned authors who continue to develop the customer response model are Kumar, Aaker, & Day (2010), who demonstrate that the customer response model continues to play a significant role in marketing research and analysis of customer market behavior and influences various marketing strategies and decisions.

c) **Kano's model of client satisfaction** emphasized the diversity of client requirements according to their importance for overall satisfaction and their relationship to product or service features (Kano et al., 1984). Since its publication, it has been used in various countries of the world and in various sectors of the economy and is extremely popular in the field of marketing and quality. The starting point for its construction was Maslow's pyramid of needs, according to which needs that are at a higher level of satisfaction arise (or are satisfied) only after the needs that are at a hierarchically lower

level are satisfied and are more prioritized in terms of their importance. It, therefore, registers different needs with different priorities. From the client's point of view, the model has 2 dimensions, which relate to 1) the degree of fulfillment of requirements related to the properties of the product or service and 2) the degree of client satisfaction.

The client's requirements are related to the features of the product or service and are divided into three groups: self-evident, expressed requirements and expectations, and surprises. The model points out that the fulfilment of these requirements, or the fulfilment of these product/service features has a different effect on the overall satisfaction of the client.

Figure 1: Kan's model of client satisfaction.



Source: Kano et al. 1984; in Rejeb, Morel & Boly, 2008.

Self-evident requirements are those that the client does not explicitly state but expects their fulfillment as a matter of course (travel safety, clean water in the sea, clean sanitary facilities). The client hardly registers their complete fulfillment, but if they are not fulfilled, they result in significant dissatisfaction.

The expressed requirements and expectations are not perceived by the client as self-evident, but express the wishes of the client (e.g. a room facing the garden, an aisle seat in an airplane, a beach within a 10-minute walk, etc.). The client's satisfaction then grows proportionally with the degree of fulfillment of his requirements.

Surprises are those components of the provided service that the client does not expect, but in the event that they are obtained through the consumption of the service, they significantly positively affect his overall satisfaction. In the practice of tourism enterprises, it is extremely important that they strive to fulfill not only the requirements that are self-evident and expressed but also that they emphasize

surprises that are a source of intense emotions for the client and can positively influence his next purchase decision. However, there are certain economic limits to surprise tactics. Costs are decisive, which can grow progressively and lead to price increases. If the customer did not accept the set price, the surprise would be pointless. It is therefore important to focus on the fulfillment of such surprises that can most significantly affect the client's satisfaction.

1.2.2. Factors of client satisfaction in tourism

Client satisfaction factors in tourism are variable and depend on the nature of the services provided. The client is primarily influenced by:

- characteristics of the product/service, while the client always perceives the characteristics through the benefit he receives,
- product/service quality,
- the price of the product/service,
- relations with the customer (ability to recognize the client's needs, speed and time of equipment, responsiveness, friendliness, availability, etc.),
- image and reputation of the company (provision of special needs, loyalty, advertising, relation to sustainability and ecological way of providing services, social responsibility, etc.).

When planning the process of providing a service or offering a product, the company must take into account:

- basic benefit for the client (e.g. in the case of a hotel, rest, relaxation, sleep; in the case of spa services, improvement or maintenance of health, in the case of a sightseeing tour, learning and cultural enjoyment),
- the expected product as a package of product/service characteristics that he expects in the process of purchasing the product (includes self-evident expectations such as a clean bed, soap, towel, hot and cold water in the case of an accommodation facility; in the case of spa services provided procedures based on the application of natural medicinal sources; in the case of a sightseeing tour, the itinerary of the route, interpretation of the guide, etc.)
- a product expanded with additional services and benefits that differentiate the company from the competition (e.g. in the case of a wellness stay, fresh flowers in a vase in the room, a package of wellness teas, a welcome drink, etc.)

- something extra that can motivate him to visit the company in the future (e.g. a financial discount for a loyal client, free choice of a permanent room in the hotel, the promise of a new aromatherapy center, etc.)

Product/service quality is considered a decisive advantage in the market, it can be a source of competitive advantage. It is essential that it is part of all processes and that the company constantly strives to increase it. The company can monitor whether it is successful in improving quality, according to the expressed satisfaction of clients, the degree of their loyalty, and the spread of the good name of the company.

Price is an important factor in tourism because tourism products satisfy less important needs in society. When determining the optimal price, it is, therefore, necessary to take into account, in addition to costs, the current situation on the market, the prices of competing products/services, demand research, the company's position on the market, the upper limit above which the product will be considered too expensive.

Relationships with customers are primarily oriented in companies to the main target groups of clients. We connect them with the knowledge of their needs and wishes and with the effort to be a responsive and accommodating company in fulfilling them.

The image and reputation of the company are the results of the company's previous operation on the market, it reflects the quality of the services provided and the company's loyalty to clients. The company's employees strongly influence the image through their behavior, enthusiasm, qualifications, work with the public, communication on the market, etc. The company has a direct influence on the broadcast image, however, the perceived image is created on the basis of personal experience, mediated experience, and references in the online space or in the offline space and is the result of a long-term process and an effort to differentiate from the competition.

Table 2: Example of visitor satisfaction factors in a wellness hotel

Quick and convenient registration during the check-in process	adequate number of the reception staff
	fast registration process
	parking services and self-service parking
	registration without waiting
	willing employees

	help with luggage if the guest is interested
The effort to truly satisfy the client	<p>the reception staff are active in ascertaining the client's requirements</p> <p>they radiate joy from work and enthusiasm</p> <p>the atmosphere of the wellness hotel in the exterior and interior is relaxing, clean, fragrant, cozy</p> <p>the interior equipment is stylish</p> <p>the client receives a welcome drink for free</p> <p>the client automatically receives information about wifi in the hotel, offers for wellness and fitness areas, etc.</p>
Focus on the offer and comfort of the client	<p>reception staff have an overview of possible activities in and outside the hotel</p> <p>they behave in a friendly and accommodating manner in person and telephone contact</p> <p>reception staff know loyal clients by name</p> <p>the wellness hotel accepts all payment cards</p> <p>in case of bad weather, when leaving the hotel, the staff will offer the client an umbrella and take the luggage to the car</p>
The pursuit of perfection	<p>the employee is able to urgently fulfill the client's wishes</p> <p>when the client arrives, the employee knows all his requirements</p> <p>the employee knows about the client's requirements during his previous stay and takes them into account</p> <p>the client feels individual care</p> <p>the reception staff addresses the client by name</p>

Source: Own processing according to Gučík, Gajdošík & Lencéssová, 2016.

1.2.3. Methods of examining client satisfaction

Researching client satisfaction is a source of information about the quality of services provided, a starting point for improving its processes, and is closely related to the prosperity of the company. If the company manages to satisfy its clients, it can achieve a great competitive advantage in the market. A satisfied client maintains loyalty to the company, repeatedly buys innovative and new products, spreads the good name of the company, favorably presents the company's products to the public, is less sensitive to price, brings incentives to improve services, and pays less attention to competing brands. The cost of maintaining a client can be lower than the cost of acquiring a new client (Gúčík, Gajdošík & Lencséssová, 2016).

There are several methods used to measure customer satisfaction. Many academics in different countries of the world dealt with them. Kotler & Keller (2007) dealt not only with client satisfaction but also with loyalty and behavior. His research proved that customer satisfaction is a key factor not only for acquiring, but especially for retaining clients. Fornell (1992; Fornell et al., 2007) is the founder of the ACSI (American Customer Satisfaction Index) model, which is considered one of the most successful methods of measuring client satisfaction. The author confirmed that there is a relationship between client satisfaction and a company's long-term success in the market. Davidow and Uttal (1989) dealt with the impact of customer satisfaction on the growth of enterprises' performance. Their research confirmed that satisfied customers are more willing to recommend the company, to return in the future, which affects the achievement of the company's economic goals. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) developed the SERVQUAL model. Oliver (1980) dealt with the process of forming customer satisfaction. His research has shown that customer satisfaction depends on the client's actual experience with the product or service compared to their expectations.

In practice, we distinguish several methods of examining client satisfaction. We divide them into objective and subjective methods.

Objective methods of investigating satisfaction work with objective indicators that express the company's market share, which can be expressed e.g. by the percentage of the number of customers, the rate of repeated purchases, the volume of products sold, or by the number of sales, etc. The disadvantage of these methods is the time lag behind the process of service provision, which will cause late detection of dissatisfaction. A delay will cause a late implementation of corrective measures, which may increase client dissatisfaction.

Subjective methods of investigating client satisfaction work with the individual perception of the service provided. Individual perception is analyzed through complaints, or by monitoring client satisfaction with first-contact employees. In the observation method, techniques such as interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, and scaling techniques are used. It is desirable to combine these techniques.

Observation has limited use, it requires experienced researchers, because usually not only the investigated parameter is analyzed, but also the circumstances of the observation, emotional factors, and behavior patterns of the analyzed subjects. The desired behavior of the researcher is defined. Standardized observation is usually used, the purpose of which is the comparability of findings (Gúčík et al., 2016).

The interview has the widest use, it is used in personal contact with the client. A recording is made of the interview, the processing of which can be technically and financially demanding. The sample set is usually smaller than in the case of a questionnaire survey or observation.

A combination of observation and interview is fictitious shopping (mystery shopping). Questionnaire research is widely used. It is about answering questions in writing. Its advantage is that the respondent has more time to think about the answer. The disadvantage is that it is not possible to check whether the questionnaire was filled in by the right person and correctly, whether the answers correspond to reality

Scaling techniques such as the Likert scale, semantic differential, etc. are used in qualitative research when it concerns the examination of attitudes and experiences. The Likert scale evaluates the investigated phenomenon on a scale of positive, medium, and negative evaluations. It can be verbal (I definitely agree - rather agree, neither agree nor disagree, rather disagree, definitely disagree) or numerical 1-5. The number of scale steps is always odd.

The semantic differential scale (the so-called Osgood's polarization scale) is based on the assumption that each person has certain attitudes towards phenomena or objects around him. Polar ratings are used (eg pleasant-unpleasant, available-unavailable, cheap-expensive, etc.). The difference between extreme values forms the semantic space of polarized properties and is divided into several intervals (+3 +2 +1 0 -1 -2 -3). The task of the respondent is to express his opinion (by circling closer to one or the other pole).

The method of group interviews (focus groups) is used in qualitative research. Interviews are unstructured, led by a moderator in a small group of respondents (max. 12), and brainstorming is used. The emphasis is on the interaction of group members, the exchange of opinions, problems, and their possible solutions.

A suitable method of subjective indirect satisfaction research is the SERQUAL method, which evaluates the level of expectations before purchasing a service (ideal quality, standards) and the actual perceived quality of the provided service after consumption (Gúčík, Gajdošík & Lencséssová, 2016). Overall satisfaction consists of sub-satisfactions (depending on the combined services) that have different weights in the evaluation of overall satisfaction. With the aim of monitoring the company's services in order to achieve their improvement, but also for the purpose of motivating employees, it is appropriate to use a value that represents the overall degree of client satisfaction. Customer Satisfaction Index (CSI) model This model is based on the principle of the EFQM excellence model. It uses generally valid determinants of satisfaction:

- quality, functionality, and availability of the product/service,
- price level, discount system, and payment terms,
- location, operating hours, method, and system of availability of the enterprise/services,
- the impact of the environment on the client, reliability of the service, empathy towards the client, qualification of employees, etc.,
- the image of the company, and its credibility,
- client expectations, are influenced by many factors, including past experience.

Table 3: Model of the European Client Satisfaction Index

Variables	Explanation of the focus of the questions
Image	The questions concern the company, its reliability, trustworthiness, client orientation, innovativeness, competitiveness, benefit to society, use of modern technologies and processes, the attractiveness of the interior and exterior of the company, and the relationship between price and quality are evaluated

Client expectations	Expecting quality before purchasing a service, fulfilling the client's individual ideas and requirements
Perceived quality of service to clients	Overall evaluation of the quality of the service, comparison of quality with the quality of the competition, comparison of reality with the client's ideas, possibilities for improvement from the client's point of view, error rate during the provision of the service during the calendar year (frequency of errors)
Perceived value by clients	Exchange value, utility value, and emotional value from the client's individual point of view
Client satisfaction	Overall satisfaction with the service, comparing the perception of the provided service with the ideal idea of its provision
Client complaints	The frequency of complaints and the way the company reacts to complaints
Client loyalty	Repeat purchase intention, enterprises recommendations, price sensitivity assessment

Processed according to www.uog.org, 2015 in Gúčik, Gajdošík & Lencsésová, 2016.

A 10-point numerical rating of individual parameters is suitable for expressing the client satisfaction index. The index is obtained by averaging all the ratings with a weighted arithmetic mean. In practice, however, it is often recommended to compile the index in the form of a relative value (in %). The data obtained from the satisfaction survey must be statistically processed, analyzed, and interpreted.

1.3. Increasing Satisfaction Through Quality Management

To nurture visitors' satisfaction, it is fundamental to consider the main triggers emerging in visitors' minds, or the antecedents of consumer satisfaction. These factors can include product quality, service, value for money, and availability of products or services. In detail:

1. Product quality is an important factor in visitors' satisfaction. If a product is of high quality and respect what has been promised, customers will be more likely to be satisfied. In addition, visitors may be more likely to purchase from the same company in the future if the quality of the product is consistently good.

2. Service is another factor in customer satisfaction. If a company provides friendly and efficient service, visitors will be more likely to be satisfied with their purchase. Additionally, they may be more likely to recommend the company to their friends and family if they had a positive customer service experience.
3. Value for money is also an important factor in customer satisfaction. Customers will be more likely to be satisfied if they feel they are getting a good deal on their purchase. Customers may be more likely to purchase from the same company if they feel they are getting a good value for their money.
4. Availability of promised products or services is also an important factor in customer satisfaction. If a customer is able to find what they are looking for in a timely manner, they will be more likely to be satisfied with their purchase.

It is therefore important for businesses in the tourism industry to ensure that they are providing excellent services that meet the expectations of their customers. This includes providing clear and accurate information about the services that they provide, responding to customer queries quickly and professionally, and offering a good customer service experience.

The management of satisfaction and actions to increase it are fundamental as it is the measure of how well a destination meets the needs and expectations of visitors. It has been proven that satisfied visitors are more likely to return and to recommend the destination, thus leading to increased tourism. Tourism operators must ensure that visitors have a positive experience when they visit their destinations. This involves providing quality services, such as transportation, accommodation, and attractions, as well as ensuring that the environment is clean and safe. Operators should also strive to create a welcoming atmosphere and provide helpful information to visitors.

The following ones are the main practical strategies to increase visitors' satisfaction. Henceforth, managers should invest in:

1. Good customer interactions, which as assessed is essential for creating a positive experience for visitors. Tourism operators should ensure that their staff are friendly, knowledgeable, and helpful. They should also offer a variety of payment options and provide easy access to customer service representatives.
2. Technology can also be used to improve visitor satisfaction. Tourism operators should use online booking systems to make it easier for visitors to book services and attractions. They should also provide interactive maps and other resources to help visitors explore the area.

3. Social media can be a powerful tool for engaging with visitors and creating positive experiences. Tourism operators should use social media platforms to provide information, share photos and videos, and respond to customer comments and complaints. These tools could also be considered to collect consumers feedbacks about possible corrective actions.

The relationship between visitor satisfaction and quality in tourism is a complex one. Quality in tourism is an important factor in determining visitor satisfaction. Quality refers to the overall experience of a destination or particular service, and is directly related to the level of satisfaction of visitors. Quality in tourism is a broad concept and encompasses a number of different factors including the quality of facilities, amenities, customer service, safety, and environmental protection.

In such a regard, quality in tourism is essential in creating a positive experience, as it ensures that visitors enjoy their time. Quality facilities and amenities are important because they provide visitors with a comfortable and enjoyable experience. Quality customer service is also essential, as it ensures that visitors have their needs and queries addressed. Furthermore, safety is an important consideration for visitors in order for them to feel secure. Finally, environmental protection is essential to ensure that the destination is preserved for future generations.

The quality of a destination or service can directly affect visitor satisfaction. When quality is high, visitors are more likely to have a positive experience, and be satisfied. Quality is a subjective measure, and therefore different visitors can have different experiences and levels of satisfaction. Quality is also determined by the level of expectations visitors have. When expectations are met or exceeded, visitors are likely to be more satisfied.

Quality in tourism management can thus be defined as the level of excellence achieved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of tourism services, products, and activities. Quality is a subjective concept and can be measured in various ways. Quality is often associated with customer satisfaction, as customers are more likely to be satisfied with a service or product if they experience high levels of quality. Quality is also associated with efficiency and effectiveness, as high-quality services, products, and activities can help to reduce costs and improve efficiency. Quality can also be associated with innovation, as high-quality services and products often require creative approaches to problem solving and improvement.

The concept of quality in tourism management has become an increasingly important one in recent years. As the industry has grown, the need for high standards of quality has become more

important. Yet, as quality is subjective, it can be difficult to define. However, there are certain factors that can be used to measure the quality of a tourism management operation.

1.3.1. Factors Determining Quality in Tourism and Hospitality

There are a number of factors that contribute to the quality of a tourism management operation. These include the quality of the staff, the quality of the services and products offered, the quality of the infrastructure, the quality of the customer service, and the quality of the marketing and promotional activities.

- Staff Quality

The quality of the staff is an important factor in determining the overall quality of a tourism management operation. Staff should have the necessary skills and knowledge to provide quality services and products. They should also have the right attitude and commitment to ensure that customers are satisfied with the services and products offered. Staff should also be adequately trained and motivated to ensure that they are able to deliver quality services and products.

- Service and Product Quality

The quality of the services and products offered is also an important factor in determining the overall quality of a tourism management operation. Services and products should be of a high quality, meet customer needs, and be competitively priced. Customers should also be able to easily access the services or products, and the services and products should be well-maintained and regularly updated.

- Infrastructure Quality

The quality of the infrastructure is also a factor in determining the overall quality of a tourism management operation. Infrastructure includes the physical facilities, such as roads, hotels, and restaurants, as well as the technological infrastructure, such as telecommunications and internet access. Quality infrastructure is important for providing customers with quality services and products.

- Customer Service Quality

The quality of customer service is another important factor in determining the overall quality of a tourism management operation. Customer service should be efficient, friendly, and helpful. Customers should be able to easily access the services and products offered, and should be able to receive prompt and helpful assistance when they have questions or problems.

- Marketing and Promotional Quality

The quality of the marketing and promotional activities is also an important factor in determining the overall quality of a tourism management operation. Marketing and promotional activities should be well-planned, well-executed, and aimed at the right target audiences. Marketing and promotional activities should also be cost-effective and should provide measurable results.

In conclusion, quality in tourism management is an important concept that should be taken seriously. Indeed, there is an evident linkage between quality, satisfaction and then reputation. Moving from this hybrid theoretical/practical section, what is missing is the understanding of the principal theories explaining it. The following observation, indeed, could allow to understand the other main antecedents of online reputation and provide information about factors which may successively influence it.

1.4. Word-of-mouth – eWOM

The expression word-of-mouth has been used in daily English for centuries. It is the oldest and one of the most important channels of information dispersion between people (Ismagilova et al., 2017). In marketing, the term word-of-mouth (WOM) is used to describe an informal oral, person-to-person communication about positive, neutral or negative experiences with a specific product, service, or a brand, which is recognized by the recipient as non-commercial (Anderson, 1998; Buttle, 1998).

Essentially, WOM is perceived as exceptionally trustworthy source of information. It creates social proof, removes friction, and builds trust in the purchase. It can produce a snowball effect, which in the case of sharing of pleasant experiences (positive recommendations) leads to more customers and sales, or vice versa, in the case of spreading negative experiences or even product denigration, it reduces the chances of choosing a particular product, service or brand by potential clients.

The WOM concept is characterized by:

- interpersonal communication as opposed to mass communication,
- the participants of the communication are past, present, and potential future customers of brands, products, and services, while communicators share their opinions, attitudes and experiences depending on the level of (dis)satisfaction with the previous purchase,
- the participants of the communication are mostly not commercially motivated,

- the content of the shared message can directly or indirectly influence attitude change, brand awareness, and purchase intention, while negative WOM usually more influences customer decision-making than positive one.

Due to the intangibility and expense of products, WOM is particularly important in the service industry, including tourism, hospitality, and leisure.

Travel is both intangible and heterogeneous, making it difficult for customers to choose between options. Since it cannot be pretested, committing to a booking is precarious. To alleviate this risk, consumers naturally used professional intermediaries such as travel agents or tour operators, to help them find products, services and experiences matching their travel needs. In each case, these acted as information brokers, simplifying planning by streamlining the processes of identifying and accessing appropriate information. However, as intermediaries tend to be commercially motivated, this gave rise to questions of credibility and trust, with consumers concerned as to whether recommendations were the best match for their needs or resulting from financial benefit. Consumers become increasingly sceptical about traditional sources, with many speculating that such advice is often based on commercial factors rather than actual, experienced quality (O'Connor, Assaker, 2022).

In contrast, WOM helps to conquer low comparability or difficult evaluation and has substantial impact on potential customers' expectations, as it clarifies uncertainties and lowers the risks associated with purchase and consumption. Through WOM, the higher perceived risk of intangible products and services – compared to tangible and testable ones – can be addressed and counteracted, and the product or service can be understood before consumption. Hence, potential consumers rely on the experiences of their peers and integrate this knowledge into their decision making. WOM is essential in the formation of destination images, which then impact the attitudes of tourists as well as their decision-making and travel behaviour (Philipp, 2022).

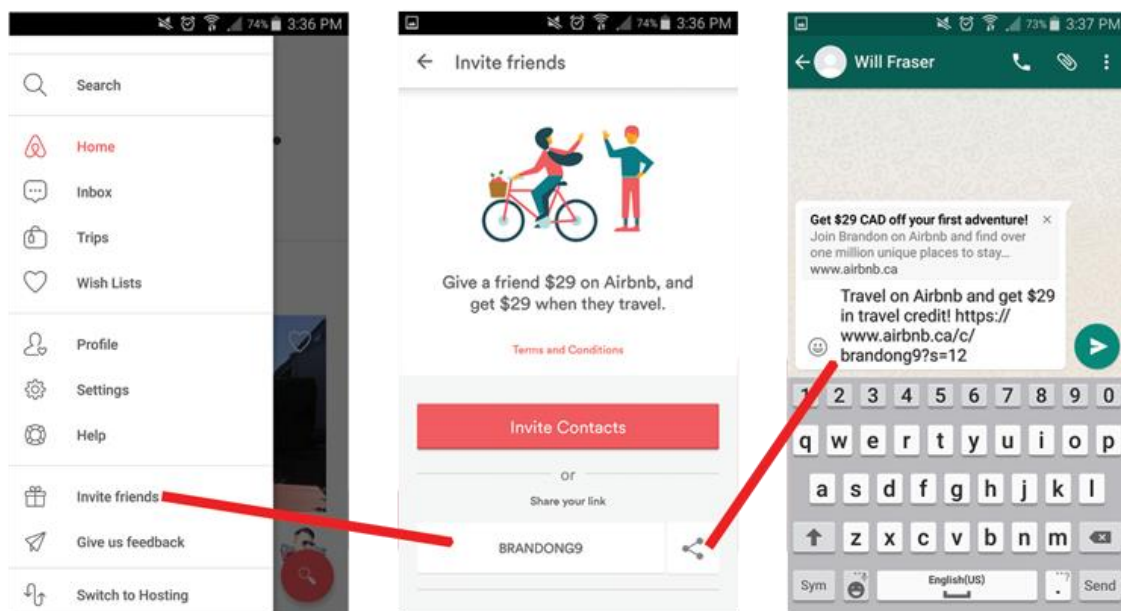
In addition to organic WOM, some organisations use referral programs (or a “refer-a-friend” program) as a customer acquisition tool with aim to reward existing customers for recommending the provider and its products or services to their family and friends (Ismagilova et al., 2017).

Referral programs are a deliberate, systematic, and persuasive way of getting people to make referrals to specific business. Referral programs are also called word-of-mouth marketing because they reward existing customers for sharing and encourage new customers. By stimulating the spread of product, service or brand information, the referral programs transform the organic form of WOM into an inorganic one, which does not lose its persuasiveness and influence. In these programs, existing

customers are rewarded with referral incentives, typically with a free cash, major discounts, or a temporary free subscription. While there is an upfront cost to the business, referral programs significantly increase long-term revenue by making loyal customers out of existing customer base (Teo, 2022).

In the travel industry, referral programs are typical for big players in the platform economy, such as Airbnb, Uber or Bolt.

Figure 2: Aibnb referral program



Source: <https://www.saasquatch.com/blog/rs-51-referral-program-examples/>.

However, these organizations do not use the typical offline form of WOM, but rather electronic channels, to initiate sharing of recommendations.

Old-style offline word-of-mouth has been shown to play a major role for customers' buying decisions. The initiation of the internet-based technologies and platforms has extended consumers' options for gathering unbiased information from other consumers and, at the same time, delivers the opportunity for individuals to offer their own consumption-related recommendation by engaging in electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM).

eWOM is defined as the dynamic and open-ended information exchange process between potential, actual, or former consumers regarding a product, service, brand, or company, which is available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet (Ismagilova et al., 2017). As Cantalops and Salvi (2014) state, eWOM is predominantly described as online reviews, online recommendations, or online opinions. It includes communication between producers and consumers as well as those between consumers themselves. The dissemination of such information about a product, service, brand, or company can be one-sided at real time, that means asynchronous (emails, review sites, blogs), or synchronous (chat rooms, newsgroups, instant messaging) allowing a considerable degree of interactivity in real time. From the point of view of the number of participants and their reach, eWOM should take form (1) from one to one (emails), (2) from one to many (review sites) or (3) from many to many (virtual communities).

Given the different characteristics of Internet communication focused to multiple individuals, available to other consumers for an indefinite period, and anonymous, eWOM deserves the intensive attention (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). Spreading information about a product, service, brand, or a company is now happening on a much widespread scale and is not guarded by the physical distance between individuals (Donthu et al., 2021). User-generated content is mainly regarded as being independent of publishers and suppliers and thus highly credible, particularly for intangible products that are difficult to evaluate prior to consumption (Litvin, Goldsmith and Pan, 2008).

The main differences between traditional WOM and up-to-date eWOM are recognized in the reach of the information's impact (number of people who can be influenced, even people who have never met) and the speed of interaction. Compared to WOM, eWOM is more powerful thanks to its accessibility, quickness, one-to-many reach, and its non-existence of face-to-face human pressure (Cantalops, Salvi, 2014).

As Nam et al. (2020) aptly pronounces, eWOM is, superframework of WOM properties, characterized by:

- immediate connection of shared opinions and information with the wide audience,
- obtaining information from several eWOM providers,
- instant availability and persistent digital footprint,
- anonymous character, which can motivate people to share information,
- possibility to build up social networks and status within those networks by writing eWOM.

O'Connor and Assaker (2022) emphasize that while previously, distribution of WOM was limited to friends and family in close contact with the customer, growth in the use of eWOM platforms diffuses what were once personal opinions and ratings to a much broader disconnected audience, allowing a single individual to potentially reach thousands of interested readers. Speed of diffusion is also accelerated, with ratings or opinions posted on eWOM platforms accessible instantly across the world. Likewise, eWOM platforms typically store and archive their content, creating a back catalogue of reviews and ratings accessible to a wider audience over a longer period. As a result, both the shelf-life and influence of consumer opinions is vastly increased since eWOM platform users can query the database at any time for an input into their decision-making process.

While WOM is, simplistically, a dyadic exchange where one person shares consumption information with another, eWOM is “a complex, multi-platform, multi-format, multi-party marketplace with diverse communication norms” (Pyle et al., 2021, p. 145). A consumer selects from a multiplicity of eWOM platforms (websites, applications) that enable consumers to review, rate and share opinions to guide subsequent buyers in their purchase choice (Buhalis and Law, 2008), as well as he/she selects from different formats (ratings, reviews, photos, videos) that suit his/her preferences (Harris, Prideaux, 2017).

The major sources of eWOM are user-generated product recommendations on social networking sites, online reviews on e-commerce platforms, and blogs (Verma et al., 2023). Common dedicated examples in the travel context include platforms such as TripAdvisor.com and Yelp.com as well as social media sites such as blogs, forums and wikis (O'Connor, Assaker, 2022).

An important consideration is whether eWOM platforms are anonymous or confirmed. Anonymous websites allow anyone to post reviews and ratings without requiring evidence that the reviewer has experienced the product/service in question. This leaves open the potential for falsified reviews, posted either to artificially boost, or discredit, a particular supplier's ratings. Other eWOM platforms only accept reviews from verified customers specifically to address this issue and maintain credibility. As only customers who have reserved and experienced the product/service are allowed to post a review, the platform can be sure that the review in question is genuine, preserving the integrity of the database wikis (O'Connor, Assaker, 2022).

The shared information (comment, advise etc.) is shaped by platform affordances (e.g., Twitter allows a maximum of 280 characters) and website-specific norms for scoring a 'good' product. Consumer may also discover hundreds of opinions with diverse views, a cacophony of information rife with personal biases, as well as both explicit and underground marketer influence. The eWOM

marketspace is therefore more complex than the prototypical WOM exchange; it is a multidimensional three level system of players - eWOM providers (reviewers), reviews, and eWOM platforms (Pyle et al., 2021).

Generally, motives for giving eWOM vary, depending also on the character of the online review (positive, negative).

Table 4: Motivation of eWOM giving

Positive review	Negative review
self improvement	expressing negative feelings
pleasure /satisfaction	financial benefits
experience sharing	revenge
socialization	helping others (altruism)
emotions expression	pleasure
helping others (altruism)	seeking help
belonging to a specific online community	dissatisfaction with the provided product
	inaccurate content of the previous reviews

Source: Medeková, Pompurová, 2022, p. 45.

Reviewers (eWOM providers) decide to share their consumption information mainly under the influence of emotions connected to their subjectively experienced satisfaction or dissatisfaction. According to Liu et al. (2021) post-purchase emotions influence not only selective disclosure of information, but also the choice of the medium of eWOM-giving (eWOM platform), and subsequently pre-purchase behavior of other potential clients (eWOM recipients).

Balamoorthy and Chandra (2023) state, that information sharing behaviour of reviewers can be attributed to the personal desire to self-presentation, specifically, on social media. Thus, social media naturally appeals to extraverts as they have a desire for social attention and social interaction. Further, materialistic individuals display their status, wealth, and uniqueness to impress others by using products to disclose information about themselves.

In practice, eWOM is evaluated in various ways, from quantitative measures such as satisfaction score (often collected as Likert-type scales to give an at-a-glance indication of quality) as well as the number and recency of reviews, which helps add credibility by reassuring users that scores are based on sufficient reviews to be free from manipulation and an accurate reflection of the current experience. Given the complex nature of the tourism product, most evaluations also include in-depth

textual reviews detail past customers' experiences as well as photos and progressively more also video. Both quantitative and qualitative data are typically analysed to arrive at calculated ratings that consolidate the ratings and opinions of individual reviewers. Overall, the objective for the platform is to add value by leveraging its data resource over and above what the user could glean from examining the individual reviews (O'Connor, Assaker, 2022).

Despite their recent development, eWOM platforms have rapidly become exceptionally influential. Numerous studies approve that individuals use eWOM to obtain information about tourism destinations, hotels, restaurants, and other tourism facilities that they want to visit or use, and that eWOM demonstrably influences their choice (Lončarić et al., 2016; Singh & Kathuria, 2019).

As Liu et al. (2021) claim, according to industry reports, 94% of travelers state that reviews are an important decision factor in choosing their accommodation, and 80% of customers will leave an online review if they are asked to do so.

Consumers believe that by adopting eWOM, they can reduce the risk of bad service choices and plan their stay more efficiently (Singh, Kathuria, 2019), consumers rely on easy-to-process information when searching for eWOM (Sparks & Browning, 2011), but also their quality (Filieri & McLeay, 2013). They trust more in posts where the identity of the author is better known (Lončarić et al., 2016; Zainal et al., 2017) and they also place more trust in contributions published on websites designed to evaluate tourism products and services, such as Booking or TripAdvisor (Lončarić et al., 2016).

As a result, proactively managing a business's reputation on eWOM platforms has become essential. To drive future success, tourism businesses need to systematically monitor mentions of their brands on eWOM platforms and post well-timed, thorough and well-crafted management responses to assure readers that someone is listening and acting to address any problems cited (O'Connor, Assaker, 2022).

1.5.Reputation and related terms

“Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it, the tree is the real thing.”

Abraham Lincoln

Tourism services have their general and special characteristics and features that distinguish them from goods. One of the significant features of tourism services is that customers cannot try them on in advance. It means that customers use them without testing and are directly involved in providing them.

Customers do so on the assumption that they feel at least a minimum level of trust in tourism service providers and expect to be able to rely on their promise of quality and reputation.

Digitization has made it possible for tourism customers to share their consumer experience and opinions through the Internet. These opinions are communicated through various forms of social media and create the online reputation of tourism service providers, but also other businesses, their services, goods and brands. The rise of the digital society means that online reputation in tourism and hospitality largely determines the business and financial performance of tourism service providers (Li et al., 2013; Rodríguez-Díaz & Espino-Rodríguez, 2018). Activity of tourism service providers through social media is quite dynamic and has a direct influence on customers' decision making when choosing a tourism services and a tourism destination in which to spend their holidays (Rodríguez-Díaz et al., 2017). A serious challenge tourism service providers face is how to manage coherent, truthful and credible communication in such an open digital society, as it seriously affects customers' decision-making processes (Rodríguez-Díaz et al., 2019). In the process of this social communication, users have the opportunity to share information, opinions, experiences, arguments and evaluations on special websites that form a new mutual communication resulting in online reputation.

From the above, it is clear that online reputation is playing an increasingly important role in tourism and hospitality and is becoming the main and decisive information for customers. It is obvious, that managers capable of building a reputation of consistent high-quality service will show a higher market power (Aznar et al., 2018).

Even before we define the term online reputation, we will focus on defining the term reputation itself. The word reputation comes from the Latin word "reputo" which consist of the prefix "re" and verb "puto" that means having an opinion considering something in a specific way, at the same time acknowledging that others may have different opinions (Marchori & Cantoni, 2012). Hlee et al. (2018) refers to the aggregate opinions generated by the system with the term reputation cue (i.e. number of reviews, friends, fans or elite badge, etc.).

It is s generally accepted that reputation is very useful for improving competitiveness (Pechlaner et al., 2002). Reputation is primarily considered an economic intangible asset that serves to protect companies from competition while providing them with a sustainable competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). However, reputation focuses on the relationships between customers and companies, not on the mutual relationships between the companies themselves in the market.

Reputation can also be understood as a certain number of cognitive associations related to the given object, which influence the behavior of the companies involved. Herbig & Milewicz (1993) consider that reputation is constructed through the accumulation of judgements the public makes regarding the company.

According to the Oxford Dictionary, we can define the word reputation as a belief or opinion generally held about someone or something and a widespread belief that someone or something has a certain characteristic (Marchori & Cantoni, 2012). The Royal Academy of the Spanish Language defines reputation in two ways: First, the opinion that one has about someone or something and, secondly, the prestige or esteem that is associated with that person or thing (Dollinger et al., 1997; Ferguson et al., 2000). In practice, reputation is something that affects the positioning of companies, and this is understood as a comparative value or advantage one company has over others when the customer is ranking them mentally (Gil et al., 2017). Even in the context of electronic commerce, reputation can be defined in two ways. First, it can be seen as a collective measure of trustworthiness according to members' ratings in a community (Josang et al., 2007). Second, it can be a measure of a company's credibility, which results from the relationship among the company's promises and fulfilments (Casaló et al., 2007). From the perspective of marketing and corporate communication, reputation is considered a perceptive representation of a company's past activities and future prospects, describing the company's overall attractiveness to all of its key components compared to other leading competitors (Dowling, 2008; Fombrun et al., 2000). In the field of tourism and hospitality, reputation captures customers' beliefs about the quality and characteristics of a tourism services (Fu et al., 2015; Kock et al., 2018), affects customers' service choice, overall attitudes about services and trust, and influences their visit intentions (Duygun & Menten, 2015). So reputation has a big impact on customers' choices, visiting experiences and perceived value (Fu et al., 2015). Reputation is basically focused on who (the customer) gives credit to whom (the company). We can also say that reputation denotes the extent to which recipients believe a reviewer is honest, concerned for others and consistent in the long-term (Park & Nicolau, 2015). Reputation affects the ability of companies to improve their profitability and sustainable growth (Viglia et al., 2016; Xiang et al., 2017).

Carrol & McCombs (2003) point to different types of reputation, which significantly helps in quantifying and overcoming the obscurity of information related to reputation. They clearly propose that reputation is actually a social construction which adopts different forms when associated with media communication, for example the company's current reputation, the reputation communicated and perceived by the different interest groups, the interpreted reputation, the agreed reputation, the ideal reputation and the desired reputation.

As we mentioned earlier, the reputation of travel service providers in the online space is becoming increasingly important. This reputation takes the form of online reputation, which becomes a strategic aspect of the competitiveness of tourism service providers in the tourism market. Increasingly, this reputation depends on public opinion online, largely depending on the variety of images, opinion and discussions online (Buhalis & Inversini, 2014). Online reputation, as a relatively new concept in tourism and hospitality, consists of a complex set of opinions, experiences and information that users of social media available on the Internet exchange with each other about tourism services and their providers or brands. Therefore, the online reputation can be considered a communication activity performed by customers in an external environment outside the direct control of companies (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). These means of communication enable the existence of a mutual relationship between customers and companies in order to reduce the impact of negative opinions and stimulate a favorable evaluation of their services, brands and image (Gössling et al., 2016). We see this as the reason why a stable and effective online reputation becomes essential for tourism service providers to achieve their revenue, communication and image goals.

Online reputation is manifested as an interactive process of mutual exchange of online generated content between companies, customers and users based on different social media channels. In this context, the online reputation is beyond the direct control of companies, although they can influence it through a communication activity strategically aimed at customers to promote the image of services, goods, brands and companies (Gössling et al., 2016). Digital marketing communication experts Del Santo & Álvarez (2012) define online reputation as the reflection of prestige or esteem of a person or brand on Internet. We should emphasize the importance of conversation in the digital environment because people converse and express their opinions online, where it is very easy and cheap to offer information and opinions through mechanisms such as forums, blogs or social networks. According to these authors, this could be defined as the “amateurisation” of marketing information, where the marketing content is created by the users themselves.

Online reputation reflects how the opportunities provided by the online space are used and abused in the application of various business practices. Del Fresno-García (2011) characterizes the online reputation as the result of what previous clients, future clients, employees, etc., say, write, and transmit to others anywhere on Internet social media, based on their direct or indirect feelings and experience with a brand at any time during their relationship. Online opinions and comments lead to attraction if they are good but may create a dynamic of falsehood and fraud, especially in platforms where no strict control exists. Consequently, online reputation should not be considered an isolated

goal, but one that is part of a company's strategic marketing function that pursues reciprocal communication and social commitment with interest groups (Gil et al., 2017).

Building an online reputation, searching and finding the best solutions for handling customer reviews and comments on various social media channels is all about online reputation management efforts. Also in tourism and hospitality, online reputation management is the process of monitoring, reporting and reacting to online feedback and opinions about business, services, brands, etc. It involves actively participating in social networking by engaging customers and generating content, as well as using customer feedback to strengthen the business and build loyalty and advocacy (www.destinationbc.ca). We want to emphasize that online reputation management is not about trying to pass the business off as something it is not. It is about setting realistic expectations for customers and fulfilling them, or even exceeding them in the best case. Doing this can compel customers to share their experiences, thereby enhancing the online reputation of tourism service providers (www.destinationbc.ca). In this regard, many of them agree that knowing what is being said about own business is not a choice, but an obligation.

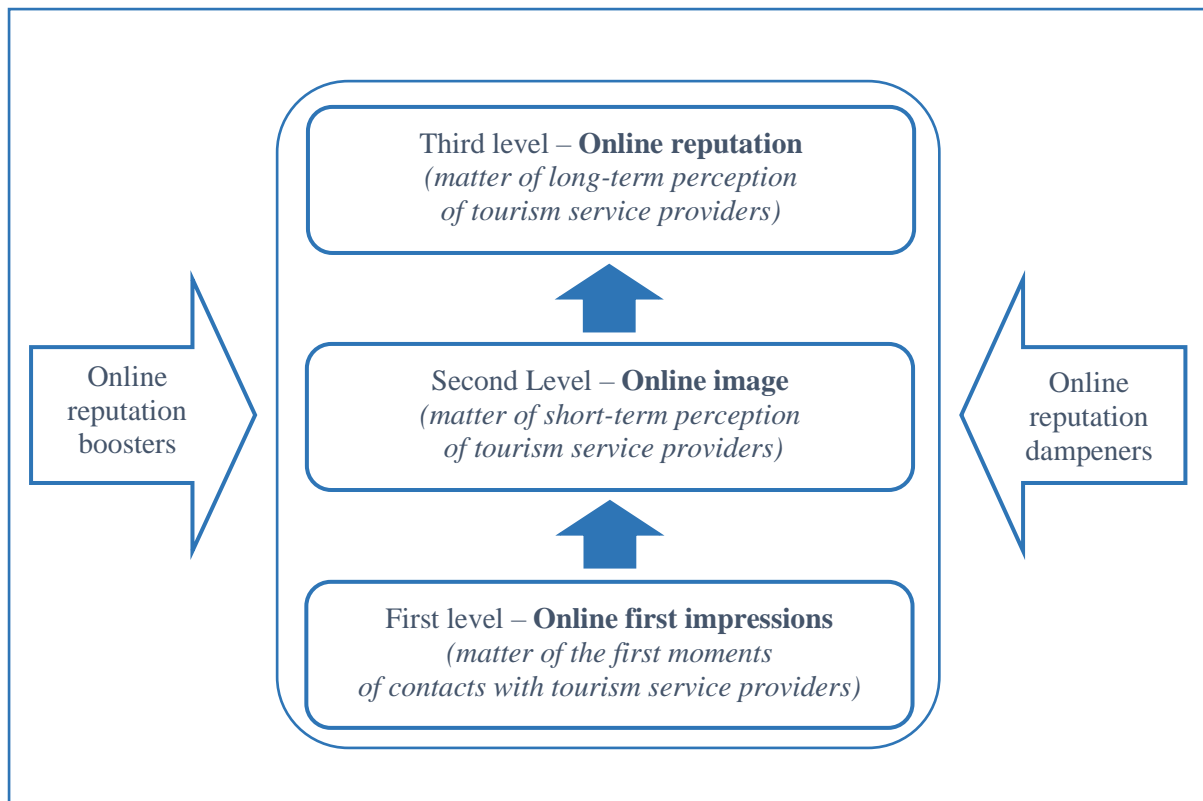
“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you’ll do things differently.”

Warren Buffet

Tourism service providers should be aware that building an online reputation must be systematic step by step, but also persistent and courageous. It seems pretty clear, that the online reputation of a tourism service providers is not born easily or automatically when starting a tourism business. It takes years to build a strong online reputation, but it can be lost in few seconds due to gambling with customer trust. It is also true that online reputation cannot be built on a bubble, and if so, only for a moment, because then it bursts. This means that successful tourism businesses have a good online reputation because they are really good, not because they have a clever and well-paid reputation manager, skilled in communication, who is able to communicate any problem in public from such a point of view that it appears to be something positive.

Just as tourism service providers gradually and systematically build their online reputation, the perception of this online reputation by customers is also gradually and systematically formed. In this context, we generally perceive three basic levels of perception of online reputation in tourism and hospitality. We illustrate these levels in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Perception levels of online reputation in tourism and hospitality



Source: Own elaboration

The first level of perception of online reputation in tourism and hospitality is usually associated with online first impressions. This level refers to subjective impressions during the first moments of contacts with tourism service providers and their business performance in the market. It arises on the basis of primary stimuli (signals) perceived by human senses. It cannot be said that customers at this level will immediately acquire a clear and firm perception of online reputation of the tourism service providers, but in any case, online first impressions indicate the direction in which this perception may go in the future. Online first impressions can basically be good, that is convincing and trustworthy or bad, that is unconvincing, untrustworthy.

As part of the second level of perception of online reputation in tourism and hospitality, the online image of customers is already starting to emerge. We can consider this level as short-term perception of tourism service providers and their business performance in the market. It is a set of positive or negative attitudes (opinions, feelings, ideas) that the customer associates with certain service providers after a certain period of time.

In the case of the third level of perception of online reputation in tourism and hospitality, customers have the opportunity to perceive online reputation in its entirety. It is a long-term perception of tourism service providers and their business performance on the market. If customers perceive online reputation as good, it means that tourism service providers deliver on their service promises, while the expectations of satisfied customers are met, their positive experiences are extended, their trust is rewarded and has a chance to grow further. And vice versa, if the Internet reputation is perceived as bad by customers, it means that tourism service providers do not fulfill their promises regarding the provided tourism services, and moreover, customers' expectations are not met, their needs remain unsatisfied, their negative experiences are extended and their trust is disappointed and doubtful for the future. We can conclude that the longer customers perceive the online reputation of tourism service providers, the stronger they are in their attitudes and opinions, and therefore their perceptions may be stronger.

The perception of the online reputation of tourism service providers can be strengthened by a whole range of factors that can also be referred to as online reputation boosters. The mission of online reputation boosters is to strengthen and support online reputation of tourism service providers, to shape it in the best possible way and to create favorable conditions for its further strengthening and development. Typical online reputation boosters include high quality tourism services at reasonable prices, stable performance reflecting high capacity utilization, professional and willing staff with a personal approach to customers, but also serious and effective communication, showing sincere interest in customers, willingness to explain misunderstandings, successful problem solving and, of course, compliance with ethical standards. The effect of online reputation boosters is that online reputation becomes more stable, predictable and recognizable in the tourism market. Such online reputation can be a manifestation of expertise, usability, functionality, accessibility, simplicity, reliability, effort, confidence, honesty, trustworthiness, diplomacy, integrity etc.

Online reputation dampeners have the opposite effect as they weaken the online reputation of tourism service providers. These factors act to weaken the online reputation of tourism service providers, negatively affect its formation and, unfortunately, create unfavorable conditions and lead to adverse circumstances for its further strengthening and development. A typical example of these online reputation dampeners is low quality and overpriced tourism services, too frequent changes in the offer of tourism services, insufficient capacity utilization, unprofessional staff keeping a distance from customers, but also insufficient and fogging communication, lack of interest in customers, unwillingness to explain misunderstandings, ignoring problems solving, deceptive marketing or disrespecting ethical standards. Online reputation becomes unstable, unpredictable and unrecognizable in the tourism market as an effect of online reputation dampeners.

“A good reputation is more valuable than money.”

Publilius Syrus

It is generally accepted that online reputation is always marked from an evaluative viewpoint: it is good or bad, but never neutral. It is possible not to have an online reputation, but if tourism service providers have one, it must be somehow good or bad (Marchiori & Cantoni, 2012). The tourism and hospitality is undoubtedly very dependent on a good online reputation, which can positively influence the purchasing decisions of customers. The relevant efforts of tourism service providers should therefore focus on the one hand on supporting a good online reputation and creating conditions for the operation of online reputation boosters, and on the other hand on limiting bad online reputation and removing the conditions for the operation of online reputation dampeners. This effort naturally involves sacrificing economic resources or incurring costs to provide a given level of tourism services. It is also necessary to remember that a good online reputation of tourism service providers has a short inertia and taking care of it needs to be a permanent process, because even flowers need to be watered constantly but carefully in order to bloom beautifully.

A good online reputation is all about credibility and it doesn't help at all if customers' questions and problems are addressed with very formal, clichéd or template answers that are clearly not very sincere. Therefore, they cannot lack honesty, and when dealing with questions and problems arising from online reviews, it is absolutely necessary to show serious interest and resolve them to the complete satisfaction of customers. We agree with the opinions of many authors that of all the factors that influence the behavior of customers when taking the opinions of other customers online, credibility is very important (Hussain et al., 2017; Nielsen, 2009; Wang, 2014). Yacouel & Fleischer (2012) consider credibility and trustworthiness to be basic elements in the online reputation of tourism service providers, which must avoid false or tendentious evaluations and comments in online reviews.

Lin & Xu (2017) suggest that online reviews not only have an effect on perceived reviewer credibility and trustworthiness, but also on brand attitude and purchase intention. A positive online review enhances reviewer trustworthiness since it is viewed by potential consumers as being fair and believable, and it can predict a stronger purchase intention while vice versa a negative review. To achieve this, travel service providers should send adequate signs to customers in the form of a good online reputation, which will gradually be evaluated in easier brand recognition in the market and stronger customer loyalty.

Tourism service providers who have been able to build and maintain a strong corporate brand and online reputation seem to be well on their way to gaining a competitive advantage over their competitors (Ajanovic & Çizel, 2015). Ignoring online reviews has the potential to harm the brand image and negatively affect the market positioning (Barreda & Bilgihan, 2013). Poor handling of negative reviews is expected to increase a customer's frustration and dissatisfaction (Mount & Mattila, 2000). In this regard, Benea (2014) expressed concern about the abuse of social media marketing and pointed out that overuse of these channels can create information overflow, which can be negatively perceived by customers and which can lead to ignorance of the brand, and consequently to a negative image.

Here it is appropriate to answer the question, what are the effects of a good online reputation or how the tourism service providers benefit from it. Looking to build or maintain good online reputation is today a challenge and an imperative as well (Iglesias-Sánchez et al., 2019). Good online reputation plays a significant role in the customer selection process. Fombrun et al. (2000) highlight that it enables the companies to attract better employees, have lower marketing costs and maintain high prices, thus strengthening the company's ranking. Good online reputation provides a solid and coherent foundation for long-term success of tourism service providers in the tourism market. This means support in achieving their business goals related mainly to increasing performance and sales and the resulting adequate profitability and competitiveness. A good online reputation also contributes to higher customer satisfaction and loyalty. We can also perceive it as a certain commitment to introduce improvements and support the authenticity of the provided tourism services. It is clear from the above that good online reputation is an opportunity well-spent. It can bring a wave of success to the tourism service providers and it also offers a strategic management perspective.

After the question about the effects of a good online reputation, we will also indicate the answer to the question about the possible effects of a bad online reputation. We can state that bad online reputation does not create conditions for long-term success of tourism service providers in the tourism market. It seriously disrupts the achievement of their business goals. A bad online reputation also leads to a decrease in customer satisfaction and loyalty and does not stimulate the interest of tourism service providers in any improvements and innovations or supporting the authenticity of the provided tourism services. It can be concluded that a bad online reputation is a lost or wasted opportunity. A bad online reputation can be likened to a treacherous shallow in which the tourism service providers can easily get stuck. This situation can gradually cause an online reputation crisis in the business of tourism service providers, which can result in minor damage to permanent damage or even complete destruction of online reputation.

We see the solution for tourism service providers in the fact that they will sincerely try to build a good online reputation, support the operation of the online reputation boosters mentioned above, and at the same time take preventive measures against the weakening of their good online reputation. In practice, this means, for example, that tourism service providers must develop appropriate strategies for responding to online complaints in order to protect and improve their online reputation and to stop the spread of negative comments (Lee & Song, 2010). Whereas many tourism service providers have focused their efforts in minimizing the damage of negative reviews, encouraging positive reviews can be a more beneficial strategy (Torres et al., 2015). In order not to gain a bad online reputation, tourism service providers must learn to relate to their different users by listening to them in order to meet their expectations (Collado, 2012). Lee et al. (2011) explain that non-action strategies may allow negative reviews to stand unchallenged thereby potentially damaging reputation and image, resulting in poor satisfaction ratings and low loyalty and putting a company in a disadvantageous position leading to customers loss. It happens when expectations are not met, customers may react by posting a negative review or comment. Their motive might be to teach the tourism service providers a lesson, warn other customers or simply to vent. However, if tourism service providers do not try to deal with these online complaints on an ongoing basis, they can become more complicated and worse, causing long-term online reputation damage that can take months or years to recover from (<https://www.destinationbc.ca/>). Tourism service providers are therefore expected to respond effectively to online complaints in order to reduce online reputation damage caused by unsatisfied reviewers and build the trust of potential customers who can be positively affected by this kind of online management response. An accommodative response is when tourism service providers admit responsibility for a negative event, expresses regret and try to repair the online reputation damage. Conversely, a defensive response is when their response includes an excuse or apology or even denies responsibility (Liu et al., 2020). A confrontational response can show that tourism service providers are insensitive to their customers' comments and unwilling to admit their mistakes, thus damaging their brand (Lappas et al., 2016).

In conclusion, online opinions and comments lead to attraction if they are good, but they can also lead to lies and deception, especially on platforms where there is no adequate level of control. However, these online reputation risks do not necessarily apply only to customers. Obviously, since online reputation affects economic success, even tourism service providers may be tempted to manipulate online-generated content (Gössling et al., 2016). This is why online reputation management in tourism and hospitality requires consideration of all the above aspects, but the starting point could be to protect the best practices of tourism service providers in order to create customer trust and turn communication into a transparency tool.

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2. Taking reputation online

For any manager operating in this industry is the reputation pivotal. For this reason, the following question need to be answered.

How could hotel and destination managers accomplish a good online reputation management?

Which are the strategic pillars which need to be followed?

The first step in managing online reputation is to be aware of what is being said about it. Companies in tourism and hospitality industries should monitor their presence on social media and other websites, in order to be aware of both positive and negative comments and reviews. This will allow them to quickly respond to any criticism or negative feedback, as well as to address and resolve any issues that may arise. In order to maintain a positive reputation, businesses should also be proactive in responding to customer complaints or inquiries in a timely manner.

As a second step, businesses should also focus on creating and maintaining a positive online presence. This can be achieved by providing engaging and informative content, such as blog posts, videos, and images, that customers can interact with. Businesses should be active on social media, engaging with customers and sharing content that promotes their brand. This will help to create a positive online reputation, which can lead to increased customer loyalty and new business.

Then, as a third step, businesses should strive to create a customer-centric environment. This means putting the customer first and providing exceptional customer service. Businesses should be responsive to customer inquiries, provide accurate and up-to-date product and service information, and address any customer complaints quickly and appropriately. This will help to create trust and loyalty, while also improving the online reputation levels.

In short, the management of reputation in digital environments is essential for the success of organizations in the tourism industry. Businesses should monitor their presence online and be proactive in responding to customer feedback, creating a positive online presence, and providing an exceptional customer experience. With these steps, it may be possible to ensure that online reputation is positive and customers are satisfied.

2.1. Online presence, visibility, and online reputation

With the increasing use of the internet and social media, the tourism industry has witnessed a significant shift towards online presence, visibility, and reputation. The importance of online presence, online visibility, and online reputation in the tourism industry has been extensively studied by many researchers. In today's digital era, online presence, online visibility, and online reputation are essential components for any business, including the tourism industry. This text aims to explore the connection between online presence, online visibility, and online reputation in tourism.

In the past, travelers relied on word-of-mouth recommendations to make decisions about where to stay, eat or visit. However, with the rise of the internet, online reviews and ratings have become an essential tool for travelers to research and select their destination. According to a study by BrightLocal (2021), 87% of consumers read online reviews for local businesses, including hotels and restaurants. Furthermore, 94% of consumers said they would avoid a business with a negative online reputation. Therefore, businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry must manage their online reputation carefully.

Online presence and visibility are critical factors in the success of tourism businesses in the modern digital era. With the widespread use of the internet, social media, and mobile devices, travelers are increasingly turning to online sources to research, plan, and book their trips. Therefore, tourism businesses must have a strong online presence and visibility to attract and engage potential customers. With the advent of the internet and the proliferation of social media platforms, businesses and destinations must have a robust online presence to remain relevant and competitive.

The importance of online presence and visibility in tourism can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, the majority of travelers now use the internet to research and plan their trips, with many relying on social media and online review sites to make their decisions. This means that tourism businesses and destinations need to have a strong online presence to be discovered by potential customers and to stand out from competitors.

Secondly, online presence and visibility are important for building trust and credibility with potential customers. In the absence of physical interactions, customers rely on the information they find online to make decisions about which tourism businesses or destinations to use. A strong online presence, with positive reviews and engaging content, can help to establish trust with potential customers and increase the likelihood that they will choose to visit or book with a particular business or destination.

Finally, online presence and visibility are important for marketing and promotion. The internet offers a range of marketing and advertising opportunities, from social media and email marketing to paid search and display advertising. Tourism businesses and destinations that have a strong online presence can take advantage of these opportunities to reach new customers and promote their products or services.

2.1.1. Online Presence in Tourism

The management of an online reputation begins with the creation of an online presence. Companies need to ensure that their website is up-to-date, informative, and easy to navigate. A website that is poorly designed, difficult to navigate or has outdated information can negatively impact the online reputation of the business. Companies also need to ensure that their online presence is consistent across all channels, including social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. A consistent online presence can help build trust and credibility with potential customers.

Online presence refers to the overall digital footprint of a tourism business on the internet, which includes its website, social media pages, blogs, and other digital platforms. Online presence refers to the existence of a tourism business on the Internet. In today's digital age, businesses must have a website that showcases their products and services, provides information about their location, and allows customers to make bookings or purchases online. A strong online presence can attract more customers to the business, increase customer loyalty, and ultimately, increase revenue.

There are several ways that businesses in the tourism industry can establish an online presence. The first step is to create a website. A website is an essential component of an online presence as it serves as a central hub for a business's online activities. A well-designed website can provide potential customers with information about the business's products and services, pricing, availability, and contact information. It is also essential to ensure that the website is mobile-friendly and optimized for search engines.

Another way to establish an online presence is through social media. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram offer businesses an opportunity to connect with customers, build relationships, and promote their products and services. It is crucial to choose the right social media platforms for the business and create a social media strategy that aligns with the business's goals and target audience.

In addition to a website and social media, businesses in the tourism industry can also establish an online presence through online travel agencies (OTAs). OTAs like Expedia and Booking.com offer

businesses an opportunity to list their products and services on their platforms, providing exposure to millions of potential customers. However, it is essential to consider the fees associated with using OTAs and the potential impact on the business's brand.

In the tourism industry, online presence plays a vital role in attracting and engaging potential customers. The tourism industry relies heavily on online presence as it allows businesses to showcase their offerings, share travel experiences, and engage with customers. A strong online presence helps tourism businesses to reach a wider audience, build brand recognition, and increase customer loyalty.

According to KPMG, online presence is critical to the tourism industry as it helps businesses to engage with customers in real-time, promote their offerings, and improve customer satisfaction (KPMG, 2021). The study highlights the importance of having a user-friendly website, social media presence, and online booking system for tourism businesses.

Similarly, Huertas et al. (2019) suggest that online presence is critical for the success of tourism businesses, as it provides customers with easy access to information about the business, its offerings, and its location. A strong online presence is particularly important for small and medium-sized tourism businesses that have limited marketing budgets as it allows them to compete with larger businesses and reach a wider audience (Hernández et al., 2021).

Examples of online presence in tourism can be as follows:

- social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, where tourism businesses can create pages, share content, and engage with potential customers,
- online travel agencies like Booking.com and Expedia, where hotels, flights, and other
- travel services,
- travel blogs and review sites like TripAdvisor, where travelers can read reviews and recommendations for destinations, accommodations, and activities,
- tourism websites, including destination websites, hotel websites, and tour operator websites, which provide information and booking options for travelers,
- online travel guides and directories, such as Lonely Planet and Fodor's, which offer comprehensive travel information and recommendations,

- virtual tours and 360-degree videos, which give travelers a realistic preview of destinations and accommodations,
- online marketplaces like Airbnb, where travelers can book unique accommodations and experiences,
- travel forums and discussion groups, such as Reddit's r/travel, where travelers can share tips and advice, and ask questions about destinations and travel-related topics,
- online travel communities, such as Couchsurfing, where travelers can connect with locals and fellow travelers,
- travel apps, including navigation apps, language translation apps, and travel planning apps, which help travelers with various aspects of their trips.

Online presence refers to the existence of a tourism business on the Internet. Businesses need to have a website that showcases their products and services, provides information about their location, and allows customers to make bookings or purchases online. According to Buhalis and Law (2008), a tourism business's online presence should include information about its products and services, prices, booking facilities, location, and contact details. A strong online presence can attract more customers to the business, increase customer loyalty, and ultimately, increase revenue.

2.1.2. Online Visibility in Tourism

Visibility is another critical factor in the success of tourism businesses online. Visibility refers to how easily a business can be found by potential customers when they are searching for travel-related information online. A business with high visibility is more likely to attract customers than one that is hard to find. Search engine optimization (SEO) is a critical aspect of online visibility for tourism businesses. SEO refers to the process of optimizing a website to rank higher in search engine results pages (SERPs). When a potential customer searches for a travel-related keyword, such as "hotels in Paris" or "best restaurants in New York," the search engine will display a list of results. The higher a business's website ranks in the search results, the more visible it is to potential customers.

Online visibility refers to the extent to which a tourism business appears in search engine results, social media platforms, and other digital channels. Online visibility is critical for the tourism industry as it determines the visibility of a business in front of potential customers. In other words, online visibility refers to the ability of tourism businesses to attract potential customers by being present on the digital channels where they are most active. Online visibility refers to the ease with which a

tourism business can be found on the internet. The more visible a business is online, the easier it is for potential customers to find them. Online visibility is crucial for tourism businesses because it can increase their reach and attract more customers. To improve online visibility, businesses can use search engine optimization (SEO) techniques to make their website appear higher in search engine rankings.

According to Kim and Yoon (2014), SEO techniques can improve a business's online visibility by optimizing website content, using keywords and improving the website's loading speed. By using relevant and high-quality content that is optimized for search engines, businesses can improve their visibility and attract more potential customers. Furthermore, social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram, are essential for improving online visibility. By regularly posting content on these platforms, businesses can increase their visibility and reach a wider audience.

Online visibility is also essential for managing an online reputation in tourism and hospitality. Companies need to ensure that they are visible on search engines such as Google, Yahoo, and Bing. This can be achieved through search engine optimization (SEO), which involves optimizing website content and structure to improve search engine rankings. Additionally, companies can improve their online visibility through paid advertising, social media marketing, and email marketing. By improving online visibility, businesses can increase their exposure to potential customers, which can lead to more positive reviews and ratings.

According to Li et al. (2020), online visibility is essential for tourism businesses to improve their online reputation and increase customer engagement. The study suggests that tourism businesses with high online visibility are more likely to be perceived as trustworthy and reliable by potential customers. Similarly, Law et al. (2020) argue that online visibility is a key driver of customer engagement in the tourism industry, as it enables businesses to reach a wider audience and attract potential customers.

Examples of increasing online visibility for the tourism industry can be as follows:

- creating a user-friendly and responsive website with high-quality images and descriptions of your tourism offerings,
- implementing search engine optimization (SEO) strategies to rank higher on search engine results pages (SERPs),
- creating and sharing engaging content on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter,

- encouraging and responding to online reviews on platforms like TripAdvisor and Yelp.
- utilizing email marketing to reach potential customers and promote special deals and packages,
- collaborating with travel bloggers and influencers to increase exposure and reach new audiences,
- listing different tourism offers on popular online travel booking platforms, such as Expedia and Booking.com.
- offering virtual tours and experiences to showcase your tourism offerings to potential customers,
- providing excellent customer service and encouraging satisfied customers to share their experiences online,
- utilizing paid advertising options, such as Google Ads and Facebook Ads, to reach a wider audience and drive traffic to your website.

Finally, it is essential to monitor and measure online presence and visibility. By tracking metrics like website traffic, social media engagement, and online reviews, businesses can identify areas for improvement and adjust their online strategy accordingly. There are several tools available to track these metrics, including Google Analytics and social media analytics tools.

2.1.3. Online Reputation in Tourism

Online reputation refers to the overall perception of the tourism business in the digital world. Online reputation is influenced by various factors, such as customer reviews, ratings, social media mentions, and other digital signals. In the tourism industry, online reputation is crucial as it directly impacts customer perception and loyalty towards a business.

According to Sotiriadis and Van Zyl (2019), online reputation is a critical factor that influences customer decision-making in the tourism industry. The study suggests that tourism businesses with a positive online reputation are more likely to attract and retain customers than those with a negative reputation. Similarly, Park and Gretzel (2019) suggest that online reputation is a key driver of customer loyalty in the tourism industry, as it provides customers with an assurance of quality and reliability.

Online reputation refers to the perception that individuals or organizations have on the Internet based on their digital footprint. In the tourism and hospitality industry, online reputation is crucial as it can influence travellers' decisions to book a hotel, restaurant, or tour. Online reputation in tourism and

hospitality is closely linked to online presence and online visibility. Online presence refers to a company's existence on the internet, while online visibility is how easily the company can be found by potential customers on the internet (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). In this context, online reputation is influenced by the way companies present themselves online and the online feedback provided by customers.

2.1.4. The connection between Online Presence, Online Visibility, and Online Reputation

Online presence, online visibility, and online reputation are closely interconnected in the tourism industry. A robust online presence is essential for a tourism business to increase its online visibility and reputation. Online visibility is directly influenced by a tourism business's online presence, as businesses that have a solid online presence are more likely to be visible to potential customers. Similarly, online reputation is heavily influenced by online visibility, as businesses with high online visibility are more likely to receive positive customer reviews, ratings, and mentions, which, in turn, improves their online reputation.

Moreover, a positive online reputation is essential for a tourism business to maintain its online visibility and attract potential customers. A business with a positive online reputation is more likely to rank higher in search engine results, which improves its online visibility. Positive reviews, ratings, and mentions on social media platforms also increase the likelihood of potential customers discovering the business and engaging with it.

Therefore, a robust online presence is a foundation for a tourism business to improve its online visibility and reputation. A business with a robust online presence can attract more potential customers, which increases its online visibility. Higher online visibility increases the chances of a business receiving positive reviews, ratings, and mentions, which improves its online reputation. A positive online reputation, in turn, helps to maintain the business's online visibility and attract more potential customers. A tourism business with a solid online presence is more likely to have higher online visibility and a positive online reputation. Similarly, a business with high online visibility is more likely to attract positive online reviews and increase its online reputation. According to Buhalis and Law (2008), online presence, online visibility, and online reputation are interconnected because they all contribute to the overall success of a tourism business.

For example, a business with a strong online presence can attract more customers, which in turn can lead to more positive online reviews and a higher online reputation. Similarly, a business with

high online visibility can reach a wider audience, which can result in more bookings and ultimately, a better online reputation. Therefore, tourism businesses need to invest in their online presence, online visibility, and online reputation to maximize their success in the industry.

A tourism business with a robust online presence is more likely to have higher online visibility and a positive online reputation. Similarly, a business with high online visibility is more likely to attract positive online reviews and increase its online reputation. According to Buhalis and Law (2008), online presence, online visibility, and online reputation are interrelated, and a business must focus on all three to remain competitive in the tourism industry.

Online reviews are a critical component of a tourism business's online reputation. According to Kim and Yoon (2014), online reviews can impact a business's search engine ranking and influence customer decisions. Positive reviews can improve a business's online visibility and attract more customers, while negative reviews can have the opposite effect. Therefore, businesses must actively manage their online reputation by monitoring their reviews, responding to customer complaints, and addressing any negative feedback.

Online reputation can also impact a business's online presence. According to Gretzel and Yoo (2008), a business with a negative online reputation may struggle to attract customers to its website, even if they have a strong online presence. Therefore, businesses need to maintain a positive online reputation to ensure that their online presence is effective.

In conclusion, online presence, online visibility, and online reputation are critical components of the tourism industry. A solid online presence is essential for a tourism business to improve its online visibility and reputation. Online visibility is directly influenced by a tourism business's online presence, as businesses that have a solid online presence are more likely to be visible to potential customers. Similarly, online reputation is heavily influenced by online visibility, as businesses with high online visibility are more likely to receive positive customer reviews, ratings, and mentions, which, in turn, improves their online reputation. A positive online reputation is essential for a tourism business to maintain its online visibility and attract potential customers.

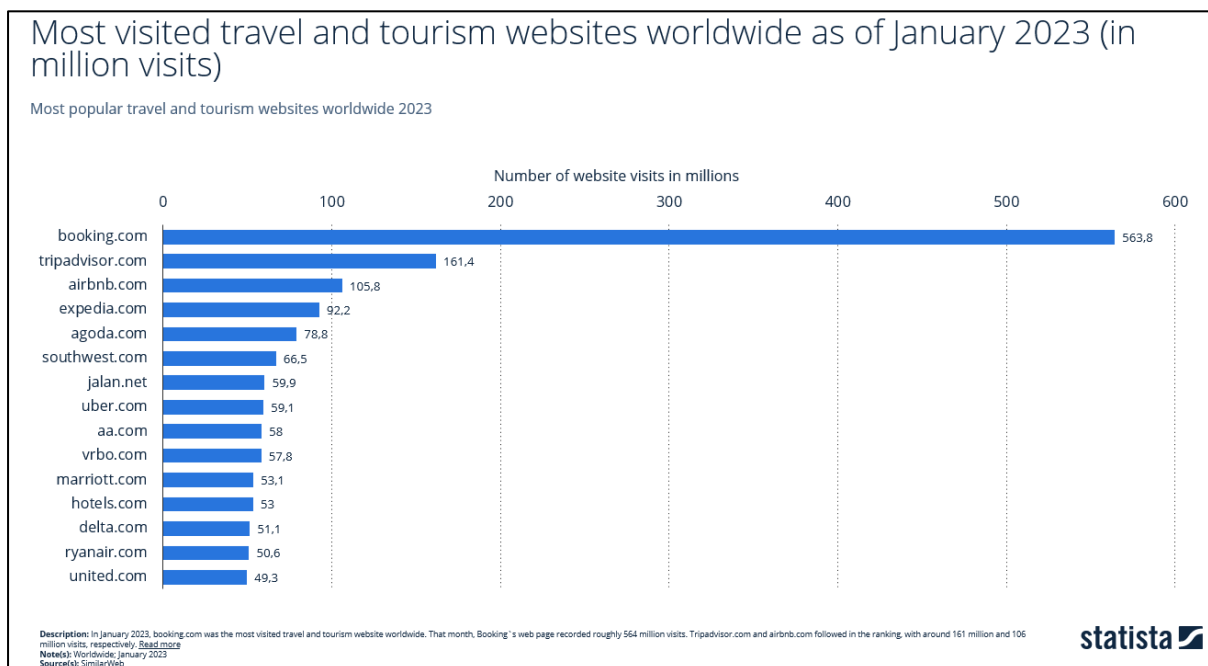
The connection between online presence, online visibility, and online reputation is vital for the success of tourism businesses in the digital age. A strong online presence and high online visibility can attract more customers and positive online reviews, while a positive online reputation can build trust and loyalty among customers. To improve their online presence and reputation, businesses must invest in strategies such as search engine optimization, social media marketing, online reputation management,

and user-generated content. Businesses must prioritize their online presence and reputation to remain competitive and successful.

2.2.Reputation and reviews platforms

The first online portals focused on tourism were websites such as Expedia, Travelocity, and Priceline, which were founded in the 90s. Expedia was established in 1996 as a division of Microsoft, Travelocity was founded in 1996 by Sabre Corporation, and Priceline was founded in 1997 by Walker Digital. These websites allowed consumers to book flights, accommodations, and car rentals online, which was completely new and revolutionary at the time. Reputation platforms began to emerge in the market several years after the creation of online tourism portals. The first review platform was TripAdvisor, which was founded in 2000 and allowed users to write reviews of hotels, restaurants, and attractions. Other platforms such as Booking.com, Expedia, and Yelp began to integrate reviews and ratings into their services in the following years. These platforms quickly became very popular and significantly influenced how consumers choose and book their travel experiences.

Figure 4: Most visited travel websites



Source: Statista.com

The very offering of travel services and products can be very diverse, ranging from accommodation choices, flights, tours, to restaurant selections, attractions, and other activities. Tourists

often face the decision of which option to choose, and reputation platforms offer them reliable information that can help them make their decision. Through reviews and ratings on these platforms, tourists can get an idea of the quality and level of services provided, influence their decision based on the experiences of other users, and avoid potential unsatisfactory experiences. Additionally, reputation platforms allow users to find new and less-known destinations that they may not have otherwise considered, providing them with new experiences. They also provide inspiration and travel ideas, as users can browse reviews and photos from other users.

In the tourism industry, online reputation platforms have a considerable influence on which hotels and attractions travelers choose and what feedback they give. These platforms have become essential tools for travelers, as many rely on online reviews and ratings when planning their trips. With this comes an increasing demand for these platforms to ensure the credibility and reliability of reviews and to try to minimize the impact of fake or manipulated reviews.

At the same time, these platforms are also essential for accommodation providers and other tourism service providers. Reputation platforms provide space for the presentation of products and services, allowing travel service providers to showcase their offerings online. Good ratings and reviews on reputation platforms can help providers gain a competitive advantage and increase their visibility in the market. This can lead to a larger customer base and increased revenue. Companies can also receive feedback from customers, which can help improve the quality of their services and increase customer satisfaction. On the other hand, negative reviews can cause a decrease in demand for their services and a decrease in profits. Therefore, it is important to actively manage one's online reputation and use the tools offered by these platforms so that entrepreneurs can monitor and manage their reviews and improve the quality of their services. Lastly, reputation platforms provide valuable information to travel service providers about their competitors, which can help them improve their products and services and increase their competitiveness.

Currently, there are many online reputation platforms in the tourism industry, such as Booking.com, Tripadvisor, Yelp, Google Maps, and others. These platforms differ in their features, target audience, and the way they try to address issues related to fake or manipulated reviews. However, they all share a common goal: to help people find quality and reliable tourism services and to help tourism businesses improve their online reputation.

A wide range of tools is used to evaluate performance and reputation on these platforms, which cover two key areas necessary for optimizing one's position on these online platforms and managing

reputation. These include tools known as "Management Dashboard Features" and "Reputation management tool".

Both "Management Dashboard Features" and "Reputation management tool" refer to tools that help hotels and accommodations manage and monitor their online reputation and ratings on online platforms such as Booking.com, Tripadvisor, and others.

"Management Dashboard Features" (in the case of Booking.com) and similar tools on Tripadvisor allow users to view and analyze various statistics and metrics related to performance and reputation on the platform. These tools provide users with an overview of the number of bookings, revenue, ratings, reviews, as well as the number of profile views and clicks on links.

The Reputation management tool primarily focuses on monitoring and managing guest reviews, identifying fake reviews, and providing support in handling negative feedback. These tools provide hotels and accommodations the ability to interact with guests and respond to their reviews.

Both types of tools aim to help hotels and accommodations improve their online reputation and ratings, thereby gaining greater trust and interest from potential guests.

2.2.1. Protection against fake reviews

Protection against fake reviews on online reputation platforms is crucial for the credibility and reliability of these platforms. Fake reviews can have a significant impact on customer decision-making and subsequently on the business of accommodation providers.

For example, if the majority of positive fake reviews of some accommodation were published on an online platform, it could lead to an increase in its popularity and subsequently also its prices, which could cause dissatisfaction and disappointment among customers who relied on these reviews. On the other hand, if the majority of negative fake reviews of some accommodation were published on a platform, it could lead to a decline in interest in the accommodation and potentially even bankruptcy. For this reason, online reputation platforms are very important for tourism entrepreneurs, and protection against fake reviews on these platforms is crucial for fair and transparent competition between accommodation providers and for ensuring customer satisfaction.

The fact that fake reviews have become an unwanted but inseparable part of the existence of reputation platforms is evidenced by the "Review Transparency Report 2021" from TripAdvisor (Anon b.r.), which states that the company removed (or rejected) more than two million submitted reviews in

2020, representing 8.6% of all reviews created in that year. However, not all of these reviews were removed due to fake reviews. Other reasons may include rule violations or reports from the user community. Specifically for fake reviews, only a very small fraction of all submitted reviews - 3.6% - were determined to be fraudulent, totaling more than 900,000 reviews. TripAdvisor prevented 67.1% of all fake reviews from even reaching the platform.

According to a survey conducted by BrightLocal in 2021, 60% of people stated that they have encountered fake reviews on the internet. The survey also revealed that 86% of consumers have been slowed down in purchasing goods or services due to untrustworthy reviews.

According to a 2019 study by the Pew Research Center, 53% of Americans stated that they generally do not trust online reviews. According to this study, 48% of respondents reported encountering fake reviews.

Various tools and technologies are often used to detect fake reviews, and of course, there is a human factor involved as well. Some of the most commonly used tools include:

- **Sentiment analysis:** This tool is used to analyze the text of reviews and identify words, phrases, and emotions that may indicate that the review is fake. For example, excessive use of enthusiastic words, or conversely, a overly negative tone, may be indicators of a fake review.
- **Machine learning:** Some online platforms, such as Booking.com or TripAdvisor, use machine learning to identify fake reviews. These algorithms learn based on hundreds of thousands of reviews and can detect unusual patterns and behavior that may indicate a fake review.
- **IP address identification:** Some online platforms track the IP addresses from which reviews were submitted to detect repeated reviews from one source, which may be an indicator of fake reviews.
- **Authenticity check:** Some online platforms use various methods to verify the identity of users who write reviews, such as email confirmation or linking to social media. This reduces the likelihood of fake accounts being created for the purpose of writing fake reviews.
- **Manual review:** Some platforms conduct manual reviews, especially in cases where algorithms are unable to confidently detect fake reviews. In these cases, people may be employed to review and evaluate each review individually.

Platforms also follow their own rules, which can affect the possibility of removing specific reviews. These reasons may include, for example, a biased positive review. This is a situation where there is a relationship with the reviewed company (such as an owner, employee, or relative) and the reviewer is influenced to write a positive review. On the other hand, there are also biased negative reviews, which are often used as an unfair means of competition.

Other practices may include "review boosting," where the reviewed company offers its customers certain benefits for a positive review, or paid reviews. This is an example of a company using the services of an individual or a company (even large organized farms) to strengthen its position in the ratings on a particular platform.

Detecting fake reviews is complicated by the fact that today, entities from all over the world are creating fake reviews. For example, TripAdvisor's 2020 report states that it removed paid reviews from approximately 131 countries and identified a sharp increase in paid reviews originating from India. In 2020, the countries with the highest activity in fake reviews included India, Germany, Brazil, Pakistan, the United States, Greece, Argentina, Bangladesh, Turkey, and Italy (Hart, 2021).

2.2.2. Consumer protection and identification

Consumer protection within review systems in tourism is of great importance, as it helps to ensure that customers are protected from unfair and deceptive practices by providers of tourism services. Reviews can provide useful information to customers, but they can also be a source of misleading information and false evaluations.

Consumer protection can be ensured in several ways. For example, review systems should be transparent and reliable, meaning they should provide relevant information about the reviewer to verify the credibility of the reviews. Reviews should also be verified and moderated to ensure they are in compliance with the rules of the review system and do not contain spam, fake reviews, or content that is illegal or inappropriate.

Another way to ensure consumer protection within review systems in tourism is to provide customers with the option to file a complaint if they feel they have been deceived or mistreated. Customers should be able to contact the service provider or the operator of the review system and request resolution to their complaints.

The significance of consumer protection within tourism review systems lies in providing customers with the confidence to use reviews and ratings to make informed decisions about the best

possible tourism services. As a result, customers can utilize tourism services with greater peace of mind and assurance that they will not be deceived, and that their money will be spent effectively.

Consumer protection is also very important from the perspective of tourism service providers. Service providers have an interest in ensuring that customers are satisfied with their services and that they return. If customers are unwilling to use a provider's services due to inadequate consumer protection or a bad reputation resulting from unfair practices, it can have a negative impact on the provider's profitability and performance.

Consumer protection also brings benefits to tourism service providers by enabling customers to provide feedback on their services, allowing providers to better understand customer needs and preferences. If service providers can respond to customer feedback and improve their services, they can become more competitive in the market.

Consumer protection is, therefore, a crucial aspect that online platform operators focus on nowadays. There are several reasons why this is the case, including:

- **Credibility** – Customers expect to have all the necessary information available on these platforms to decide whether to book accommodation or services. If they encounter dishonest practices or a lack of information, it can lead to mistrust and a decrease in demand on these platforms.
- **Safety** – Consumers must be protected from fraudulent activities and dangers that may arise from ignorance of the target environment. Therefore, it is important for platforms to provide clear rules and controls to ensure the safety and protection of their users.
- **Quality** - Platforms must ensure that the services offered correspond to the description and standards. If the quality of the services offered is unsatisfactory, it can lead to negative feedback and a decrease in customer interest. For example, Booking.com, Expedia, and TripAdvisor have strict standards that must be met by all hotels, restaurants, airlines, and other services offered on these platforms. These standards relate to cleanliness, safety, staff education, and other criteria.
- **Payment processing and payment data security** - Booking.com, Expedia, and TripAdvisor are reliable platforms with high security standards. These platforms accept payments from customers using secure payment gateways such as credit cards or PayPal. Customers can be

assured that their financial data is protected, and the payment will be processed without any problems.

- Data Protection - Data protection systems and rules for handling data must comply with existing laws, taking into account the specificities of online sales, and ensure that customers' personal data does not fall into the wrong hands.
- Warranties and Insurance: Some platforms may offer warranties and insurance that protect consumers from poor quality goods, fraud or other problems. These warranties and insurance can increase consumer confidence in the services and products offered.
- Just as great attention is paid to protecting consumer interests, it is equally important to pay attention to identifying users of reputation platforms. These measures are primarily aimed at preventing unethical behavior and creating space for the use of fake reviews.
- Platforms may require user identity verification using various methods, such as email verification, phone number verification, providing photos, and even ID or other identification document verification. Such measures can help limit abuse and fraud on the platform.
- In addition, in some countries and regions, consumer protection laws and regulations are mandatory, and service providers must comply with these regulations to avoid fines and sanctions. For example, some countries require providers of tourism services to maintain a certain level of quality and safety to protect the health and safety of customers. Service providers must also be able to provide customers with complete and accurate information about their services so that customers can make informed decisions.
- Sanctions for unfair practices: Platforms may have rules and conditions that establish sanctions for unfair practices and rule violations. These sanctions may include, for example, exclusion from the platform, loss of rating, or a ban on offering products or services on the platform. This can significantly reduce the risk of fraud and abuse on the platform.

In addition, in some countries and regions, consumer protection laws and regulations are mandatory, and service providers must comply with these regulations to avoid fines and sanctions. For example, some countries require providers of tourism services to maintain a certain level of quality and safety to protect the health and safety of customers. Service providers must also be able to provide customers with complete and accurate information about their services so that customers can make informed decisions.

2.2.3. Motivational rewards

Motivation is a key attribute of human behavior and it is understandable that platforms focused on leveraging consumer attitudes in the increasingly competitive environment of online sales must use tools that lead to higher motivation and loyalty of their users. Therefore, we may encounter a variety of practices that utilize both reputation platforms themselves and the companies listed on them. It is also a given that while the platform itself will strive to create a strictly functioning environment, the latter will try to maximize the principles set within its limits (and sometimes even on the edge). Motivational rewards can have a positive impact on all parties involved. Users gain benefits, accommodation providers gain greater visibility and reputation, and the platforms themselves gain a greater number of reviews and ratings, which helps improve the quality of services provided on the platform.

First, regarding the attitudes and opportunities of reputation platforms. Motivational rewards are a commonly used tool on reputation platforms in tourism to motivate users to provide high-quality reviews and ratings. These rewards can be of various kinds, such as discounts on accommodation, special offers, or points that can be used for future bookings. In addition to motivating users to provide reviews and ratings, motivational rewards can also motivate users to make repeat bookings on the same platform. Users who receive discounts or other benefits are more likely to return to the platform for further bookings.

Motivational rewards are often used on platforms like TripAdvisor or Booking.com to increase the number of reviews and ratings that users provide. For example, TripAdvisor offers rewards to users who regularly provide reviews, depending on how many reviews they have already written. These rewards can include various benefits, such as discounts on admission or even free travel.

Another example of the use of motivational rewards in tourism can be Airbnb, which offers a program called the "Superhost program". Superhosts are accommodation providers who have high ratings and provide excellent services to their guests. Airbnb offers various benefits to Superhosts, such as increased visibility on the platform, discounts on fees, or even invitations to special events.

On the other hand, motivational rewards are of course also offered to users for getting involved in the platform and providing feedback in the form of reviews or ratings. These rewards are not directly related to whether the review is positive or negative, but rather to the number of reviews that users provide and their level of engagement on the platform.

If benefits were offered for positive reviews, it would be a practice beyond the set rules. In such a case, benefits for positive reviews would be offered to users for providing exclusively positive

reviews, regardless of whether they are true or not. This way of obtaining positive reviews is considered unethical and can lead to a breach of trust and the quality of information provided on the platform.

In practice, we can encounter a whole range of methods that create pressure for their guests to write a review as quickly as possible while their impressions of the stay are still fresh. For example, Lance Longwell in his article provides examples of so-called review boosting, where guests could receive a free glass of wine as a benefit for completing a review directly in the restaurant, or an example of a hotel that had a terminal at the reception where a guest received a 5% discount for a review under the supervision of the staff (Longwell 2022).

In practice, platforms try to address this issue by preventing fraudulent activities, such as purchased positive reviews, and by motivating users to provide authentic and high-quality reviews through motivational rewards and other benefits. This can help improve the quality of information on the platform and increase the credibility of reviews and ratings.

Motivational benefits may differ in their form on individual platforms, but they are similar in principle. For example, Expedia.com offers users various types of reward programs and discount codes for booking accommodations, flights, or activities on the platform. For instance, the Expedia Rewards program allows users to earn points with each booking that they can later use to pay for accommodations. OpenTable, an online reservation platform for restaurants, has its own loyalty program that rewards users with points that can be redeemed for discounts on future visits to restaurants. Users can earn points by booking a table and completing their visit. Yelp, a platform for rating and reviewing businesses, also has a loyalty program that allows users to earn points by providing a review or photo of a business. The points system allows users to obtain discounts in restaurants or other places.

Another tool in the field of consumer-focused benefits are loyalty programs. For example, Booking.com has its own loyalty program called Genius. This program is designed for more active users of Booking.com who have a history of several bookings on the platform.

Genius program participants receive various benefits depending on their level in the program. These levels are determined based on the number of completed bookings in the last 2 years.

Benefits for program participants may include, for example, a 10% or more discount on selected accommodations, late check-out and early check-in, upgrades to better rooms or rooms with a view, gifts or surprises in the room, quick check-in without the need for prior credit card confirmation, special offers and discounts.

The Genius program has a total of three levels that differ in the amount of discount and benefits offered to participants:

- Genius Level 1: Participants in the program obtain this level after completing at least 2 reservations within 2 years. At this level, participants are entitled to a 10% or higher discount on selected accommodations.
- Genius Level 2: To obtain this level, participants must complete at least 5 reservations within 2 years. At this level, participants are entitled to a 10-15% or higher discount on selected accommodations, as well as late check-out and early check-in, and free breakfasts on select stays.
- Genius Level 3: Participants achieve this highest level after completing at least 15 reservations within 2 years. At this level, participants are entitled to a 10-20% or higher discount on selected accommodations, late check-out and early check-in, upgrades to better rooms, free breakfasts on select stays, and priority support on all bookings.

Each level of the Genius program offers users additional benefits, which aim to motivate them to repeatedly use the services of Booking.com.

Tripadvisor used the loyalty program Tripadvisor Plus. In 2021, they announced an effort to change the loyalty model concept from "instant savings" to "rewards." Tripadvisor Plus represents a form of annual subscription for users (which differs from Booking.com's previous program), where they receive cash rewards within the offer of accommodations on the Tripadvisor Plus platform, which they can use in subsequent bookings, and potentially during their stay (restaurants, bars, etc.). For accommodation facilities, the program brings higher visibility in search results, with the ability to filter to display only Plus hotels, as well as the opportunity for closer relationships with customers who book through the Plus program, and better opportunities for targeted upselling and cross-selling.

Expedia has its own loyalty program called Expedia Rewards, which offers various benefits for members. Expedia Rewards offers three levels of membership: Blue, Silver, and Gold, and members can advance to a higher level by traveling more or spending more money on Expedia. Each level offers different benefits, such as:

- Blue: This level is obtained by new users who register for the program. Members are entitled to a 10% discount on selected accommodations and have access to special offers. They also earn points for bookings, with the possibility of double points when booking through the app.

- Silver: This level is obtained by users who spend at least \$5,000 on Expedia or book accommodation for at least 7 nights. Silver members are entitled to all the benefits of the Blue level, plus access to exclusive discounts on selected accommodations and special offers for active vacations.
- Gold: This level is obtained by users who spend at least \$10,000 on Expedia or book accommodation for at least 15 nights. Gold members are entitled to all the benefits of the Silver level, plus access to exclusive discounts on selected accommodations and special offers for active vacations.

Similarly designed is the loyalty program on Hotels.com, called Hotels.com Rewards, which has two levels of membership - silver and gold.

All programs, Booking.com Genius, TripAdvisor Plus, and Expedia Rewards, have similar goals, to motivate users to repeatedly use the platform's services and provide added value for their loyalty.

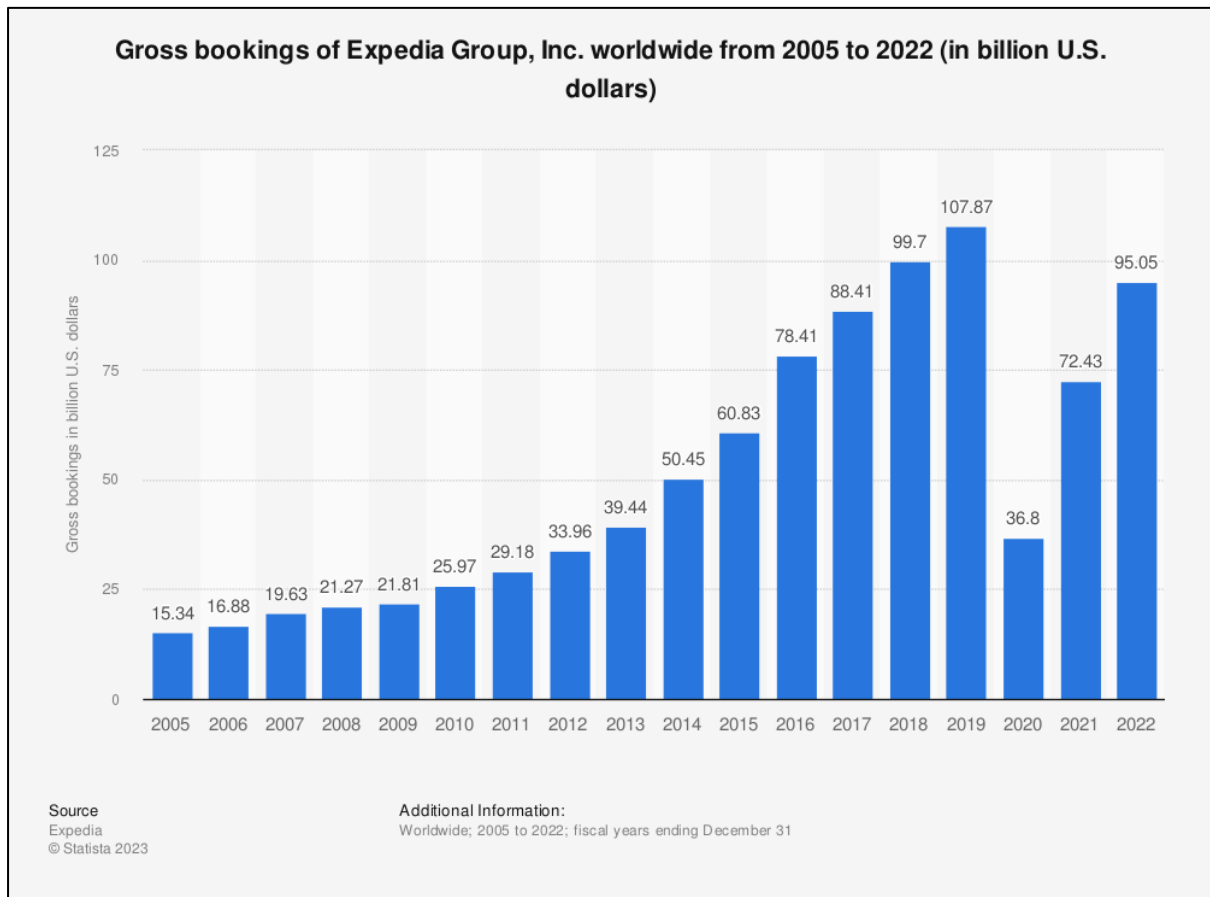
2.2.4. Platforms' description

Expedia.com

Expedia Group is an American online travel agency and technology company providing services for booking hotels, flights, cars, and other travel experiences. The history of Expedia dates back to 1996 when it was founded as a division of Microsoft in the US state of Washington. Expedia soon became independent and was publicly traded on the NASDAQ stock exchange in 1999. In 2001, Expedia became part of USA Networks, Inc., which later changed its name to InterActiveCorp (IAC). IAC owned and operated a number of popular online services, including Expedia, Hotels.com, Hotwire, and Travelocity. In 2005, Expedia was split into two separate companies: Expedia, Inc. and TripAdvisor. Expedia, Inc. included brands such as Expedia.com, Hotels.com, Hotwire, Egencia, Venere, Trivago, and others, while TripAdvisor focused on providing reviews and opinions on travel destinations and accommodations. In 2011, Expedia, Inc. separated into two independent companies: Expedia, Inc. and TripAdvisor, which became standalone companies trading on the stock exchange under separate ticker symbols. Today, Expedia Group is one of the largest players in the travel services market, owning and operating several popular online brands including Expedia.com, Hotels.com, Orbitz, Travelocity, Trivago, Hotwire, Ebookers, and others.

After reporting significant losses in the first two years of the health crisis, online travel companies showed strong signs of recovery in 2022. That year, for instance, the value of Expedia Group, Inc.'s gross bookings worldwide rose by around 31 percent compared to 2021. Ultimately, the global revenue of Expedia Group, Inc. reached nearly 11.7 billion U.S. dollars in 2022, increasing by approximately three billion U.S. dollars from 2021 but remaining slightly below the peak reported in 2019.

Figure 5: Bookings of Expedia Group, Inc.

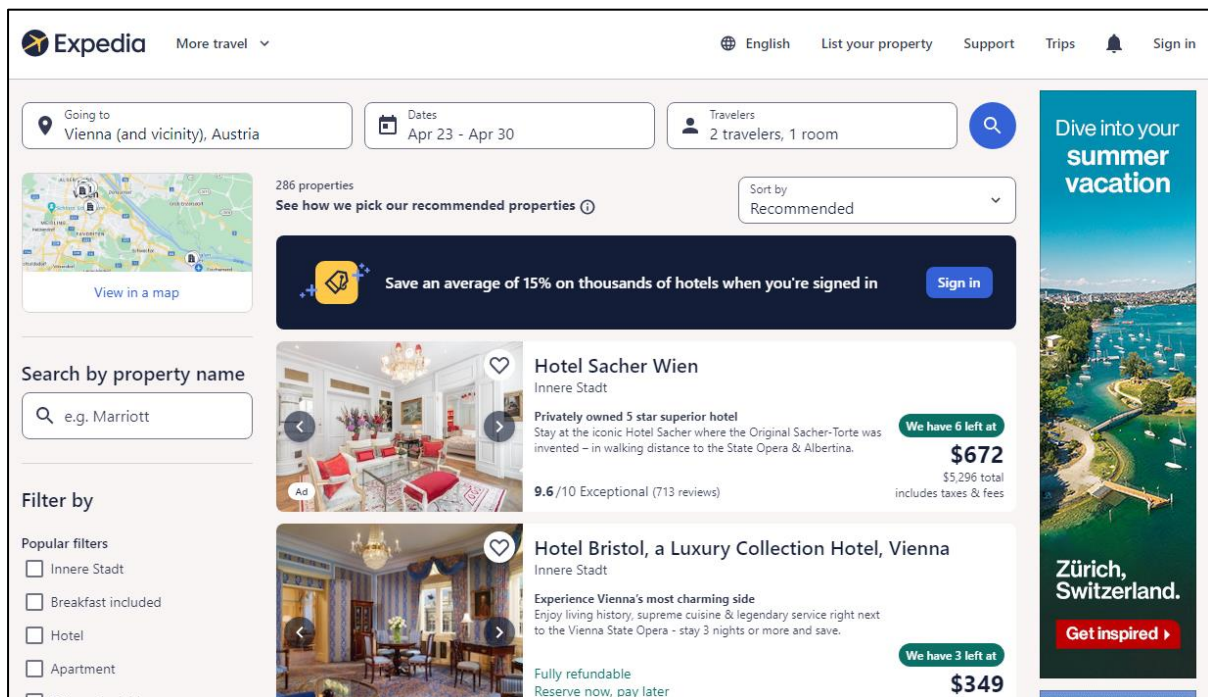


Source: Statista.com

Expedia offers its customers a classic mix of travel services, including flights, accommodations, car rentals, tours, package deals, activities, and travel insurance. Within its offerings, Expedia uses a variety of marketing tools such as:

- **Expedia Rewards:** It is a loyalty points program that allows customers to earn discounts on travel and other benefits. Customers earn points for every reservation they make on Expedia, which can be used to book additional travel.
- **Expedia Price Match:** Expedia offers a lowest price guarantee, which means that if a customer finds a lower price on another website, Expedia will try to match that price.
- **Expedia Deals:** Expedia offers many different discounts and deals on flights, accommodations, and other products. These offers change regularly, so customers can find great prices on their favorite destinations.
- **Expedia VIP Access:** Expedia partners with some of the best hotels around the world and offers customers access to exclusive rates and other benefits.
- **Expedia Mobile App:** Expedia has a mobile app that allows customers to easily and quickly book flights, accommodations, and other products. The app also offers special deals and discounts for users.
- **Expedia Add-On Advantage:** If a customer books a flight or car at the same time as their accommodation, they can save up to 20% on their booking. This tool is only available to Expedia Rewards members.

Figure 6: Example of Expedia search results



Source: Expedia.com

After completing a reservation on Expedia.com, each customer has the opportunity to rate their stay at the hotel, flight, car rental, etc. and share their experiences with other users. These reviews include ratings of various aspects such as cleanliness, staff and service, amenities, property condition and facilities, eco-friendliness, and other factors.

Like other companies, Expedia uses a variety of tools and methods to analyze reviews within their review system. These include:

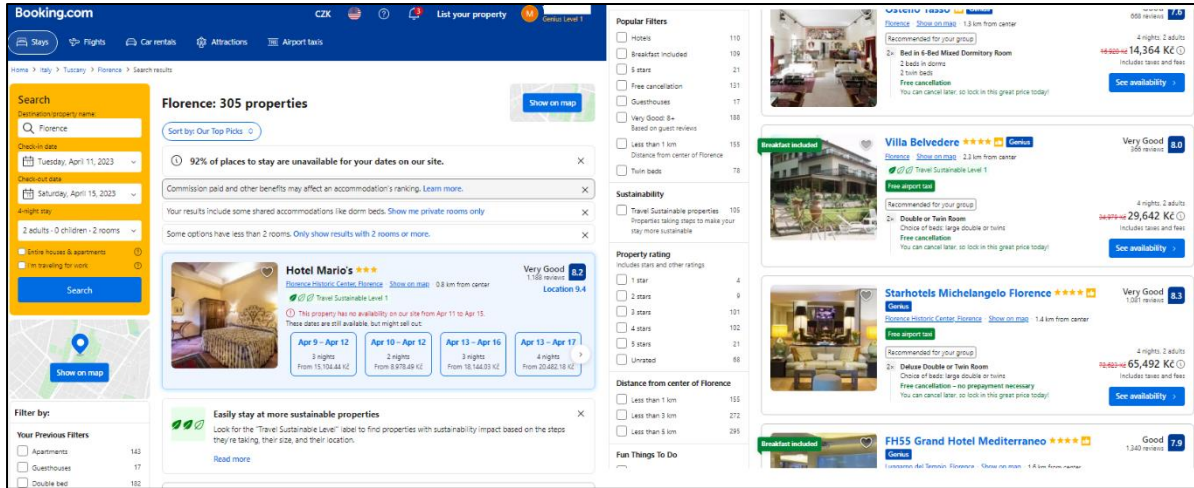
- **Automatic review quality check:** Expedia uses machine learning algorithms to automatically check the quality of reviews. These algorithms check whether the reviews are authentic and meet the established rules and standards. If a suspicious review is found, it may be removed or further examined.
- **Manual review check:** Expedia also has a team of employees who manually review reviews. These employees deal with suspicious reviews and also monitor whether hotels are abusing the review system, such as by creating fake positive reviews or falsely degrading reviews of competitor hotels.
- **Review trend monitoring:** Expedia monitors the development of reviews over time to identify any changes in review trends and provide feedback to partners on how they can improve their services.
- **Translation: Sentiment tracking:** Expedia uses tools for sentiment analysis to monitor emotions and moods in reviews. These tools help identify positive and negative expressions and evaluate overall user sentiment towards services and products. These tools and methods help Expedia ensure that reviews are high quality, authentic, and objective, and that they provide useful information for travelers looking for accommodations and other travel services.

Booking.com

Booking.com is today one of the world's largest online travel agencies that provides accommodation booking and other services for travelers. The history of this company dates back to 1996 when it was founded by Dutch entrepreneur Geert-Jan Bruinsma. Originally, the company was called Bookings.nl and specialized in hotel reservations in the Netherlands. In 2000, the name was changed to Booking.com and the company began to focus on the international market. Today, Booking.com is owned by Booking

Holdings Inc. (formerly Priceline Group), a company specializing in travel technology based in Norwalk, Connecticut.

Figure 7: Example from Booking.com

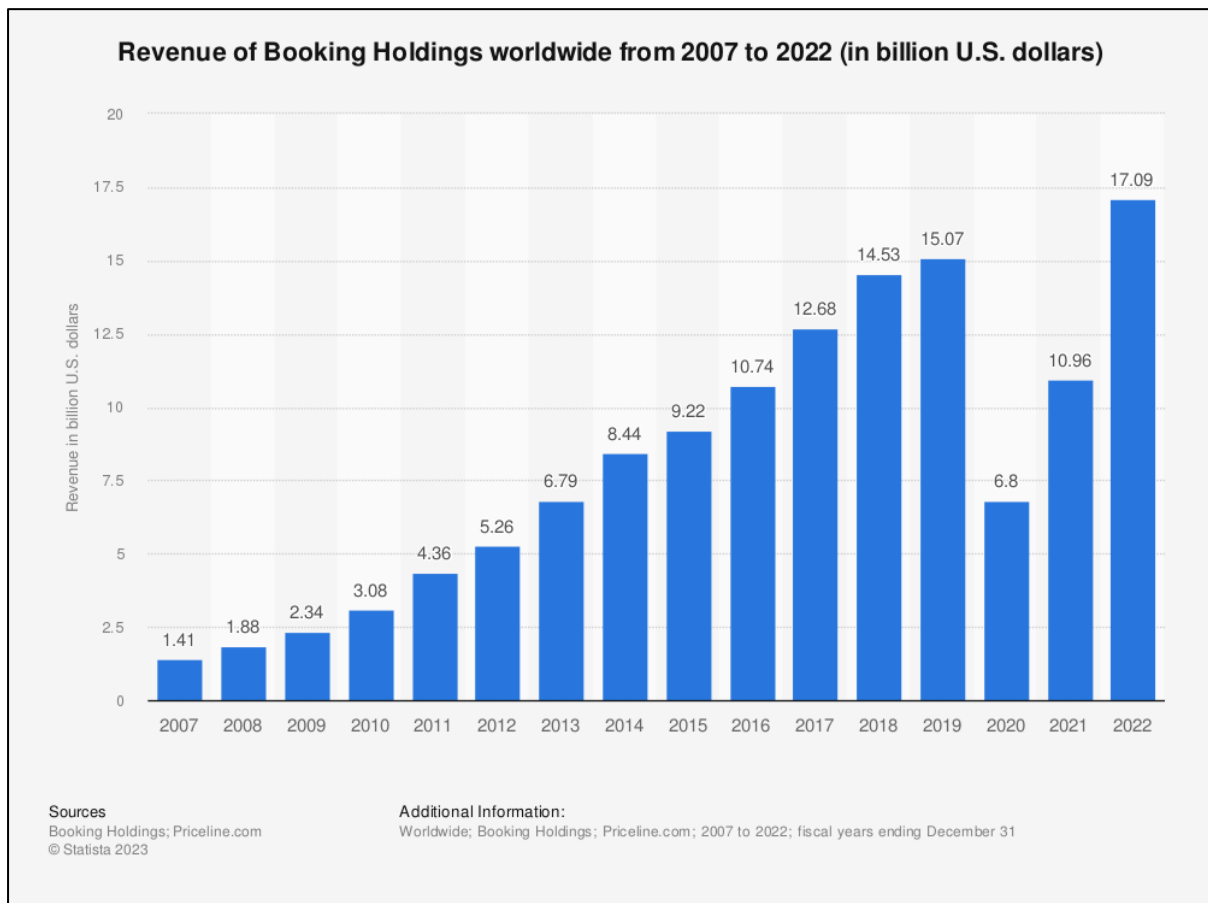


Source: Booking.com

Its portfolio includes a number of other companies operating in the field of tourism and hospitality such as Priceline.com, Kayak.com, Agoda.com, Rentalcars.com, Cheapflights, Momondo and OpenTable.

Today, Booking.com is one of the largest online travel agencies in the world with more than 28 million registered accommodations in 228 countries. The company offers reservation services for hotels, apartments, villas, inns and other types of accommodation. In addition, it also provides flight booking, car rental and other travel services. The site is available in almost 40 languages.

Figure 8: Revenue of Booking Holdings



Source: Statista.com

In March 2022, Booking.com was the most visited travel and tourism website worldwide with nearly 458 million online visitors. Second and third in the ranking were TripAdvisor and Airbnb, with roughly 144 million and 92 million visits, respectively. The company's mobile app was the most downloaded online travel agency app worldwide in 2021. That year, the Booking.com mobile app recorded around 63 million aggregated downloads on iOS and Google Play. Meanwhile, the Airbnb app placed second in the ranking, with roughly 44 million downloads. From December 2021 to March 2022, the total number of visits to Booking.com worldwide increased month-over-month, further highlighting the company's growing popularity. The number of visitors in December 2021 was 349.6 million, by March 2022, this had increased to 457.7 million visits (Statista, 2023).

Booking.com uses various mechanisms to ensure that reviews are as objective and relevant as possible for other users. For example, to prevent fake reviews, Booking.com verifies whether users actually made a reservation and stayed at the accommodation, as completing a reservation is necessary

to write a review. Additionally, Booking.com uses sophisticated algorithms and systems to detect and remove fake reviews. Users on Booking.com rate accommodation in several different categories on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is the lowest rating and 10 is the highest rating. An email with a questionnaire in which the guest evaluates their experience with the stay is received after leaving the accommodation. The guest has 90 days to complete the questionnaire.

Categories may vary depending on the type of accommodation the user booked, but generally, these categories relate to the following aspects:

- **Location:** The location is rated on a scale of 1-10 based on how close the accommodation is to tourist attractions, the city center, the airport, and other important places.
- **Cleanliness:** Cleanliness is rated on a scale of 1-10 based on how clean and tidy the accommodation is, including bedrooms, bathrooms, and common areas.
- **Comfort:** Comfort is rated on a scale of 1-10 based on how comfortable the beds are, how high-quality the room amenities are, and whether there are adequate comfortable seating options.
- **Facilities:** Facilities are rated on a scale of 1-10 based on how high-quality and functional the various equipment and services are in the accommodation, including Wi-Fi, TV, air conditioning, swimming pool, and other facilities.
- **Staff:** Staff are rated on a scale of 1-10 based on the approach and willingness of the staff to help with any problems, as well as the overall quality of services provided in the accommodation.

Value for Money: allows guests to express whether they believe the price they paid for the accommodation was reasonable for the quality and level of services they received. The "value for money" rating can be very useful for potential guests, as it allows them to compare prices of different accommodation facilities and consider whether the offered services are in line with the price. This category is also useful for the accommodation facility itself, as it allows them to get feedback from guests and improve their services and offerings. Guests can provide optional ratings in other areas such as Wi-Fi or breakfast, but these are not the same for every guest. The results from this section are not included in the average rating. Booking.com strives to detect fake reviews and ensure that published reviews are trustworthy and relevant, similar to other companies. As mentioned before, the basis is to authenticate the reviewer in connection with the use of a specific service. In addition, Booking.com uses a sophisticated review control system that allows it to detect and remove fake reviews. This system uses machine learning and artificial intelligence to analyze various factors, such as vocabulary, writing

style, and the user's previous reviews, to determine whether reviews are truthful. User profiles are also monitored, and their activities on the website are checked. If a user is suspected of creating fake reviews, their profile may be blocked.

Booking.com naturally offers various tools for managing reviews and their evaluation for accommodation providers, which are listed on the website. These tools include:

- **Guest Center:** This tool allows accommodation providers to communicate with guests before, during, and after their stay. Guests can leave a review of their stay, which the accommodation provider can then respond to. This tool allows accommodation providers to monitor reviews and quickly respond to guest feedback.
- **Partner Hub:** This tool allows accommodation providers to manage their information on the Booking.com website, such as photos and descriptions of their accommodations. Partner Hub also allows accommodation providers to track their results and ratings, including reviews from guests.
- **Guest Review Insights:** This key tool allows accommodation providers to analyze their guest reviews using statistical functions. With this tool, accommodation providers can track their results in different categories such as location, cleanliness, comfort, and services. The tool also allows for comparison with competitors and tracking trends in reviews. This tool also enables partners to monitor how quickly and effectively they respond to guest reviews. In this way, partners can improve their communication skills and enhance relationships with guests.
- **Review Express:** This tool allows accommodation providers to send a request for reviews to guests who have recently stayed at their property. This tool makes it easy for accommodation providers to obtain more reviews and improve their ratings.

To display performance and effectively manage it, the Performance and Reputation Dashboard can also be used, which allows for the display of key performance indicators such as the number of bookings, revenue, occupancy, and more. These tools enable accommodation providers to optimally manage their reviews and analyze their results, which helps them improve their services and increase the credibility of their reviews.

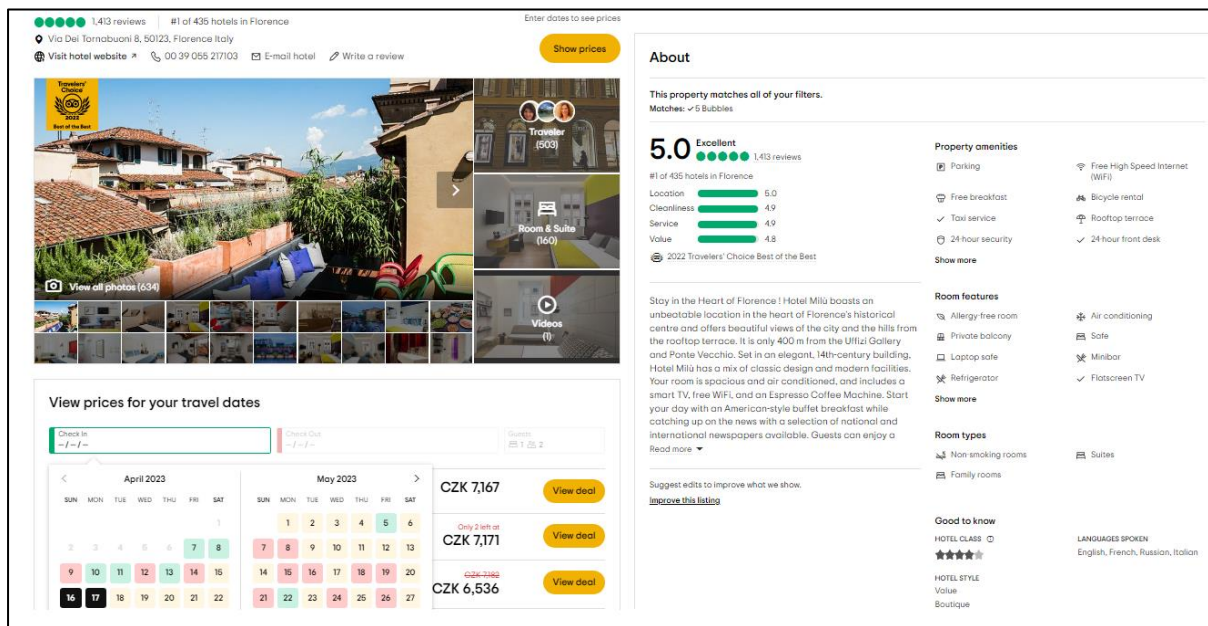
[TripAdvisor.com](https://www.tripadvisor.com)

TripAdvisor was founded in 2000 by Expedia as a platform for reviews and ratings of hotels. In 2011, it became an independent company and joined NASDAQ in 2012. Over the years, it has expanded its

services to include restaurants, flights, cruises, and other areas of the tourism industry. The company operates in 43 countries and is available in 22 languages.

In recent years, TripAdvisor has significantly influenced the digital transformation of the travel industry. In 2016, TripAdvisor introduced a new design for its website and apps, which aimed to be more user-friendly and allow for easier searching and booking of experiences. Two years later, it introduced new functionality based on artificial intelligence, which is designed to help users find suitable hotels based on their preferences and travel style.

Figure 9: Example from TripAdvisor



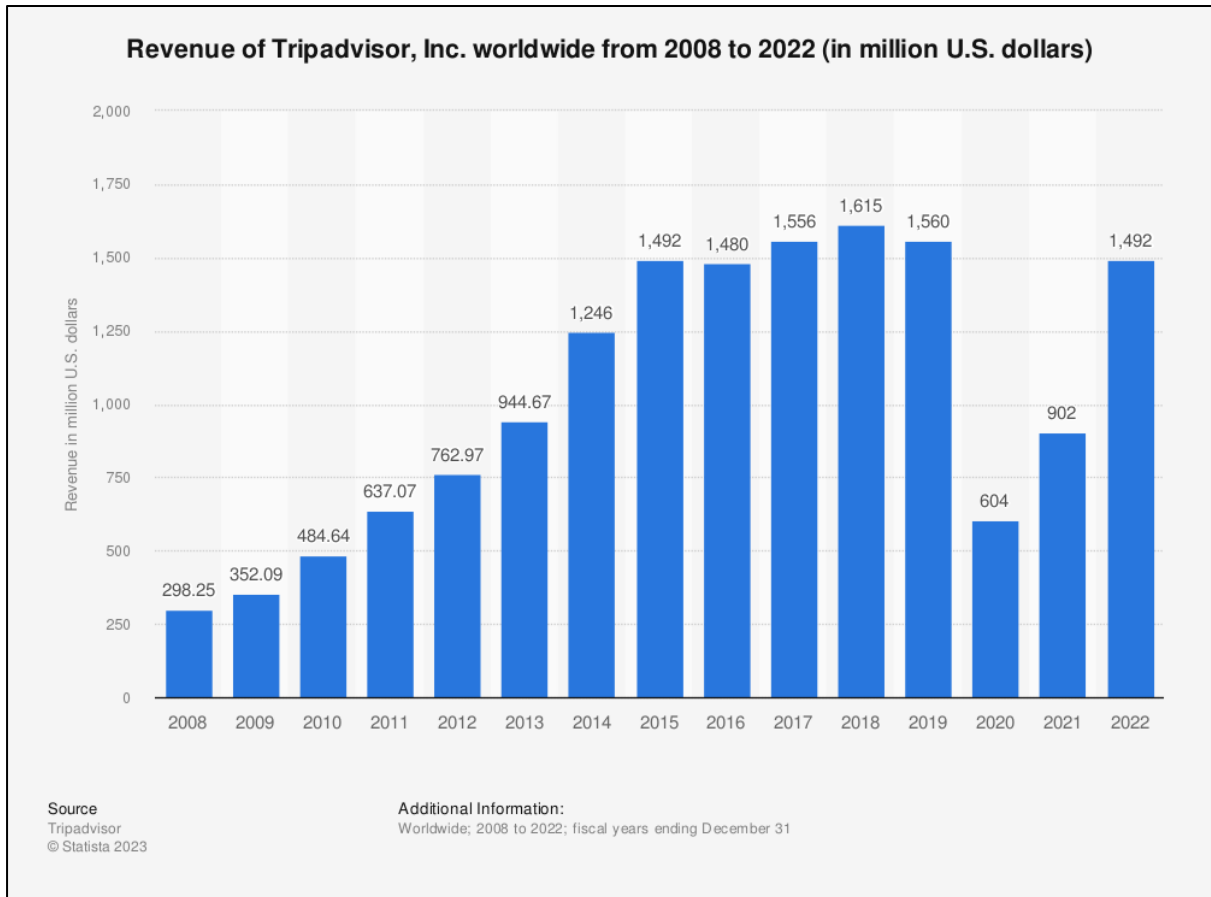
Source: Tripadvisor.com

In 2020, TripAdvisor focused on supporting the tourism industry during the COVID-19 pandemic and introduced new features, such as the ability to filter hotels with free cancellation. In recent years, it has also been striving to develop its services in the area of experiences and tourist activities, which could be an advantage when tourism returns after the pandemic. According to data from the fourth quarter of 2021, TripAdvisor achieved revenues of \$1.16 billion, which represents a slight increase compared to the previous year.

In 2022, the global revenue generated by the Tripadvisor core business segment increased significantly compared to the first two years of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. In 2022, the company's core segment - including earnings from Tripadvisor-branded hotels, Tripadvisor-branded

display and platform, and Tripadvisor experiences and dining - amounted to 966 million U.S. dollars, rising from 665 million U.S. dollars in 2021. Overall, the revenue of Tripadvisor, Inc. worldwide bounced back in 2022 but remained below pre-pandemic levels (Statista,2003).

Figure 10: Revenue of TripAdvisor, Inc.



Source: Statista.com

To publish reviews, TripAdvisor uses a set of internal rules that reviews must meet. Some of these rules include:

- Recent: The experience must have occurred within the past 12 months.
- Unbiased: Individuals or entities affiliated with a property are not allowed to post reviews of their business or competing establishments.
- Non-Commercial: Reviews cannot contain links or promotional content or advertisements.

- Relevant to travel experiences: Personal opinions and content irrelevant to the experience are not allowed, including posts about politics, race, ethics, religion, and social issues.
- First-hand: Reviews must be from the point of view of the traveller authoring them. Rumours, second-hand information, quotations for other sources, or links to news articles will not be published.
- Respectful: Tripadvisor will not host any content that promotes intolerance for, contains offensive stereotypes of, or incites hatred or bias towards people based on their ethnic or social origin, race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religious/spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic class, physical or mental ability, immigration status or nationality.

Pre-posting moderation occurs after a traveller submits a review but before it goes live on the site or app. This process algorithmically screens reviews, automatically eliminating any content that violates Tripadvisor's guidelines or contains misinformation or spam.

In fact, one-bubble ratings only account for 7.2% of reviews submitted in 2020. More than eight in ten reviews (82%) received 4 or 5 bubbles, and nearly two-thirds of all reviews received 5 bubbles (65.8%). (TripAdvisor Reviews,2022).

According to Q4 2021 data, TripAdvisor had 463 million unique monthly visitors and 1.4 billion reviews. The company also says it has approximately 463,000 hotels and accommodations on offer and more than 1.5 million restaurants. In 2020, more than 26 million reviews were subsequently published on the platform, of which 54.1% of posts related to customer experiences that took place in Europe, 23.5% in North America, 13.7% in Asia and the South Pacific , 4.7% in Central and South America and 3.9% in Africa, Antarctica and the Middle East. In terms of focus, over 8 million reviews were focused on hotels, they also included contributions of over 12 million restaurant reviews and over 4 million reviews of experiences, attractions and activities. The average review rating in 2020 was 4.30 out of 5.0, up from 4.22 out of 5.0 in 2018.

Tripadvisor offers review analysis and reporting tools for businesses that are registered on the platform. This service is called Tripadvisor Analytics and allows businesses to track the performance of their Tripadvisor profiles, analyze reviews and ratings, compare themselves to competitors and get information about profile traffic.

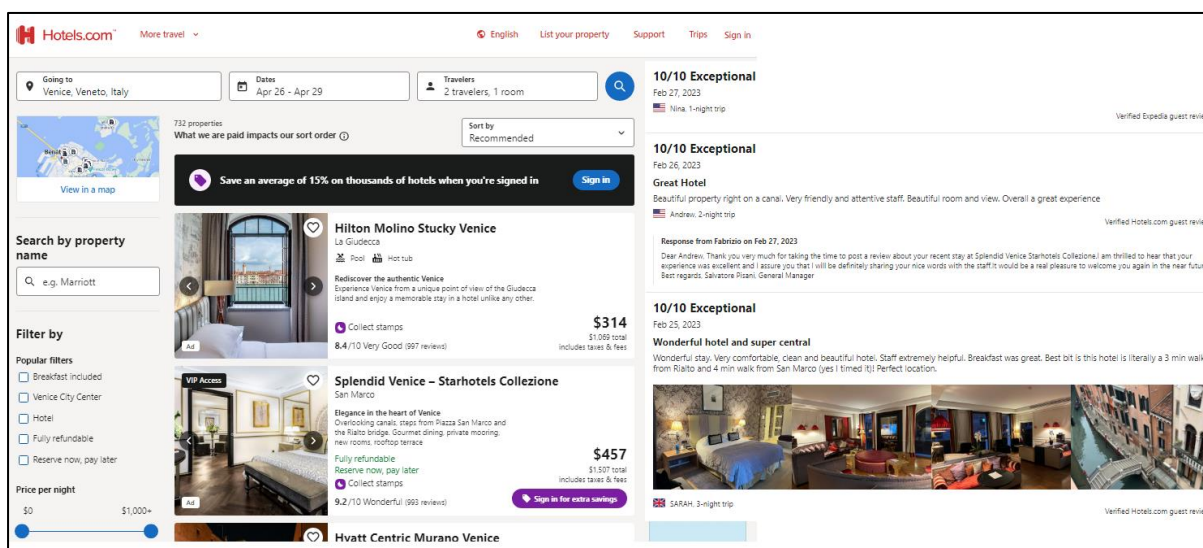
Tripadvisor offers a tool for managing reviews (Reputation management tool) called "Tripadvisor Management Center". This tool provides companies with several functionalities for analyzing and managing reviews:

- Review monitoring: The tool allows tracking all reviews of the company on Tripadvisor and sending notifications for new reviews. The company can also see how many reviews it has received in the last 30 days and how it is rated.
- Review responses: The company can quickly and easily respond to reviews through the Management Center tool. Responses will appear next to the original review on the Tripadvisor page.
- Statistics display: The tool enables the company to see statistics on the number of page views, clicks, interactions, and other relevant information. This information can help the company understand the preferences of its target audience and how they can improve their services.
- Competitive tracking: The tool allows a company to monitor and compare its position with competitors using comparative graphs.
- Profile management: The tool enables a company to manage and update its profile on TripAdvisor. The company can add photos, edit information about its services, and more.
- Booking widget: The company can add a booking widget to its website and allow users to book their services directly from TripAdvisor.
- Survey analysis: The company can access guest surveys and analyze their feedback.
- Reports: The tool allows the company to generate various reports, such as average rating reports, keyword reports, and more.

On the TripAdvisor platform, commissions are calculated based on the so-called booking fee, which is a percentage of the reservation price that TripAdvisor charges customers who use its booking system. The specific amount of the reservation fee varies depending on the type of facility (e.g. hotel, apartment, restaurant), and also on whether the facility uses paid advertising on the TripAdvisor platform. Facility operators thus pay TripAdvisor a commission on the total reservation price, which ranges from 12% to 15% .

Hotels.com is an online travel agency (OTA) specializing in hotel room reservations worldwide. In 1991, David Litman and Robert Diener founded the company Hotel Reservations Network (HRN), which specialized in phone hotel reservations. In 1995, HRN launched its first website, which allowed customers to book hotel rooms online. A few years later, in 2001, HRN was renamed to Hotels.com and a year later became a subsidiary of Expedia. Today, Hotels.com is part of the Expedia Group and offers more than 500,000 accommodations in 200 countries around the world. Hotels.com focuses on offering competitive prices, attractive offers, and various discount programs for customers. Hotels.com also offers a loyalty program where customers can earn points for each reservation made and later use them to get a discount on their next reservation.

Figure 11: Example from Hotels.com



Source: Hotels.com

Hotels.com uses star ratings like other review systems. Guest reviews are submitted by guests who have booked on Hotels.com and completed a stay at the hotel or vacation rental. To write a review, it is necessary to log in to your account on Hotels.com, and in the Manage Your Reservations section, you can leave a review only for completed bookings. The review system also has clearly defined rules for what a review must not contain. These include:

- Hotel or vacation rental rates, rate ranges, or other pricing information

- Comments or questions about other reviews or the content of this website, all of which are subject to change without notice
- Direct comments or questions to hotel or vacation rental staff
- False statements or unlawful remarks
- Profanity or other objectionable content
- Phone numbers, physical addresses, email addresses, or information that can be linked to a specific individual
- HTML tags or URLs
- Quoted material from websites, books, magazines, newspapers, or other sources
- Impersonations of someone else or information about another person.

Google

The review system on Google is a part of the Google My Business service, which allows businesses to create an online profile and appear on maps and search results. Reviews can be written by both customers and other individuals who have experience with the business.

Each review on Google contains a rating on a scale of 1 to 5 stars and a textual review in which users can describe their experience with the business. Additionally, users can add photos and videos that relate to the business.

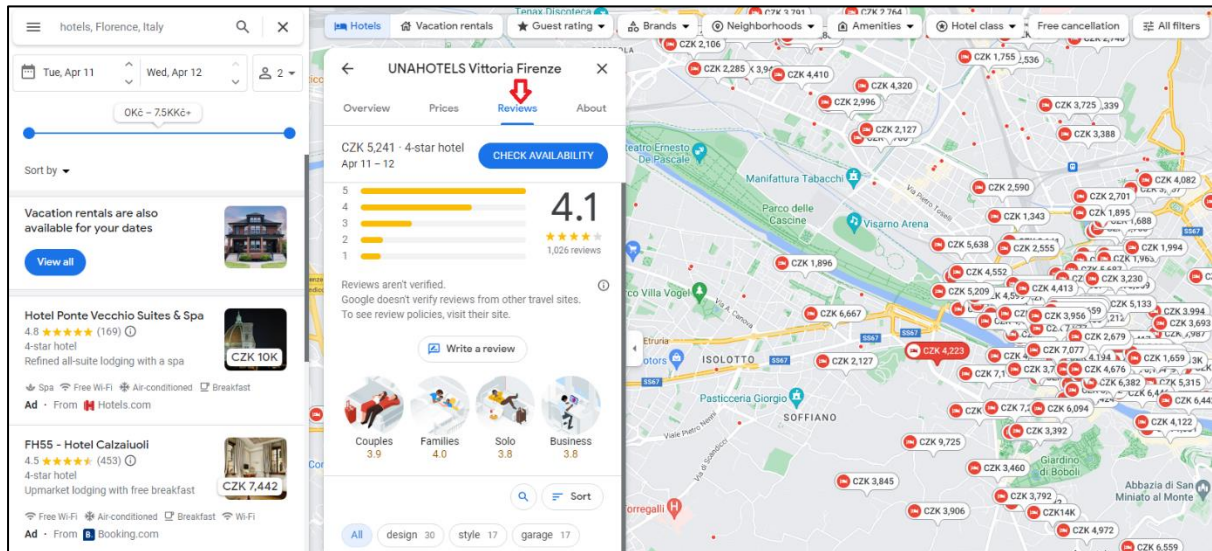
Businesses can respond to reviews and communicate with customers in return. They can also request Google to remove inappropriate reviews, such as fake or misleading reviews.

Google ratings are an important part of a business's reputation and influence how the business appears in online search and maps. Therefore, businesses try to obtain as many positive reviews as possible and improve their reputation on this platform.

Reviews of places and services in tourism are a part of reviews on Google Maps and are evaluated in the same way as other reviews on Google. Users can rate places using stars and write reviews about them. Google then uses algorithms to detect and evaluate fake and spam reviews to ensure

that the results are relevant and trustworthy for users. Ratings and reviews are taken into account in Google's algorithms for search and displaying results on maps.

Figure 12: Example from Google



Source: google.com

Google has several mechanisms in place to protect against fake reviews, which are similar to those used in traditional review systems:

- Spam protection: Google has its own mechanisms for detecting and blocking spam and fraudulent reviews. These mechanisms include checking IP addresses, email addresses, and other factors that may indicate that a review is fraudulent.
- Review moderation: Google allows users to report fraudulent or inappropriate reviews, which are then subject to moderation. If a review is deemed inappropriate, it may be removed.
- User identity verification: Google requires users to have a Google account in order to write reviews. This reduces the likelihood of fake reviews being written.
- Authenticity check: Google uses algorithms to detect the authenticity of reviews and tries to identify fraudulent and untrue reviews. These algorithms include analyzing the language and context of reviews.
- Information expansion: Google tries to obtain more information about users and businesses to make it easier to determine whether reviews are authentic or not.

Despite this, fake reviews still appear on Google, and Google tries to solve these problems as quickly as possible. Google has several analytical tools for evaluating reviews, such as:

- **Google My Business Insights:** This tool provides detailed information on how users view and interact with your Google My Business listing. You can track views, searches, messages and phone calls, as well as ratings and reviews.
- **Google Merchant Center:** If you run an e-commerce store, you can use Google Merchant Center tools to track reviews and ratings of your products. You can see how many stars each product has and how ratings are distributed.
- **Google Customer Reviews:** This tool allows e-commerce operators to collect and manage reviews from their customers. You can use it to get feedback from customers, track average ratings, and see how your ratings compare to the industry average.

Google Analytics: Google Analytics is not directly intended for tracking reviews, but can be used to monitor the behavior of users on your website who are searching for information about your brand or products. For example, if you have a reviews section on your website, you can track how many users visited that section, how long they spent there, and what actions they took based on that section.

In addition to the already mentioned Google My Business Insights, Google My Business Reviews can also be used to analyze reviews. This provides an overview of the reviews on the Google My Business profile, including the number of reviews, the average rating and the distribution of the ratings. It can also show how ratings change over time and vary by category and location.

Google Customer Reviews uses several indicators to evaluate customer satisfaction. From 1 to 5 stars are used for the Customer Satisfaction Rating, where 5 means maximum customer satisfaction. Another indicator that can be obtained is the total number of reviews: This indicator shows the total number of reviews that have been obtained through Google Customer Reviews. It is also possible to quantify reviews for the last 90 days, or the share of reviews with a picture or video.

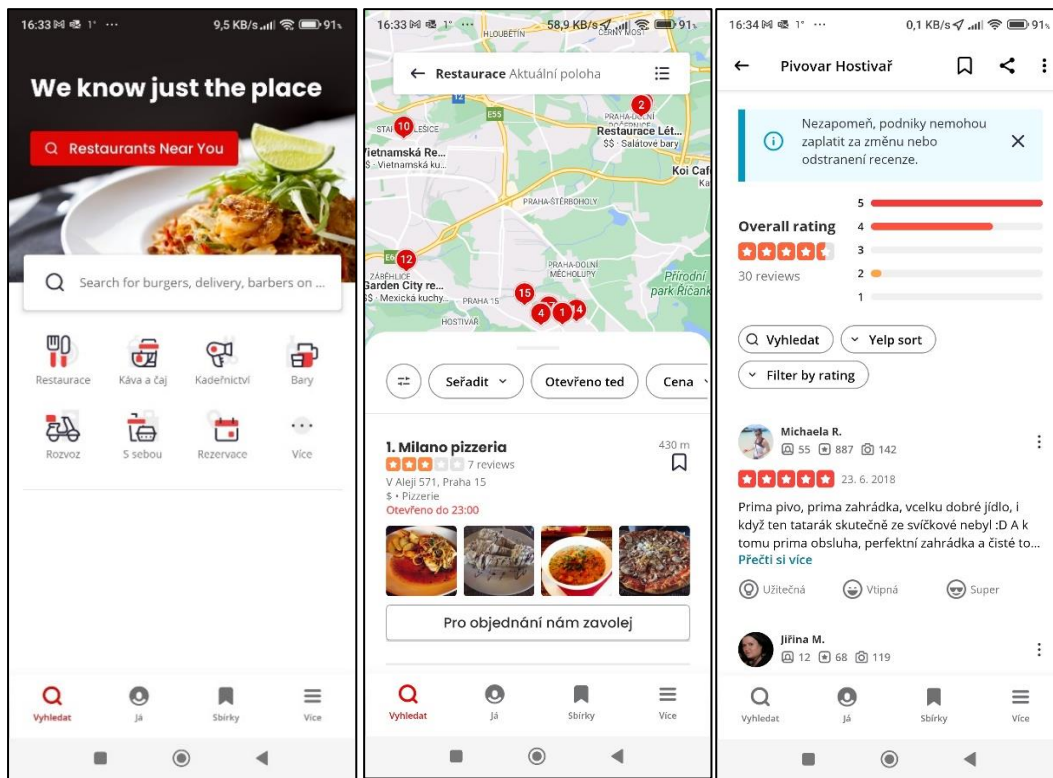
Google uses complex algorithms to evaluate reviews of places and services in tourism. These algorithms consider many factors such as review quality, user reputation, relevance and more. In essence, it can be stated that even in this area, Google's procedures are very similar to the measures used by other review platforms.

Yelp

Yelp is one of the largest online platforms that allows users to write and read reviews of businesses such as restaurants, hotels, beauty salons, fitness centers, and more. Yelp was founded in 2004 in San Francisco and currently operates in many countries around the world, including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France, and some countries in Asia.

The user interface of the Yelp application is clear and easy to navigate, allowing users to easily search for and view reviews of businesses. The Yelp app is available for mobile devices with iOS or Android operating systems and can be downloaded for free from the App Store or Google Play. Upon launching the app, users see a home screen with a search bar where they can enter the name of a business or a keyword such as the category of the business, type of cuisine, location, or other criteria. After entering a keyword or business name, a list of businesses matching the search criteria appears, along with information about the location, business rating, and other details. Users can further filter the results by various criteria such as price, type of business, location, and more. Clicking on a specific business displays more detailed information about the business, including the business rating, user reviews, address, phone number, business hours, and other details. Users can also view photos and videos of businesses and save their favorite businesses to lists for easy access later. The Yelp app also allows users to write their own reviews and ratings of businesses, add photos, and other information.

Figure 13: Example from Yelp



Source: Yelp mobile application

Companies can work with Yelp statistics using the Yelp Analytics tool. This tool provides detailed information about the business profile's traffic, including the number of views, clicks, phone calls, and navigation directions. Yelp Analytics also allows businesses to track the keywords and phrases that users are searching for to optimize their profile content.

Another feature of Yelp Analytics is monitoring the company's reviews and ratings. Businesses can track the most common review topics, the most active users, and the average rating compared to competitors. Companies can use this information to identify areas where they need to improve their services and offerings.

In addition to Yelp Analytics, the company also offers Yelp for Business, which allows businesses to update their profile information, respond to reviews, and obtain basic visitor statistics.

Yelp offers various types of paid services, including advertising and highlighted search result listings, that businesses can use to improve their visibility on the platform. Yelp Ads allows businesses to enhance their listings on Yelp.com and place their ads at the top of search results pages on Yelp.com

and other partner websites. This placement allows businesses to increase their listing's visibility and attract more potential customers. Additionally, businesses can monitor the success of their advertising campaigns and analyze how effective they are.

Another service offered by Yelp is Yelp Connect. It is an online marketing service provided by the Yelp.com platform for communicating with users. Yelp Connect allows businesses to create posts that are displayed on their business page on Yelp.com and in the Yelp mobile app.

These posts can be creative and contain various elements, such as images, videos, and text messages, so that businesses can showcase their products and services and communicate with potential customers. Posts are displayed in a new "Connect" tab on the business page on Yelp.com and in the Yelp mobile app.

Businesses can use Yelp Connect to promote their offers, discounts, special events, and other news. These posts can be targeted to a specific audience, such as people searching for a specific type of business or users who have already visited a particular business.

Yelp Connect also allows businesses to track the performance of their posts, such as the number of clicks, views, and interactions with users, which allows businesses to analyze the success of their campaigns.

In addition, Yelp offers a range of other features. For example, Yelp Guest Manager is designed for restaurants, which is an online platform for managing reservations. Restaurants can accept reservations online through Yelp Guest Manager and automatically synchronize them with their calendar to avoid overlapping reservations. Additionally, they can provide their guests with quick and easy ways to make reservations, such as through the Yelp mobile app or Yelp website.

The Yelp Guest Manager also allows restaurants to track their foot traffic, average time spent by guests in the restaurant, and other key indicators in real time. This enables restaurants to better plan their staff and resources and maximize their profits.

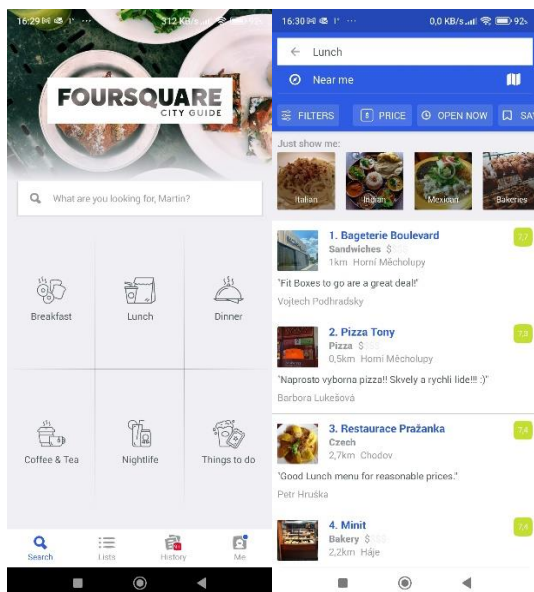
In addition, Yelp Guest Manager offers restaurants features for managing their queue and waiting list, which allows restaurants to improve the guest experience and minimize wait times. Restaurants can also use the Yelp Guest Manager platform to send reservation reminders and remind guests of their reservations.

Foursquare

Foursquare is a mobile app for geolocation services that was founded in 2009 in New York City. In its early years, it functioned as a social network for sharing information about places that users had visited. Foursquare allowed users to check in at locations and add information about benefits, such as discounts or special offers. This app was very popular between 2010 and 2012, when it became one of the largest players in the geolocation services market.

However, with competition from other companies such as Yelp and Google Maps, Foursquare's user base gradually decreased, and the company had to revise its business model. In 2014, Foursquare split into two separate apps: Foursquare and Swarm. Foursquare focused on the business side of the service, while Swarm offered the user functionality and social aspects of the original Foursquare. Currently, Foursquare focuses on providing geolocation and mobility data and analytics for businesses. Foursquare Analytics provides businesses with information on how their customers move, where they shop, and what they prefer. This allows businesses to improve their services and marketing campaigns. Foursquare also offers an API that allows other companies to use its data for their own purposes.

Figure 14: Example from Foursquare



Source: Foursquare City Guide

Foursquare also focuses on developing travel applications, such as City Guide, which offers users tips on restaurants, bars, and other interesting places in specific cities. As a result, Foursquare has become a significant player in the tourism market.

Currently, Foursquare has approximately 50 million active users, and its database contains more than 105 million places and 13 billion geolocation check-ins. Foursquare also collaborates with several large companies, such as Uber and Airbnb.

Foursquare offers users a range of functionalities, including:

- Search and discovery of places: Users can search by category (e.g. restaurants, cafes, bars), location or keywords, and find recommended places nearby.
- Ratings and reviews: Users can rate and review visited places and share their experiences with other users.
- Creating lists: Users can create lists of favorite places and share them with other users.
- Friend tracking: Users can track their friends' activities and receive recommendations based on their visits.
- Navigation and route planning: Foursquare allows users to plan their routes and navigate to destinations, including information on transportation and opening hours.

Foursquare also offers users the opportunity to earn rewards, such as discounts or special offers, for visiting certain places and meeting certain conditions. Furthermore, Foursquare allows users to link their account with other applications, such as Uber or OpenTable, to easily book transportation or a table at a restaurant.

On the other hand, Foursquare allows businesses to manage their profile on the platform through Foursquare for Business, create and edit information about their products and services, add photos, communicate with users and respond to reviews. Additionally, Foursquare offers geofencing functionality, which allows businesses to create specific zones that activate certain marketing campaigns or offers for users who are in that zone. Foursquare also provides tools for data collection and analysis, including demographic data about users, information about user activities on the platform, and feedback from users in the form of reviews and ratings. These tools help businesses understand their customers' behavior and identify areas where they can improve their services.

OpenTable

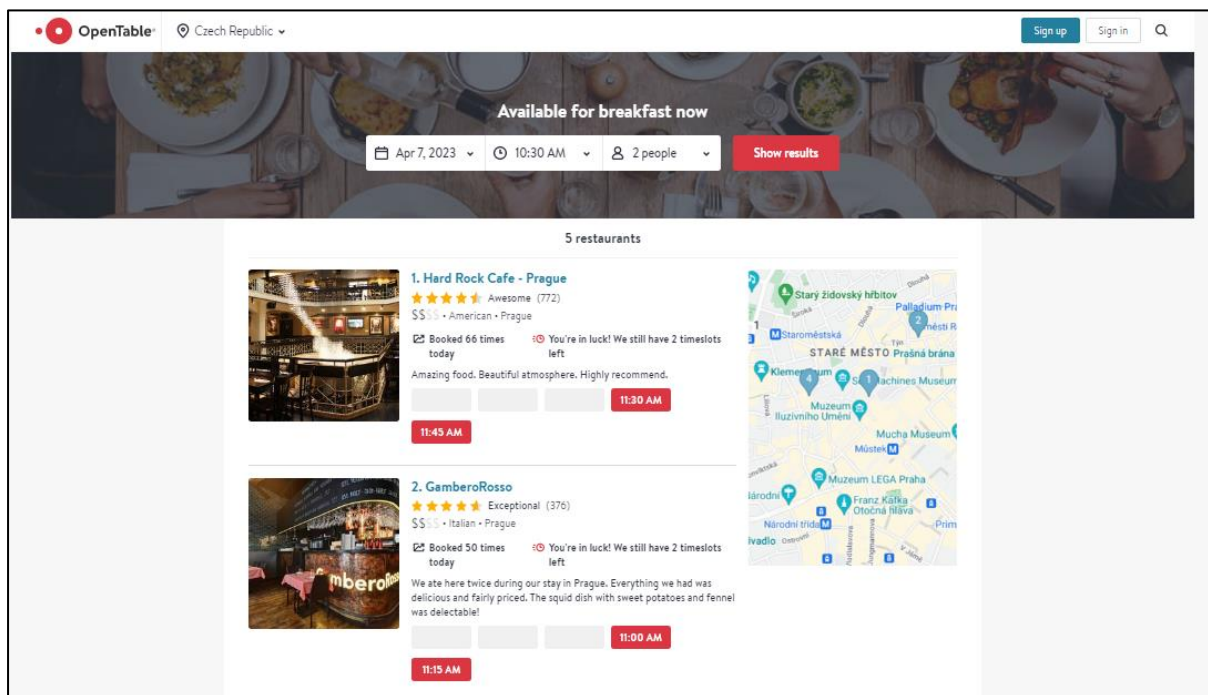
OpenTable is an American company that offers online restaurant table reservation and related services for guests, restaurants, and partners. It was founded in 1998 in San Francisco and launched its platform for online restaurant table reservations in 1999.

OpenTable allows guests to choose from thousands of restaurants in different countries around the world and easily book a table online. Restaurants can use the platform to manage their reservations, create and update their menus, send reservation confirmations, and provide other services. Partners, such as travel guide services and websites, can use the OpenTable API to integrate services into their sites and provide guests with easy access to restaurant table reservations.

In 2014, OpenTable was acquired by the Priceline Group (now Booking Holdings) and became part of its portfolio. OpenTable offers restaurants marketing tools such as special offers, loyalty programs, and advertising campaigns. Additionally, restaurants can use the OpenTable reservation widget to place on their websites, allowing guests to easily reserve tables at their restaurants.

OpenTable also has a review section that allows guests to rate and write reviews about the restaurants they have visited. These reviews are then displayed on the restaurant pages on OpenTable and can help other guests choose a suitable restaurant. Reviews are rated using five stars and guests can also add comments to their reviews. Restaurants can receive positive reviews and high ratings, which can help attract more guests and improve the restaurant's reputation. Restaurants can also respond to reviews, which can be useful for addressing any issues and improving the guest experience in the future.

Figure 15: Example from Opentable



Source: www.opentable.com

To evaluate restaurants on OpenTable, various data and factors are used that affect the overall rating, such as:

- **Quality of food:** The evaluation of the quality of food is usually one of the most important factors that influence the evaluation of a restaurant. Guests rate the taste and quality of food, presentation, and so on.
- **Quality of service:** The evaluation of the quality of service is another key factor that guests consider. Good service, speed of serving food, and friendly staff can positively affect the restaurant's rating.
- **Atmosphere and restaurant design:** Guests also evaluate the atmosphere and design of the restaurant, such as decorations, lighting, and overall atmosphere.
- **Location and accessibility:** Location and accessibility are other factors that can influence the restaurant's rating. Guests consider the location of the restaurant and the ease of access to it.
- **Prices:** Guests also evaluate the prices of food and drinks, taking into account their quality and overall experience at the restaurant.

These factors are then taken into account when calculating the overall rating of the restaurant on OpenTable, and guests can express their opinion using five stars and also write a review.

OpenTable allows tracking a restaurant's reputation and obtaining feedback from guests. Operators can monitor and respond to reviews and communicate with guests directly through OpenTable. The platform offers the option to reply to reviews directly from the "Reviews" page. Responses can be made privately or publicly. It is also possible to respond to reviews from Google and Facebook, which requires authorization and linking to Google and Facebook Business Pages.

The Reporting Suite is a key tool for restaurant performance statistics, and the Marketing Insight report is a key tool for marketing statistics, both available in the Marketing/GuestCenter section. The Reporting Suite includes Shift Occupancy Report, Cover Trends Report, First Time Visit Report, Guest Frequency report, Reservation Report, Turn Time Analysis Report, Referral Tracking Report, monthly Email Report, and Guest Export.

The dashboard is the primary management tool, as with other products. OpenTable Dashboard is a tool for managing reservations and analyzing restaurant performance. The dashboard allows operators to track the number of reservations, earnings, occupancy, and other key indicators. It also

provides the ability to compare performance with aggregated and anonymized data from other local restaurants listed on OpenTable.

The Reviews Report is part of the reports. OpenTable thus provides restaurant operators with clear reports on reviews and ratings, which allow them to follow the trend and analyze the development over time.

There is also an application for mobile platforms OpenTable for Restaurants. OpenTable for Restaurants provides restaurants with tools to streamline management and optimize the use of their capacity. Thanks to this, restaurants can easily create and manage their profiles, set up and update their tables and offer guests the option of table reservations through the online platform. OpenTable for Restaurants also enables restaurants to track and analyze customer data such as guest databases, guest preferences including number of reservations, average order value and reviews, etc.

OpenTable also allows restaurant operators to connect with other platforms, such as Uber Eats, Deliveroo and others, allowing restaurants to accept orders and payments through these platforms.

OpenTable also uses the OpenTable Dining Points loyalty program, where you can earn points when making a reservation. Reservations in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, and Australia can earn OpenTable Dining Points. Redemption options vary by region.

2.3. Social media and social networks' functions and its impact on reputation

In today's digital age, social media has become an essential tool for businesses to connect with their customers and build their brand. For the tourism industry, social media provides a platform for businesses to showcase their services and destinations, engage with customers, and receive feedback. However, with the increasing popularity of social media, it has become challenging for businesses to manage their online reputation effectively. Negative reviews and feedback can quickly spread across social media platforms, impacting a business's reputation and bottom line. This chapter will explore the impact of social media and network functions on online reputation management in the tourism industry. We will discuss the strategies and best practices for using social media to build a positive reputation and manage negative feedback effectively.

Social media refers to online platforms and tools that enable individuals and organizations to create, share, and exchange information, opinions, and content in virtual communities and networks. Social media platforms are designed to facilitate communication and interaction among users through various features such as messaging, sharing, commenting, and liking.

In the tourism industry, social media has become an essential tool for businesses to connect with customers, promote their services and destinations, and manage their online reputation. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, and YouTube provide a platform for businesses to engage with customers, share content, and receive feedback.

With social media, businesses can create brand awareness, target specific customer segments, and drive traffic to their websites. Social media also provides businesses with valuable insights into customer preferences, behavior, and feedback. By leveraging social media, businesses can build a loyal customer base, generate positive reviews and feedback, and ultimately improve their online reputation. Therefore, social media is of great importance in the tourism industry as it enables businesses to connect with their customers and build their brand.

2.3.1. Influencer marketing

Influencer marketing has become a popular social media marketing strategy in the tourism industry due to the power of social media influencers to influence consumer behavior and shape perceptions. Influencers are individuals with a significant following on social media platforms, who are seen as authoritative and influential in their niche or industry. In the context of the tourism industry, influencers can include travel bloggers, vloggers, photographers, adventurers, and other individuals who create and share travel-related content on social media platforms.

One of the key benefits of influencer marketing in the tourism industry is the ability to leverage the influencers' reach and engagement with their audience. Influencers often have a large and dedicated following that trusts their recommendations and opinions. By partnering with influencers, businesses in the tourism industry can tap into this reach and engagement to promote their brand or destination, create buzz, and generate awareness among a relevant and engaged audience. Influencers can create compelling content, such as sponsored posts, videos, stories, and reviews, showcasing their experiences with the brand or destination, and encouraging their followers to engage with the content and take action.

Another advantage of influencer marketing is the ability to create authentic and relatable content that resonates with the target audience. Influencers are known for their authentic and genuine content that often reflects their personal experiences and opinions. This authenticity can help businesses establish trust and credibility with their target audience, as influencers are seen as independent and unbiased sources of information. By partnering with influencers who align with their brand values and

target audience, businesses can create authentic and relatable content that resonates with the audience and helps shape positive perceptions about their brand or destination.

Influencer marketing also provides businesses with the opportunity to tap into niche markets and reach specific target audiences. Influencers often specialize in specific niches or segments within the tourism industry, such as adventure travel, luxury travel, solo travel, or family travel. By partnering with influencers who cater to a specific niche, businesses can reach a highly targeted audience that is more likely to be interested in their offerings. This can help businesses generate targeted leads, increase engagement, and drive conversions among a relevant and engaged audience.

However, it's important to note that influencer marketing also comes with its challenges and considerations. It's essential for businesses to carefully select influencers based on relevant metrics such as audience demographics, engagement rates, content quality, and brand alignment. It's also important to establish clear expectations, guidelines, and contractual agreements with influencers to ensure that the content is authentic, compliant with relevant regulations, and aligned with the brand's values and messaging. Additionally, businesses should also monitor and measure the effectiveness of influencer marketing campaigns to ensure that they are delivering the desired results and contributing to the overall online reputation management strategy.

To give an example, Marriott Hotels & Resorts partnered with a select group of travel influencers from different countries who had a large following and were known for their travel-related content. The influencers were invited to stay at various Marriott properties around the world, such as luxury hotels and resorts, and were provided with complimentary accommodations, amenities, and services.

During their stay, the influencers created engaging and authentic content on their Instagram accounts, featuring their experiences at Marriott properties. This included high-quality photos and videos of their luxurious accommodations, amenities such as spas, pools, and dining options, as well as their personal stories and recommendations about their stay.

The influencers used the hashtag #MarriottxInfluencers in their posts, which helped to create buzz and generate engagement among their followers. The campaign showcased the unique features and offerings of Marriott properties, while also leveraging the influencers' personal brand and influence to create positive perceptions about the Marriott Hotels & Resorts brand.

The content generated by the influencers was highly visual, aspirational, and relatable to the travel aspirations of their audience, which helped to create positive brand associations and promote Marriott Hotels & Resorts as a desirable choice for luxury travel accommodations. The campaign also leveraged the influencers' authenticity and trust with their audience, as they shared their genuine experiences and recommendations, which resonated with their followers and helped to build trust and credibility for Marriott Hotels & Resorts.

The #MarriottxInfluencers campaign resulted in increased engagement, reach, and brand exposure on Instagram, as well as positive user-generated content (UGC) from the influencers' followers who shared their own experiences and recommendations using the hashtag. The campaign contributed to enhancing Marriott Hotels & Resorts' online reputation by leveraging the influential reach and authenticity of travel influencers to create positive perceptions and associations with the brand.

In summary, influencer marketing is a popular social media marketing strategy in the tourism industry that leverages the reach, authenticity, and influence of social media influencers to shape positive perceptions and generate awareness about a brand or destination. It can provide businesses with the opportunity to tap into influencers' reach and engagement, create authentic and relatable content, and reach specific target audiences. However, careful planning, selection, and monitoring are crucial to ensure that influencer marketing campaigns are aligned with the brand's values, comply with regulations, and contribute to the overall online reputation management efforts.

2.3.2. Social listening

Social listening is a powerful tool that allows businesses in the tourism industry to gain a deeper understanding of their customers' preferences, opinions, and feedback. It involves actively monitoring and analyzing social media conversations, mentions, hashtags, and reviews related to their brand or destination across various social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TripAdvisor. By employing social listening techniques, businesses can uncover valuable insights that can inform their marketing strategies, improve their products or services, and enhance their online reputation.

For instance, social listening can help businesses identify common themes or trends in customer feedback. By analyzing the sentiment, keywords, and themes in social media conversations related to their brand or destination, businesses can gain insights into what customers like or dislike about their offerings, what experiences they are seeking, and what aspects of their products or services need

improvement. This information can inform their marketing strategies, help them tailor their offerings to meet customer expectations, and enhance customer satisfaction.

One of the key benefits of social listening is its ability to help businesses proactively address any negative sentiment or feedback that may arise on social media. For example, if a customer posts a complaint about their experience with a tourism business on social media, social listening allows the business to quickly identify and respond to the issue. By promptly addressing customer concerns and resolving problems in a timely and professional manner, businesses can demonstrate their commitment to customer satisfaction and showcase their responsiveness to customer feedback. This can help mitigate potential reputation damage and show that the business values its customers, ultimately contributing to a positive online reputation.

Social listening also provides an opportunity for businesses to engage with customers and acknowledge positive feedback. By monitoring conversations related to their brand or destination, businesses can identify and respond to positive mentions, reviews, or testimonials from satisfied customers. Engaging with customers in this way not only shows appreciation for their support but also helps build relationships and fosters loyalty. For example, a tourism business can reply to positive reviews with personalized messages, express gratitude for the positive feedback, and invite customers to share their experiences further. This level of engagement can create positive brand associations, strengthen customer relationships, and enhance the overall reputation of the business.

In addition to monitoring conversations related to their own brand or destination, social listening can also help businesses in the tourism industry gain insights into broader customer sentiment, industry trends, and competitor activities. By actively listening to social media conversations related to travel, tourism, or related keywords, businesses can gather valuable insights into customer preferences, opinions, and emerging trends. For example, by monitoring hashtags related to travel, destination-specific conversations, or travel trends, businesses can identify popular destinations, types of experiences, and customer preferences. This information can inform their marketing strategies, help them tailor their offerings to meet customer demands, and stay relevant in a fast-paced and ever-changing industry.

Social listening can also provide businesses with insights into competitor activities. By monitoring social media conversations related to their competitors, businesses can gain insights into competitor marketing campaigns, promotions, customer feedback, and reputation. This information can help businesses benchmark themselves against their competitors, identify areas where they can improve, and uncover opportunities to differentiate themselves from their competitors. For example, by

monitoring competitor hashtags, mentions, or reviews, businesses can gain insights into what customers are saying about their competitors and identify areas where they can excel, such as customer service, unique offerings, or pricing strategies.

Moreover, social listening can help businesses identify emerging industry trends and stay ahead of the curve. By monitoring conversations related to industry trends, customer preferences, or technological advancements, businesses can identify emerging trends and adapt their offerings or marketing strategies accordingly. For example, by monitoring conversations related to sustainable travel, wellness tourism, or digital nomadism, businesses can identify emerging trends and tailor their offerings to meet customer demands. This can help businesses stay ahead of their competitors, identify new opportunities, and position themselves as industry leaders.

The businesses can have different objectives that they want to implement in their business strategy. As it can be seen in the table below there can be four different goals of the social media. It is important to have the right data in order to manage reputation and fully reach the potential that social listening gives us.

Table 5: Objectives and their measurability

Business Objective	Goal of social media	Measurability of the objective
Grow your brand	Awareness	Number of followers, shares, etc.
Turn customers into brand supporters	Engagement	Comments, likes, @mention tags etc.
Generate leads and sales	Conversion	Click-throughs, newsletter subscriptions, etc.
Improve customer retention	Consumer	Average response time to questions, references and prevailing sentiment on media, etc.

Source: own elaboration

For this we can use quantitative indicators. Social media monitoring indicators can be divided into four categories according to the purpose of their use. These four categories are: awareness, engagement, conversion and consumer. The following subsections describe the more unusable indicators of these categories.

- Indicators of awareness

Brand awareness equates to the attention paid to the brand by the audience. For statistically relevant data, awareness needs to be tracked over a long period of time. On social media, it is tracked through mentions, whether they are direct mentions ('@brand') or indirect ('brand').

Audience growth rate looks at the rate of audience growth and tells how quickly a business is gaining new followers on social media. It is calculated by the ratio of the net number of new followers to the total number of followers.

Post reach tracks how many users have seen a post since it was published. To get the percentage reach of a post within a company's audience, divide the number of views of the post by the total number of followers. To improve the reach of a post, you can also publish posts at times when the most users are active.

Potential reach is an indicator for the number of users who could realistically see a post that has been shared by someone who is following the company. Potential reach ranges from 3% to 5% of theoretical reach, which is calculated by multiplying the mentions by the number of follower profiles that made a mention.

Social share of voice tracks the number of direct and indirect mentions of a company compared to its competitors. It is calculated by summing the mentions of the company and the mentions of its competitor brand and then dividing the sum by the total number of mentions in the industry.

- Engagement indicators

The applause rate is the number of positive reactions to a post, such as "likes", saving to favourites, etc. This response means that the user finds the content relevant and valuable and identifies with it. To find the rate, a formula is used: the number of approving reactions divided by the number of followers and then multiplied by 100 to get the percentage result.

The average engagement rate represents the number of interactions per post, e.g. commenting, sharing, and clicking "like". The higher the rate, the more the published content is perceived by the audience, which is very important. This rate is found by dividing the number of interactions by the number of followers.

The amplification rate is the ratio of the number of shares to the number of followers. The higher the rate is, the more willing the audience is to be associated with the brand.

The virality rate is the ratio between the number of users who have shared a post and the number of individual views. Even if a post has a lot of views, it doesn't mean it has to have a high virality rate. It is more beneficial for the company to have fewer views with more shares, when the rate is then higher.

- Indicators of conversion

The conversion rate is the ratio between the number of visitors who clicked through to a website via a post and subsequently took an action on it, and the total number of visitors to the website. The action taken can take the form of purchasing a product or service, subscribing to a newsletter, registering or downloading an app, etc.

Click-through rate is a measure that tracks the number of clicks on a given link in a post that leads to further content. This rate informs about the attractiveness of the mentioned offer in the post by tracking the clicks on the link against the total number of views of the post with the link.

The bounce rate is the percentage of visitors to a web page who, while visiting it, quickly leave it again. It allows you to track social media traffic as well as ROI relative to traffic from other sources, e.g. Facebook click-through vs. Google search engine click-through.

Cost-per-click is the amount of money that a user receives per click from a sponsored post, which thus serves as an advertisement. It is calculated by dividing the funds spent on advertising by the total number of clicks.

The cost-per-thousand impressions corresponds to the amount of money spent on a sponsored post seen by 1,000 users. The goal is just to create an impression and get it shown to the user.

Social media conversion rate is the total number of social media conversations, expressed as a ratio of social media conversations to total conversations.

Conversation rate is the ratio of the total number of comments on posts to the number of followers. This rate expresses how willing the audience is to engage in a conversation.

- Consumer satisfaction indicators

Consumer testimonial is any comment, testimonial, review, rating or endorsement of a brand. For these, the first priority is of course to provide a satisfactory product and service to the consumer. These recommendations need to be encouraged and asked for in a mannerly manner.

Customer satisfaction score measures how satisfied customers are with a brand, its products or services. Customers are either asked to verbally describe their experience or to rate their satisfaction from one to ten.

The net promoter score tracks the level of customer loyalty. Customers are asked whether they would recommend the product and then rate it from one to ten. It is calculated by taking the difference between the number of satisfied customers and the number of critics and then dividing the difference by the total number of respondents.

In summary, social listening is a crucial aspect of social media marketing and online reputation management in the tourism industry. It provides businesses with valuable insights into customer preferences, helps them proactively address customer concerns, allows for engagement with customers, and keeps them informed about industry trends and competitor activities. By leveraging social listening effectively, businesses can improve their online reputation, better understand their customers, and stay ahead in the competitive tourism industry.

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3. Online reputation from the customers' perspective

Buying tourism products is a typical situation of a complex decision-making process. The client gets non-tangible product in return to the money spent. In the first moment the customer gets a piece of paper or an email sometimes for many hundreds or thousands of euros. The customer, in fact, must believe that the product will meet his expectations, will satisfy his needs, and the quality will be appropriate once it comes to the consumption. The uncertainty and sometimes stress is underlined by the fact, that the amount of expenditure in comparison to regular earnings is high and expenditures involve savings and usually it requires a long-term planning. The variety of products and combinations in tourism is enormous, starting with many similar destinations, accommodation types in the destination and ending with different accommodations categories, prices and ratings.

In this chapter we will discuss the reputation of tourism business from the user's perspective. We identify two types of users (1) writers of reviews, people sharing their experience, and (2) readers, people using the reviews for their decisions. These groups, however, are not homogenous. They differ in terms of motivations, expectations, attitude to reviews, significance of the role of reputation in the decision making process, used platforms etc. Therefore we analyse these aspects in order to help the businesses and destinations make right decisions. First, we will introduce some theories in general and then the specific application to readers and writers is explained. And then the collected data will be presented using descriptive statistics. Deeper analysis will follow in scientific journals.

When coming to technology, many researchers apply technology acceptance model (TAM) (Lin, 2007). In terms of users and their ability to use the platforms and use the reviews, this model can be useful. The technology acceptance model is a theoretical framework that was originally proposed by Davis (1989) to explain how individuals adopt and use new technologies. TAM suggests that an individual's intention to use a technology is influenced by two primary factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. In the context of online reviews, perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which an individual believes that online reviews will help them make a better decision about a travel product or service. Perceived ease of use, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which an individual believes that using online reviews to make decisions is easy and efficient.

Several studies have applied the TAM to the context of online reviews and have found that the model is useful in explaining the adoption of technologies and use of online reviews by travelers (Archi & Benbba, 2023). Both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use significantly influenced

travelers' intention to use technologies, including online reviews to make travel decisions (Agag & El-Masry, 2017; Chen & Tsai, 2019; Chong et al., 2018). Additionally, the study found that travelers who had more experience with online reviews and who trusted them more were more likely to use them in their decision-making process.

Motivation is described as the internal driving force responsible for initiating, directing, maintaining, and energizing targeted behaviour. Simply said, it guides our behaviour and actions towards achieving a specific goal. The basic internal source of motivation is a motive, which determines the direction and intensity of behaviour. From the theoretical perspective we can distinguish the internal and external motivation. Motivation can arise from internal or external motives and stimuli but is often a combination of both. Internal motivation means engaging in behaviour that is inherently satisfying or pleasant, while external motivation pertains to behaviour that is performed to achieve another outcome.

Internal motivation is based on psychological needs. It is rather an Some motives are common to all people based on their needs (safety, social needs). Whereas the intensity of the motives and the priorities can differ. Internal motivation only arises in activities that an individual has an internal interest in - those that are attractive, new, or represent a challenge or aesthetic value to the individual. Internally motivated activities are considered to provide satisfaction of innate psychological needs and a certain form of pleasure. Behaviour that is strengthened by internal motivation is called self-affirming. Deci and Ryan (2000) state that internal motivation is more innate than acquired. Internal motivation can be increased by fulfilling the need for competence. At the same time, there is a need to fulfill the sense of autonomy, which appears to be a key element for internally motivated behavior. The individual must perceive that they are making decisions about their actions themselves and are competent to fulfill the given task. (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The authors researched the relationship between internal and external motivation (we can also use the terms intrinsic and extrinsic motivation) and introduced the theory of self-determination. The authors identified four types of external motivation depending on the distance from internal motivation:

- External regulation, where behavior is controlled by external incentives such as praise, rewards, and avoiding punishment. "I am doing the activity in order to satisfy external demands or to obtain a reward."
- Introjected regulation, also known as behaviour regulation taken from the outside, which is conditioned by self-esteem. A classic form of introjection is the involvement of the ego, when a person acts to increase it or maintain their self-esteem and feeling of worth. "If I didn't do it, I would feel a sense of guilt."

- Identified regulation is a more autonomous form of external motivation. In this case, the person accepts the rules of behavior as their own and identifies with them. "I work hard on the task because it is an important goal."
- Integrated regulation is the most autonomous form of external motivation and occurs when behavior is fully integrated into personal values and beliefs. "I perform the activity without prejudice and I am unbiased."

The Self-Determination Theory distinguishes between autonomous motivation and regulated motivation. Autonomous motivation is based on fundamental psychological needs, primarily autonomy and competence. The satisfaction experienced by an individual in autonomously motivated activities includes feelings of self-efficacy, autonomy, and enjoyment and excitement. Autonomous motivation is composed of intrinsic motivation and fully integrated extrinsic motivation. Autonomous motivation is also associated with better mental health and more effective performance. In contrast, controlled motivation involves external regulation through punishment and reward or introjects (uncritically adopted opinions or attitudes). Regulated motivation involves behaviors because the individual feels pressured, either through coercion, seduction, or control.

Whereas the self-determination theory is purely psychological with universal usage, we can observe similar logic also in other theories – theory of planned behaviour (Wang, 2016) or theory of reasoned action, where the social norms can represent kind of regulated motivation. The regulated (external) motivation can play a role in consumption of luxury goods for status reasons (Eastman & Eastman, 2015; Song, 2020).

Application of social influence theory is based on a well-established theory that changes in behaviors caused by social influence happen in three different process modes — internalization, identification, and compliance. Identification means that the person feels a sense of belonging or fitting into a social group of social media users (Malhotra & Galletta, 2005) and therefore is willing to share the experience, answer questions or rate others shared experience. Internalisation means that the person makes an action (like shares the experience) because it is in line with his internal needs and intrinsic motivation. The behaviour becomes a part of his/her personal norm (Malhotra & Galletta, 2005). The last situation is compliance – means that a person pushes her/himself to an activity in order to achieve a reward, benefit, or approval, or avoid costs of non-compliance. This is an example of external (extrinsic) motivation and the research reveals it to be the least powerful (Kang & Schuett, 2013).

Another theory that can put a light on the motivation to participate in platforms for experience sharing is the theory of social belonging. The theory suggests that individuals are more likely to share

their experiences online when they feel a sense of belonging within a particular online community. This is because the online community provides a sense of validation, acceptance, and support, which can satisfy the fundamental need for social belonging.

Now, a short introduction of the data used in the next chapters to illustrate the topic. Together 3193 answers were collected in Slovakia, Czech Republic, Italy and Finland. From these respondents 2708 read the review, and 1305 respondents write the reviews. So, the total number of answers on the particular topics respect these numbers. The answers are partially collected at the universities, so the questionnaires were delivered to international communities and the data are not limited to these countries. The sample is characterized by these numbers:

Table 6: The sample in the research (%)

Education	
Elementary	4,82
High school	54,67
University / college	33,43
Vocational	7,08
Gender	
Men	33.7
Women	63.9
Income groups	
Above average	17,65
Average	67,69
Highly above average	2,43
Under average	12,23
Technology usage	
Basic user (simple programs such e-mail, I can use mobile devices)	8,65
Regular user (at a higher user level, I can manage commonly used programs such as MS Office, mail, I use common applications on mobile devices, including user settings of mobile devices)	48,56
Very advanced user (I follow news in IT, I take care of the technical equipment of the household, I am able to program, I manage advanced functions)	9,93

Advanced user (I am familiar with more advanced HW and SW settings, I actively use various applications and programs, I try to keep up with technological innovations)	32,86
Travel frequency	
occasionally (3 – 5 times a year)	44,45
only a little (1 - 2 times a year)	45,21
very often (6 and more times a year)	10,34

Source: Own research

Reviews and ratings are a phenomenon of these times. The approach has developed throughout the years from absolute trust, a crisis with fake reviews and trust (Streitfeld, 2011), towards reasonable usage of the reviews by the business, consumers, and creators with more or less critical attitude.

3.1. Readers' motivation for reading the reviews

The motives for reading differ for the individual readers (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2003). The most important ones are:

- risk reduction,
- reduction of search time,
- dissonance reduction, and
- group influence.

Based on the values and current situation, the customer perceives risk in functional areas (quality of the service), social (family and friends), financial (price), and physical areas (bodily harm). The motive of reducing time is very relevant nowadays. Finding the proper product brings two kinds of costs: internal and external (Smith et al., 1999). The internal costs are mainly represented by the mental effort, the external are opportunity costs for time and monetary costs of obtaining the information. These costs lead to the effort to reduce the time of the search. Time pressure for the reader is given by the perceived general lack of time. Dissonance reduction is well applicable in tourism as a motive for reading the reviews. Sweeney et al. (2000) explain the conditions when the dissonance may be aroused and all of them are applied in leisure travel – the traveller invests a substantial amount of money or psychological cost into the choice, the decision is voluntary, and it is usually irrevocable (or for a certain level of costs). Group influence is the willingness to comply with the peer group and many people are

influenced by the group opinion (Lee et al., 2011). The influence of community and social environment can affect the approach and usage of reviews. The literature identifies also social reassurance as a motive (E. E. K. Kim et al., 2011).

The authors try to analyse the motives from different perspective, however, the main results stay the same. The results of the primary research are presented in the following table.

Table 7: Motives for reading the reviews

Reasons / motives	Score on 1-7 scale
To prevent disappointment in quality	5,38
Because it makes the decision easier	5,34
To optimize the price/quality ratio	5,21
To prevent wasting money	5,20
To avoid wasting time by eliminating low-quality or inappropriate hotels and destinations	5,15
To check the location of the accommodation	4,92
To ensure safety and prevent health issue	4,58
To get information about current health and safety measures in the hotel	4,43
Because I expect unbiased or neutral information about the product	4,40
Because I am part of the modern community	3,83

Source: Own research

3.1.1. Effect on decision making and expectations

Online reviews influence travelers' decisions by providing them with valuable information about a destination, accommodation, or activity. The effect on the bookings, revenue, occupancy, and RevPAR is confirmed by many studies and some research even calculates the exact impact. One study revealed that a 1% increase in online customer rating increases sales per room up to 2.68% in Paris and up to 2.62% in London (Öğüt & Onur Taş, 2012). The effect of reviews and ratings on decision process is significant and confirmed by many studies (Chong et al., 2018). Commercial studies confirm the same. A study conducted by TripAdvisor revealed that 72% of respondents always or frequently read reviews before making a decision on places to stay and eat, or things to do. And 86% agree that TripAdvisor makes them feel more confident in their booking decisions (*Online Reviews Remain a Trusted Source of Information When Booking Trips, Reveals New Research | Tripadvisor*, n.d.). A study by BrightLocal showed that 98% of consumers at least “occasionally” read online reviews when researching local

businesses and 76% of people “always” or “regularly” read online reviews for local businesses. 46% trust the online reviews as much as personal recommendation, however, the trust decreased between 2021 and 2022 (Paget, 2023). The trust is particularly important for travelers, as they are often making decisions about unfamiliar destinations, accommodations, and activities. Reviews from other travelers can provide a sense of reassurance and confidence in their choices.

The tendency to use and rely on reviews and ratings in the decision-making process is explained as the heuristic known as social proof. Heuristics are simple rules that enable the decision-making process by excluding part of the information. The social proof is a kind confirmation that the action is correct and appropriate. The behaviour is an imitation of that similar people do and think. The reviews can be also potentially biased. Not on purpose but based on a natural psychological process. Recently, empirical research confirmed that previous ratings are able of biasing future ratings based on a positive social influence (Aral & Walker, 2012). It has been an accepted fact, that behaviour of the individuals is influenced by the surroundings. The two forces are called normative social influence (the effort to conform with the primary group) and informational (the acceptance of the information given by unknown but respected person) (Kelman, 1961). The effect of reviews is kind of informational social influence.

The readers approach the reviews in a pragmatism way. The usefulness of the review is the key factor in adopting the information (Zhao et al., 2015). Based on the information adoption model, the research also confirmed that an information adoption is influenced by both the argument quality, credibility of the message (Chong et al., 2018) and credibility of the source (Zhang et al., 2014). This is an important message for the platform’s providers and for hotels as well. Trust is an important factor of adopting the information and also is a significant predictor of the future steps (consideration and booking) Trusting the reviews has an effect on booking intentions, attitude toward the hotel, trust in the hotel, and perception of the website. This was confirmed for 2-star hotels as well as for 4-star hotels (Ladhari & Michaud, 2015). However, the trust is not equally distributed to the reviews. There is a confirmed relationship between the ratings and the number of reviews. Whereas the readers have a tendency to trust the lower rating regardless the number of reviews, in trusting the high rating the number of reviews plays a role. Higher ratings are trustworthy only when they originated from a high number of review (Gavilan et al., 2018).

The effect of reviews on booking intentions is moderated by several factors. Type of the products, depth and level of detailed description in the review (Mudambi & Schuff, 2010), perceived expertise of the reviewer (Zhao et al., 2015) and also the interaction between the expertise of the writer

and reader (D.-H. Park & Kim, 2008). The number of the reviews effects the booking intentions in a positive way (Danish et al., 2019). Some authors suggest that the trust and volume are in fact the only significant factors (Lim et al., 2022). Also, the brand image is one of the factors influencing the factual effect on the intention to book a hotel (Chakraborty & Biswal, 2020).

The effect of negative reviews on booking intentions is higher than the effect of the positive reviews (Zhao et al., 2015). Whereas negative review has the power to prevent a person from booking the hotel, the power of positive review is much lower.

We must also state that the effect on the behavior and booking intention is different in the individual cultures. Online reviews had a different impact on Chinese tourists' behavior than on American tourists' behavior and for example, Chinese tourists are more hesitant to give low rating to a restaurant, (Jia, 2020, p.; Leon, 2019). Cultural differences play a role in review writing and interpreting, whereas Chinese tourists focus more on facts, the Americans tend to express emotions and recommendations (Mariani & Matarazzo, 2021; Zhu et al., 2017, p.).

The descriptive analysis of the collected data shows, that 68.8% (answers 5-7 from 7 points) of the respondents take the positive reviews as a necessity to think about booking the hotel (29.7% fully agree with this statement). 71.1% of the respondents confirmed that a positive review made them to book a hotel (26.3% fully agree). On the other hand, 66.25% agrees that negative reviews in general prevent them from booking a hotel (31.0% fully agree) and 70.8% agrees that a negative reviews prevent them from booking a hotel because the negative reviews criticized something important for them (34.6% fully agrees). Even if the numbers are similar, the percentage of answers “fully agree” is higher in connection with the negative reviews. Whereas the positive reviews are more understood as a must, a precondition, the negative reviews perform higher impact on the behaviour. Only 37.4% agrees that positive reviews made them make book a more expensive hotel that planned (only 8.7% fully agree).

Table 8: Position of reviews among the factors when making the final decision

When making the final decision between the SUITABLE accommodation I book ...	
the accommodation I like more how it looks.	5,45
the accommodation with better reviews and ratings.	5,04
the accommodation with better location.	5,02
the cheaper accommodation.	3,74

Source: Own research

The answers presents an importance of design, professional presentation, pictures and aesthetics. The position of reviews is only slightly higher than location. Surprisingly the price is the least important factor, once the preselection of suitable hotels is made.

3.2. Writers' motivation to share their experiences

Reviews are one type of user-generated content. The aim at defining the users who also produce the content lead to the new term – producers. The term is connected to the social media and networks where users consume and produce content for the others (Zammit, 2016).

3.2.1. Motivation for sharing the travel experiences

The motivation to share the experience and create the content can be different for individual persons and users. Individuals may also have different threshold values that influence their behavior when sharing. Some people feel good about sharing information with others, while others are more hesitant (Paletz et al., 2019). In general, the open and extravert people tend to share more often (Correa et al., 2010). For many, especially young, travellers, sharing the experience is an integral part of the journey. The research showed that the motives can differ depending on the used platform – own website, OTAs, and third-party website (Belarmino & Koh, 2018).

In general, why people share their experiences? The authors approach this topic in different ways, define different number of motives and apply different level of abstraction and categorisation.

Bronner and Hoog (2011) identified five types of motivation: self-directed (personal), helping others (social concern), social benefits, consumer empowerment (quality assurance), and helping companies (helping the company). Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) defined eight motives categories when analysing the responses: venting negative feelings, concern for the others, social benefits, economic incentives, helping the company, advice seeking, platform assistance (problem solving plus convenience and collective power), and extraversion/positive self-enhancement. Not all have the same significance. Social benefits, economic incentives, concern for other consumers, and extraversion/positive self-enhancement motives have the strongest impact on the number of online reviews.

One of the primary reasons why people share their travel experiences on social media is the perceived enjoyment, can be usage of the technology, or pleasure from sharing emotions with others (Oliveira et al., 2020).

The altruism motive is very strong, in some studies even the most important one (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). People who had positive travel experiences were more likely to share their experiences on social media to help others who may be planning a similar trip, and to provide helpful tips and advice, the concern for others (Bakshi et al., 2019; Yoo & Gretzel, 2008). This applies similarly to sharing the negative reviews, in order to warn others and provide useful information about the risks and challenges of a particular destination. People who had negative travel experiences were more likely to share their experiences on social media as a way of helping others avoid similar problems (Mladenovic et al., 2019).

Another reason why people share their travel experiences on social media is to build a personal brand. Social media has become a powerful tool for personal branding, and many people use it to showcase their interests, values, and personality. When people share their travel experiences on social media, they are creating a narrative about themselves and their lifestyle. In a study conducted by the University of Southern California, researchers found that people who share their travel experiences on social media are more likely to be perceived as adventurous and outgoing, which can help them build a personal brand that aligns with their interests (Escalas & Bettman, 2009).

For many people, the reason for sharing their experience is the desire for validation. Researchers found that people who post about their travels on social media are seeking validation from others. They want to receive likes, comments, and shares on their posts as a way of confirming that their experiences are worth sharing and worth spending the time with (Boley et al., 2018).

Connecting with others who have similar interests is another reason why people share their travel experiences on social media. When people post about their travels on social media, they create a community of like-minded individuals who share their passion for travel. In a study conducted by the University of California, researchers found that people who share their travel experiences on social media are more likely to form social connections with others who have similar interests, which can lead to meaningful relationships (Winstone et al., 2021).

This motivation can be also perceived as so-called social capital seeking. Social capital refers to the resources that individuals can access through their social networks, such as social support, information, and opportunities. Travelers often use social media to build and strengthen their social capital by connecting with others who share their interests and goals (S. Park & Nicolau, 2015).

The research also identified the need for preserve memories. By sharing their experiences on social media, travelers can look back on their travels and remember the places they visited, the people

they met, and the things they did. Beside that, researchers found that travelers often use social media to seek advice and recommendations from others. By sharing their experiences and asking for recommendations, travelers can tap into the collective knowledge of their social networks and that this can be an important way of improving the quality and safety of their travels (Guttentag, 2013). Furthermore, a study revealed that travelers often use social media to document their personal growth and transformation, and that this is an important way of communicating the meaning and significance of their travels. Travel itself and the decision to travel can be part of the personal growth (Hirschorn & Hefferon, 2013).

3.2.2. Factors influencing the willingness to share the experience

When travelers have positive emotional experiences, such as awe, excitement, or joy, they may feel compelled to share those experiences with others in order to relive the experience, elicit similar emotions in others, or simply to brag about their experience. Research has shown that emotional experiences can be particularly influential in motivating people to share information on social media. Exceptional experiences are more likely to be shared on social media than other types of experiences (Rudd et al., 2012). Similarly, people are more likely to share positive experiences that elicit strong emotions, such as happiness or excitement (Berger & Milkman, 2012). In addition to emotions, the "wow" effect can also be a powerful motivator for sharing travel experiences on social media. Sharing a "wow" effect is a way for travelers to differentiate themselves from others and to demonstrate their unique experiences and perspectives, particularly when the experience is unexpected (A. J. Kim & Ko, 2010) and it is a significant driver of engagement and virality on social media platforms (Goel et al., 2016; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011). The experience characteristics in shaping travelers' willingness to share and also the way of presenting the experience (Su et al., 2021).

Travelers are more likely to share their experiences if they perceive that there are benefits to doing so, such as gaining social recognition, receiving feedback or recommendations from others, or contributing to a larger community of travelers. Studies such as (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014) have highlighted the importance of perceived benefits in shaping travelers' willingness to share. The same study confirmed the importance of social norm as the above explained external motivation. If sharing travel experiences is seen as a common or expected behavior among a traveler's social network, they may be more likely to share their experiences in order to conform to these norms.

Perceived control is important in shaping travelers' willingness to share their experiences. If travelers feel that they have control over the sharing process, such as the ability to choose what information to share and who to share it with, they may be more willing to share (Xiang et al., 2017).

Because of using online platforms, having control over technological innovations is important in this case (Buhalis & Law, 2008). Similarly, perception of risks can prevent travelers from sharing if there are potential risks associated with sharing, such as privacy concerns or fear of negative feedback (Oliveira et al., 2020).

Finally, demographic factors such as age, gender, and cultural background can also play a role in determining whether or not travelers are willing to share their experiences on social media (Karatsoli & Nathanail, 2020).

3.2.3. Motivation for writing reviews

As mentioned, reviews are a specific kind of user-generated content. The reviews are a form of e-WOM and as such are perceived as a trustworthy source of information. Most motivations for sharing the experience is applicable also to the sharing the reviews. However, there will be several specifics.

The review is not a general story about or a picture of the vacation and destination, it touches a specific business and can have an effect on its performance. It is not a general information; it is very personalized, and the content is focused on the service provider. The primary motivation for writing tourism reviews is to share experiences with others, provide helpful information to fellow travelers and to contribute to the online travel community.

As noted by Sparks and Browning (2010), travelers may feel a sense of responsibility to provide feedback to service providers in order to improve the quality of service for future customers. This can be especially true for negative reviews, which may be seen as a way to alert service providers to problems that need to be addressed (Sparks & Browning, 2011).

Potential for reciprocity is a significant motivator to write a review. This refers to the expectation that if a traveler writes a review, they may receive something in return. Some service providers may offer incentives, such as discounts or loyalty points, to customers who write reviews, which can also encourage reciprocity (Duan et al., 2019). However, it's worth noting that there is a potential downside to incentivizing reviews. Some researchers have suggested that offering rewards for reviews can lead to biased or dishonest reviews, as travelers may be more likely to write positive reviews in order to receive a reward. In addition, the authors noted that incentivizing reviews can lead to a decline in the quality and usefulness of reviews, as reviewers may be less motivated to write detailed or thoughtful reviews when they are only focused on receiving a reward. Another study found that offering incentives for reviews can also lead to a decline in trust among consumers, as they may become

sceptical of the authenticity and reliability of incentivized reviews (*Authenticity and Brand Trust*, 2018; Lu et al., n.d.; Rynarzewska, 2019)

Similarly, to sharing the experience in general, social validation is a motivation for writing reviews in tourism. By sharing their experiences and opinions with others, travelers can gain a sense of belonging within the online travel community and receive positive feedback from other users. This can provide a sense of social validation and status. Participants who had received positive feedback on their own reviews were more likely to write additional reviews in the future. Social validation can also influence the way people perceive the quality and usefulness of reviews. Readers of online reviews are more likely to perceive reviews as credible and reliable when they are accompanied by a large number of positive ratings or comments (Vermeulen & Seegers, 2009). In addition, the authors found that positive ratings and comments can lead to a "bandwagon effect," in which readers are more likely to follow the opinions and recommendations of others (Boto Garcia & Baños-Pino, 2022).

It must be mentioned that some types of motivation and expectations are typical for writing negative reviews. As dissatisfaction and bad experience are very unpleasant outcomes when spending a significant amount of spare time and money for vacation, this leads to special reactions, that deviate from the common reasons for sharing the experience.

Specifically for negative reviews, the frustration is a strong impulse. Frustration release is indeed a significant motivation when the tourists feel that their expectations have not been met or when they experience a sense of injustice or mistreatment (Ažić & Bačić, 2020). In addition, the authors found that travelers who have a strong emotional attachment to a destination or activity may be more likely to write negative reviews when they have a negative experience, as they may feel a sense of betrayal or disappointment. Travelers may be more likely to write a negative review when they feel that their voice will be heard, when they believe that their review can make a difference and bring attention to the issue. They may also expect a prompt response from the service provider.

Writing a review provides a sense of emotional relief for consumers and can also serve as a form of punishment for service providers, as it can damage their reputation and potentially lead to a decline in business (Dellarocas & Narayan, 2006). It is kind of seeking justice or revenge for perceived mistreatment or injustice by a service provider. They may feel that the negative review is a way of holding the service provider accountable for their actions. Some authors call it to "exert power upon the company" (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2003).

Altruism and the aim at preventing the others from an unsatisfactory experience was already mentioned. Travelers may feel a sense of responsibility to share their negative experiences with others in order to prevent them from making the same mistakes or having similar negative experiences (Litvin et al., 2008). This is so far the only motives, where the researchers found a difference between men and women ((Mladenovic et al., 2019).

Writing negative reviews in order to seek compensation or resolution for their negative experience is a common motivation. Especially, if the service provider refuses the responsibility for a mistake mentioned in an official complaint (Ažić & Bačić, 2020). They may hope that the service provider will respond to their negative review and offer some form of compensation or resolution in order to address their concerns and prevent reputation damage.

3.2.4. Managerial and business implications

There are several managerial and business consequences coming from the information above. Many businesses encourage their customers to share their experiences, to write a review, especially a positive one. As presented above, the most powerful motives are the intrinsic (internal) ones. If the hotel or destination uses some appeals, it should be done in a natural way, the customers or visitors should not feel like being under pressure. The appeals should be in line with the values and internal beliefs of the customers, they should talk to their internal conviction. The research confirmed differences in motivation depending on age, gender (Gonçalves et al., 2018). An inconspicuous, unobtrusive support or hint, decent communication and emotional relations can foster the sharing of positive experience. The individual business should be careful with material incentives for sharing the positive reviews, as if this is done massively and openly, it decreases the perceived trustworthiness and usefulness of the reviews. This can potentially damage the reputation and image of the business.

The businesses (hotels, other accommodation facilities, restaurants, attractions) can support the sharing with a small surprise, and unexpected bonuses, like welcome drink, personal welcome cards, making bed when arriving late, chocolate, soft toy for children, towels decorations, own coloring book in a restaurant and many others. The most powerful is a personal touch. This can create a personal relationship between the guest and the hotel, the business or destination. This supports the feeling of altruism, fairness and need to support the business and willingness to share the experience.

The business and destination also create photo points, where the visitors can make the pictures, share with the given hashtag and become part of the community or group that visited this place. If the photo point has an emotional charge, this can foster the willingness to share the picture. Many people

are motivated by the possibility of educating people, bringing interesting information and knowledge. This can be supported by offering the content for sharing – information, stories, explanations, pictures, and of-the-scene information. The business can organize events for guests, workshops, community meetings etc. This can serve as a part of the surprises and emotional charge of the stay as well as an inspiration for content to be shared.

As mentioned, for many people, sharing the experience is a way of developing their personal brand. The brand is created and supported (among others) by the consumed goods, and services and their brand. Creating a unique brand, association and values can support the sharing of the experience by the relevant persons. As the connections and followers will most likely have similar lifestyle, interests and values, this can talk to the relevant potential customers as well.

Taking into account the need for communication and social belonging, in general, it is important to answer the reviews, communicate with the online community. This can increase the feeling of belonging, and self-esteem and support the sharing in the next occasions.

Combining the facts, that the rating on own website is on average better than on other platforms (Belarmino & Koh, 2018) and the confirmation of TAM and the role of usefulness and easiness, the businesses can, by focusing on improving these factors, encourage more travelers to use online reviews, and write them directly on the website.

Considering results of the research on information adoption (Chong et al., 2018), the important message for the business is, that they should pay more attention to the reviews that receive positive readers' feedback (e.g., usefulness confirmation like thumbs). These are more powerful to influence the decision making of the potential customer and to influence the reputation.

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4. Online Reputation Management

4.1. Strategies and approaches to ORM

The research in hotels and destinations, using the in-depth interviews with managers reveals three levels of approaches to ORM:

- monitoring the reviews,
- answering the reviews,
- full online reputation management.

Some hotels', attractions' and destinations' managers monitor the reviews, however, do not actively engage with the issue, neither positive nor negative. They are aware of their disadvantages and weaknesses and usually do not have possibilities to change it. They rely on the loyal customers, direct bookings, or attractiveness of the destination (e.g., Venice, Florence).

The next level is that the managers reply to reviews (usually in a non-systematic way) just to show an effort. They are aware of reputation power but do not have time to take care of it. They mostly miss systematic approach, rules, monitoring tools or know-how

The third level represents the full online reputation management. This is typical for chain hotels, but also for individual hotels of higher standard. The reputation management has a huge support and well-prepared methodology, the reputation and reviews are part of the KPIs and are regularly reported.

When we talk about destinations and attractions, the approach of the managers is very individual and different. There is an identified difference between the sizes of the destination management organisations. The destination's reputation is more complex and complicated to monitor. The specifics and ORM is presented in chapter 6.

4.1.1. Response strategies

Answering reviews is a crucial activity when we talk about online reputation management. The effectiveness of the process is influenced by frequency, speed, and length (Li, Cui, and Peng, 2017).

It is a pleasant duty when answering the positive reviews. Even if it may sound like wasting time, the consumers expect an answer to both, a positive or negative review, and answering the positive

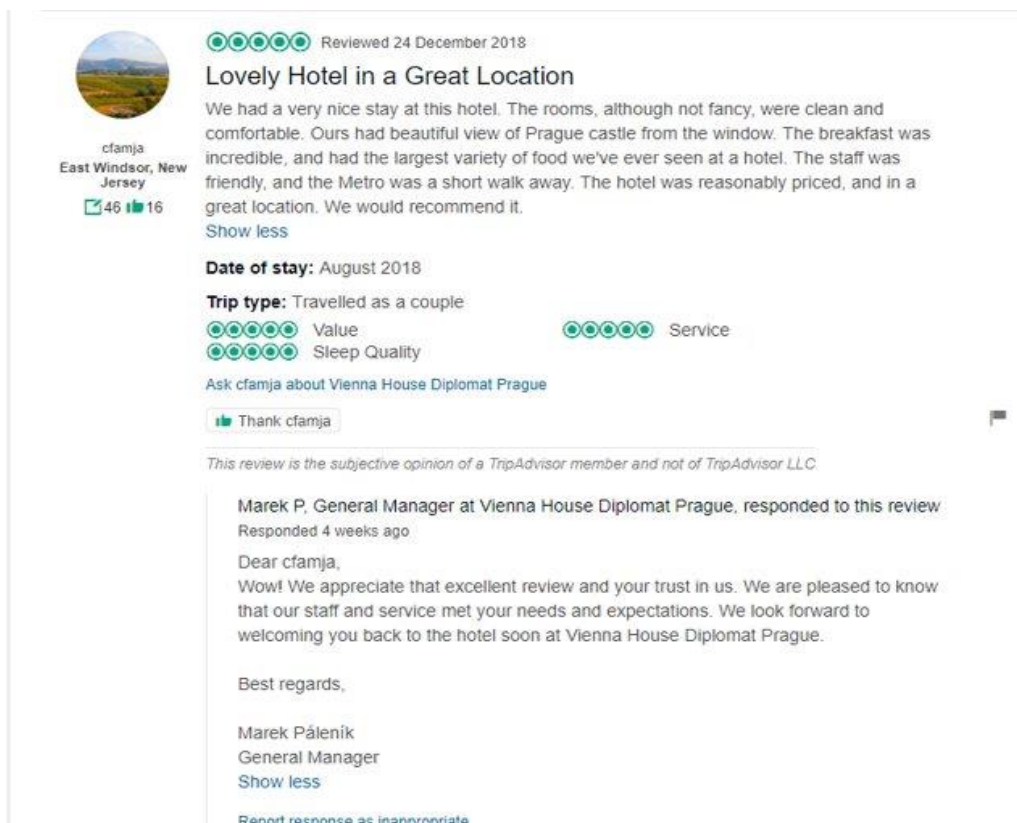
ones is considered to be part of the customer care, showing respect and appreciating the time and effort of the customer. Responsiveness is one of the key dimensions of electronic service quality. Response rate is monitored in reputation management tools as one of the KPIs.

Responding the positive feedback can follow this structure:

- thank for the feedback,
- „happy“ for making the guest happy,
- invite the customer to revisit.

It is important to respond specifically and individually. Obviously pre-defined answers are showing lack of appreciation and respect. It can demotivate other guests to write a review. Large hotels should keep high standards of professionalism, the smaller hotels, boutique hotels, family businesses can be more personal.


Figure 16: Examples of responses to positive review



The screenshot shows a TripAdvisor review from user 'cfamja' (East Windsor, New Jersey) dated 24 December 2018. The review is titled 'Lovely Hotel in a Great Location' and describes a positive stay at Vienna House Diplomat Prague, praising the view, breakfast, staff, and location. The review includes a 'Date of stay' (August 2018), 'Trip type' (Travelled as a couple), and ratings for Value (5/5), Sleep Quality (5/5), and Service (5/5). A 'Thank cfamja' button is visible. Below the review, a response from Marek P., General Manager at Vienna House Diplomat Prague, is shown, dated 4 weeks ago. The response expresses appreciation for the review and invites the guest back to the hotel. The response is signed 'Marek Páleník, General Manager' and includes a 'Show less' link and a 'Report response as inappropriate' link.

 Reviewers' choice · Reviewed: January 27, 2019

I had a great experience staying in London. We were warmly greeted by Sandy. The place is absolutely

 · I had a great experience staying in London. We were warmly greeted by Sandy. The place is absolutely amazing and cosy with everything you need. It is so bright and stylish. I recommend it to anyone who visit London. Plus the location is really convenient! I will stay here again for sure.

 · everything is good

Stayed in January 2019

 Helpful  Not helpful

Property response:

Your praise is the biggest support and encouragement for me, I will continue to do a good job in service, and every guest who arrives will feel at home, looking forward to your coming again again

Source: TripAdvisor.com, Airbnb.com

Negative feedback is more difficult and many managers hesitate whether and what to answer. Negative review can be approached from two sides – it is a gift and opportunity. You get a chance to make changes, get better, increase the satisfaction of the future guest. You get an information that can save you many unsatisfied customers and you get it for free. The other point of view is, that a negative review is a thread and source of frustration. The potential customers will read it, they might choose a competitor for their stay. There is also a psychological moment that the management and team make effort, do their best and there is no appreciation at the end.

The literature identifies two basic strategies when answering negative reviews: (1) accommodative, when the business accepts the responsibility for the issue, and (2) defensive, when the business denies the responsibility and answers with doubts, excuses, or trivializing (Kim et al., 2004, Davidow, 2003, Fang, 2020). The subdivision of the two main concepts leads to the following:

- no response,
- accommodative strategy,
 - apology strategy,

- problem-solving strategy,
- defensive response strategy.

The act of politely acknowledging and apologizing for complaints made by reviewers without offering compensation or taking corrective measures is known as the pure apology strategy (Treviño & Castaño, 2013). On the other hand, providing compensation or implementing corrective actions is considered the problem-resolving strategy (Lee & Song, 2010). Conversely, managers who solely focus on explaining the reasons for service failures and deny responsibility for negative experiences or the presence of negative situations mentioned by reviewers adopt the defensive strategy (Lee & Song, 2010; Treviño & Castaño, 2013). Managers who choose to remain silent on online platforms and refrain from responding to any reviews, whether negative or positive, employ the no response strategy (Lee, 2004). However, it has been found that managerial responses to negative comments enhance consumers' trust in the company and their intention to purchase the product (Sparks, So, & Bradley, 2016). Some authors have examined the impact of different types of responses, and it has been observed that accommodative responses have a more positive effect on brand evaluation and purchase intention (Johnen & Schnittka, 2019; Lee & Cranage, 2014; Lee & Song, 2010; Li, 2018). On the other hand, to automatically admit that the things went wrong can initiate the perception of wrongdoing or failure. An experiment revealed that the best strategy is an accommodative answer in case of failure and an defensive response in case of ordinary negative reviews (Li et al., 2018).

Figure 17: Examples of responses to negative reviews

apniemann25
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Reviewed 1 August 2018 via mobile

Worst hotel I have stated in in a very long time

Pictures on site are a joke - very old and dingy hotel- even by older European standards. 4 night here - room temp has not been below 85 every night - here w group- same issue all the rooms - will NEVER stay here again

Show less

Date of stay: August 2018

Trip type: Travelled with family

Ask apniemann25 about Vienna House Diplomat Prague

Thank apniemann25

This review is the subjective opinion of a TripAdvisor member and not of TripAdvisor LLC

Marek P. Generální ředitel at Vienna House Diplomat Prague, responded to this review
Responded 3 August 2018

Dear Guest,

We are truly sorry your experience was not to your satisfaction. We are looking into the issue and doing everything we can to correct it as soon as possible. For you and for future guests.

Therefore I am glad to inform you that our hotel will be fully renovated within next 10 months. All our rooms and public areas will get a brand new design.

I hope you give us a chance to welcome you again in Vienna House Diplomat Prague.

Best regards,
Marek Páleník
General Manager

Show less

Report response as inappropriate

This response is the subjective opinion of the management representative and not of TripAdvisor LLC

Source: TripAdvisor.com

Note: Please notice that this negative review concerns the same hotel as the previous positive review. This perfectly demonstrates how differently the same service can be perceived.

Several typical steps in dealing negative reviews were identified. The complete list of steps and moves are presented in the following table.

Table 9: Moves and steps in responding negative answers

Move	Step
1. Salutation	
2. Acknowledging feedback	a. Expressing gratitude
	b. Valuing feedback
	c. Expressing regret/concern/apology

3. Brand positioning	a. Stating hotel's commitment
	b. Confirming hotel's standard
4. Dealing with complaints	a. Explaining causes of the incident
	b. Reporting action taken
	c. Admitting mistakes
5. Concluding remarks	a. Expressing gratitude (2)
	b. Expressing regret/concern/apology (2)
	c. Asking for a return visit
	d. Soliciting direct contact
	e. Promising to improve service
6. Closing	a. Sign off
	b. Signature
	c. Job title
	d. Contact information
	e. Affiliation

Source: Thumvichit & Gampper, (2019)

To summarize the recommendation, we bring comprehensive tips and recommendations:

- Monitor and Respond Promptly

Regularly monitor online review platforms, social media channels, and travel websites for any negative feedback about your hotel or tourism attraction. Act promptly and respond to negative reviews in a timely manner.

- Stay Professional and Empathetic

When responding to negative reviews, maintain a professional tone and avoid becoming defensive or confrontational. Do not argue with the customer even if he is not right. Empathize with the guest's experience and acknowledge their concerns if justified. Assure them that their feedback will be used to improve the quality of service or facilities. By showing empathy and understanding, you can

help diffuse the situation and maintain a positive image for your business. Even if the reviewer is not right (blaming you for Puddles during rain etc.), still answer in a polite way, acknowledge the feelings (frustration, bad mood), and explain the situation.

- Take the Conversation Offline

While it's important to respond to negative reviews publicly, invite the guest to continue the conversation offline. Provide them with a direct contact person or email address to discuss their concerns in more detail. This allows you to address their issues privately and work towards a resolution. By taking the conversation offline, you demonstrate a commitment to resolving the problem rather than engaging in a public back-and-forth.

- Address Specific Concerns

In your response, address the specific concerns raised in the review. Provide transparent explanations or information regarding any issues mentioned. If appropriate, offer a clear action plan or steps you will take to rectify the situation. Highlight any changes you have made or are planned. This demonstrates accountability and reassures potential guests that you are proactive in addressing problems.

- Learn from Negative Feedback

View negative reviews as an opportunity for improvement. Analyse the common themes or issues mentioned in the reviews and use them as constructive feedback to identify areas that require attention. Regularly review and update your operational processes, staff training, and facilities based on this feedback to enhance the guest experience.

- Showcase Your Response Efforts

When appropriate, publicly follow up on negative reviews to show that you have taken an action to address the concerns raised. Highlight any improvements or changes implemented as a result of guest feedback. This demonstrates transparency and accountability, reinforcing your commitment to guest satisfaction.

- Remember who you actually talk to

Even you think the person will never read your answer, remember that in fact, you talk to your future guests and visitors who will be affected by your answer in their decisions. This is not a one-to-one conversation. It is the showcase of your care, gratitude and effort to communicate and improve.

According to a research made by Shiji (ReviewPro), in which 7500 hotels were analysed, the response rate in 2022 globally was 61.9%. This was an increase by 6.0 points over 2019 and 3.1 points over 2021. Five-star hotels had the highest response rate with 70.0%, 4-star hotels 61.7%, and 3-star hotels 56.2%. The response rate is growing over the years and though all hotel categories. On average, hotels responded to positive reviews in 4.4 days and to negative in 5.6 days. This confirms an interesting paradox. Whereas most instructions and guidelines recommends answering the negative reviews and perceive their effect more influential, the managers struggle with answering negative reviews and prefer the positive feedback and communication.

The analysis focused also on the positive/negative mentions, the share was 72.4% and 27.6%, respectively, and the highest proportion of negative mentions was written in Portuguese (34.1%), followed by French (29.8%).

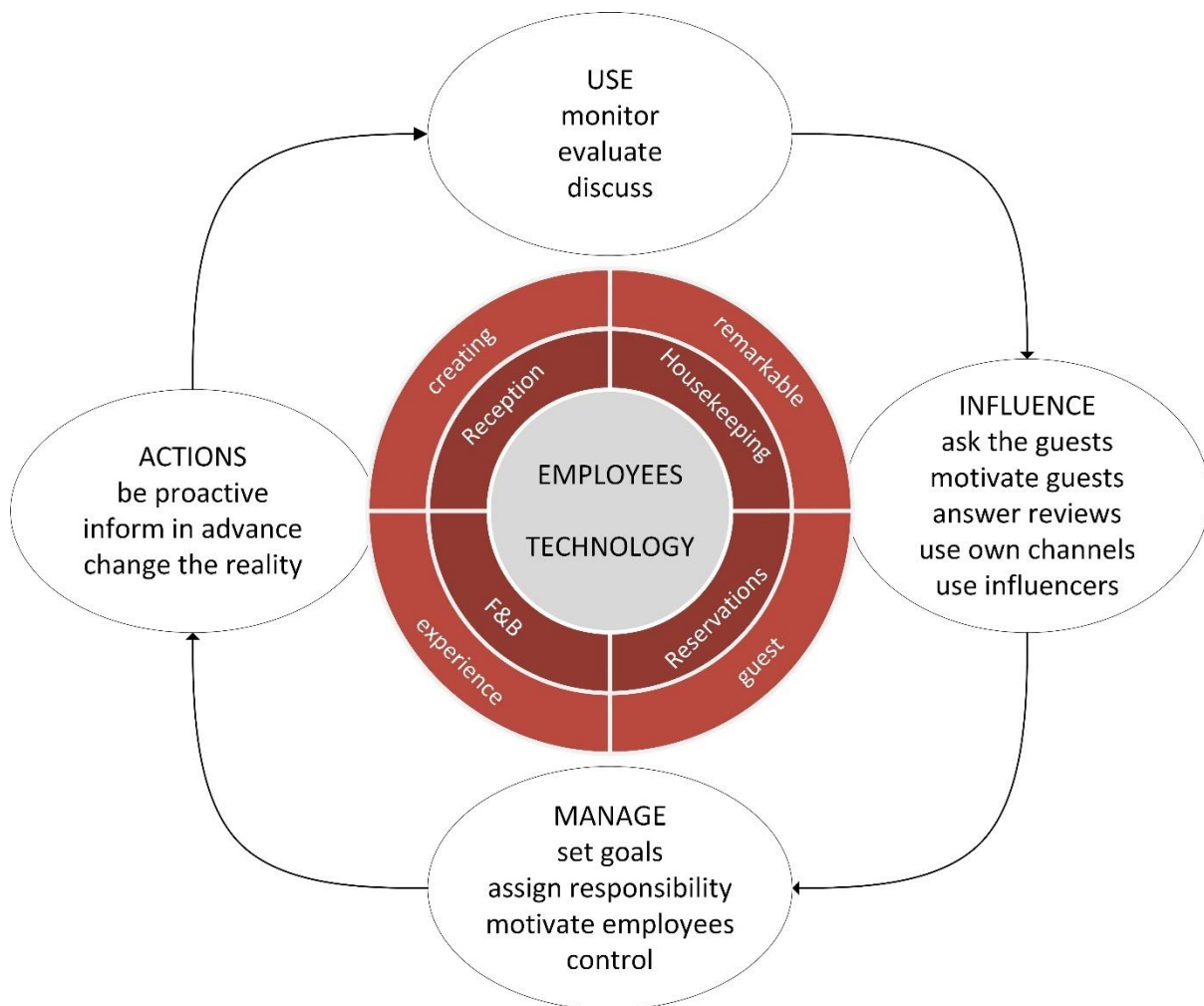
Looking at the data from Europe, the response rate is lower – 57.5%. European hotels responded mostly to Tripadvisor reviews (74.7% of positive, 60.1% of negative) and much less to Booking.com reviews (56.5% of positive, 54.0% of negative) and Google reviews (55.6% of positive, 46.7% of negative). Four-star hotels are the only one with higher response rate to negative reviews than to positive reviews (61,5% and 59.1%). The lowest response rate perform he 3-star hotels to the negative reviews (29.4.%) (Shiji, 2023).

Answering reviews in a proper way, on a regular basis and personalized takes time. The platforms and reputation management tools introduced in the following chapters can significantly ease the tasks. The emerging capabilities of artificial intelligence bring new level of automatization and quality. The AI assistant speaks any language and is able to write a personalized answer. The example is the Mara Review response generator. The user will copy the review, wait for the answer, check it, and copy back to the review platform. The process still must be supervised and complemented by manual work, however, can save time and expert capacities for other work.

4.1.2. Online reputation management

The case studies and interviews brought insight into the online reputation management process and steps. If we combine activities from all the three levels mentioned in chapter 4.1. and complement with the knowledge from literature ((Nguyen & Coudounaris, 2015; Riel & Fombrun, 2007; Samara et al., 2021), we can create the whole online reputation process. As it is a continuous process, it is presented as a circle.

Figure 18: Online reputation management process



Source: Own elaboration

When starting the process of online reputation management, managers use the reviews as a starting point. The reviews should be monitored, evaluated and analysed, and discussed. The relevant departments must be involved in the discussion. The aim at using the reviews and increase the online reputation must be shared among the organisation and departments. Implementing the new procedures brings additional work and topics and this may cause reluctant initiative. The implementation of online reputation management can be related to branding strategy implementation and improvements of communication standards (Barsky & Frame, n.d.; Riel & Fombrun, 2007).

The next step is an effort to influence the reputation. The destinations and businesses ask the guests to write a review and motivate them. They can use a personal welcome card, with expressing the hope that they will enjoy the stay and share their experience, some destinations or hotels use visual

reminding like logos of TripAdvisor at the reception, use own specific hashtag on the souvenirs, main meeting points, photo points, etc. There can be also a personal request. Many hotels introduce the position of customer relations manager who talks to guest, checking and fostering their satisfaction. The trigger to write a review can be part of the conversation. The last but not least is an email request after departure (Barsky & Frame, n.d.; Nguyen & Coudounaris, 2015).

Answering the reviews will not change the rating or delete the complaint, however, it can mitigate the effect of a negative review and show the respect and care in case of a positive reviews. The problematics is described in the previous chapter.

The managers should be aware that reviews are the most important part but not the only part of reputation creation and management. It is very useful to use own online channels – website, social networks, own journal, blog, etc. (Kushcheva & Eilola, 2023). Using these channels is related not only to reputation but to image as well. Influencers and influencer marketing are an effective way how to increase reputation and create image.

To apply the managerial principals to online reputation, the topic must be approached very systematically. Setting goals, assigning responsibility, and controlling the progress are necessary parts of the process. In many hotels and organisations, achieving the goals in online reputation management is connected with personal management and motivation – bonuses and rewards. Without clear goals, responsible department and control, it is impossible to evaluate the success. To successfully implement the online reputation management, the creative and supportive culture is an essential prerequisite (Cravens & Oliver, 2006). The employees are essential part of implementation and success in online reputation management and the connection to human resources management is obvious (Wæraas & Dahle, 2020).

The last step is taking relevant actions. One of the effective actions in building the reputation is the proactivity. Do not wait for the customer to come and tell somebody. It is necessary to ask during the stay or latest before departure. One of the motives for writing negative reviews is frustration. If the receptionist or manager do not allow the guest to leave with his/her frustration, if they will enable to let out the frustration of the guest, it will save negative reviews and reputation harm. They can offer a compensation (discount, free drink or dinner), change the room or show special care and change the guest's opinion to a positive one. Or at least will remove the reason for writing a negative review because everything has been already said.

Two main questions must be answered:

- Are the complaints justified?
- Are the complaints repetitive?

If the answer is yes, preventive or corrective actions must be taken. There are two possibilities: inform in advance and prevent the disappointment, or change the reality. In some cases, changing the reality is easy – change of coffee brand, implement better cleanliness control. In some cases, it can be a challenge – noisy street, old furniture, event in the destination causing complicated transportation etc. If the reality cannot be changed, open and honest communication is a key factor in creating appropriate expectations, and preventing disappointment.

Analysing the reviews and searching for improvements can influence long term planning and investments of the hotel or destination.

4.1.3. We are not perfect, what now?

Not everything goes as planned. In some cases, the managers are aware of failures, and shortcomings in their business but the change is not up to their decisions or the competencies (e.g., investments in equipment, cannot find enough qualified staff, cannot increase the salary, or implement new services...). Still this is not a reason to give up improvements in other areas or to resign to the reputation management. Most products and quality/price levels find their target group.

To manage the online reputation in general, it is crucial to find the strengths and focus on them. Keep satisfactory level of the other services and factors of satisfaction.

To analyse your unique selling point the reviews can be used. Monitor what are the guests happy about, what do they praise. Find who these guests are and advertise to these target groups your strengths. They will be happy and will write positive reviews. And the effects described in following chapter can happen – increased occupancy, increased daily rate. Then the business can create funds for improving also the other areas. Highlighting the unique features and charm of your hotel, friendly staff, unique equipment (playroom, wellness) will resonate with the guests who will appreciate it and forgive the rest.

The most important departments connected to satisfaction is reception, the housekeeping department, and the food and beverage department (Engeset, 1996). When talking about hospitality services, the identified factors are adaptation to customers' need, friendliness, the ambience of the hotels

and staff's emotional stability (Sadik, 2020). Therefore it is recommended to prioritize exceptional service and hospitality. Train the staff to provide warm and personalized service, creating a memorable experience for the guests or visitors. Invest in staff training programs that emphasize friendliness, attentiveness, and going the extra mile to exceed guest expectations. Focus on the aspects you can control, such as service, cleanliness, and guest comfort, to minimize negative experiences.

As we talk about online reputation management, to ensure that the online presence accurately represents the hotel's unique value proposition or the products of a destination. Updated website with high-quality photos that showcase the best aspects of the property or attractions are a base. On the other hand, in case of known shortcomings, it is highly recommended to be honest and not to create expectation that cannot be met. This would be counterproductive. Mentioning that the hotel is not suitable for families due to noisy bars and night clubs around can save a lot of negative reviews, whereas it can attract young customers searching exactly for this environment. Online presence means taking care of own channels on social media platforms and to engage with potential guests and showcase the unique aspects of the hotel, destination or attraction. Share captivating stories, historical facts, or guest testimonials that highlight the memorable experiences guests can have at your property.

When talking to a satisfied guest on site, ask him to leave a review and share his experience. To implement strategies like follow-up emails, handwritten notes, or incentives to motivate guests to share their positive experiences online will increase the number of reviews and will most likely increase the rating as well. Responding promptly and gratefully to every positive review to show appreciation for guest feedback will engage more customers to write a positive review if their experience was good.

Case study: Mountain hotel Javor

Mountain hotel Javor is a hotel in the heart of Giant Mountains. Communist architecture, nowadays with a 40 years old equipment. Their rating on TripAdvisor used to be at 3 – 3,5 points.

Figure 19: Interiors at Mountain Hotel Javor



Source: TripAdvisor

However, they found their ideal target group, focused on its needs and created a good reputation as a children friendly hotel. With several playrooms, one of them in the dining room enabling the parents to eat while their children are already playing, many activities, outdoor swimming pool, terrace restaurant, evening cinema for children, own skiing instructors etc. The second strength of the hotel is excellent cuisine with a large choice, many homemade product and good quality of dishes. And last but not least, the staff is friendly, can make fun, is not rude when the children are running around. The parents are absolutely happy because they can relax and spend at least some time in two, they are not afraid that their children will bother the other guest. In short, hotel offers freedom to each member of the family. At the end of the stay, the guests forgive the old furniture, horrible corridors or old showers.

Figure 20: Review example

★ **Most helpful rating** Review written: March 25, 2023

Hotel Javor

10

😊 · Beautiful surroundings, excellent cuisine, nice staff. The room is smaller, but cosy, clean with a comfortable mattress.

😞 · The shower and WC would already deserve reconstruction.

However, the strategy of the hotel was obvious – reconstruction of the exterior to decrease the energy demand, construction of the common spaces – create smaller lounges where the families and

friends can play, consume the drinks, ice cream sundaes or chips. Then the rooms and other interiors parts of the hotel.

Figure 21: Current pictures and reviews



Great for children

This hotel is clearly designed for kids (probably older than 3 years). There are two places for kids inside (one of them directly in the canteen) and one outside. Small rooms, at least the one we stayed in, but large enough even for a crib, which might be rented. An event for kids takes place each afternoon and night. Breakfast was very rich, lunch and dinner were good. Summer season in the Krkonoše mountains was wonderful as well as fun parks and other activities not far away from hotel.

Review written: March 24, 2023

It's ideal for parents with small children in tow. The breakfast and hotel facilities are really disappointing.

5.0

☺ · Location and friendly staff. Balcony from the room. It was the only hotel where they had time off.

☹ · Rooms and equipment outdated, shower behind the door_strange, noise from children who were everywhere. Which I understand, great for parents with small children, they can play everywhere in the corridors and they have a lot prepared for them. Personally, I will not go to the hotel again,

Source: <https://hotel-javor.com/>, TripAdvisor.com, booking.com

As can be seen from the reviews, the reconstruction is ongoing. There are some hotel rooms already refurbished, however, not all of them. And the reviews also show different preferences and priorities of the guests.

4.2.Measuring ORM

An online reputation is considered as the achievement of a particular objective of individual, which involves a series of innovative strategies that require skills of managers. From the study of Dwivedi et

al., (2022), the role of the digital service portfolio is defined to build reputation of a tourism destination by boasting tourism experience and provide visitors with immersive and interactive experiences. This can ultimately lead to positive reviews and word-of-mouth recommendations, which can contribute to building the reputation of tourism. Additionally, they emphasize on the importance of providing visitors with real-time and reliable information to mitigate risks and maximize their value for money and time, which can also contribute to building a positive reputation for tourism. Dwivedi et al., (2022) further advocate Key performance indicators (KPIs) for building the reputation of a tourism destination through digital service portfolios may include metrics related to visitor engagement, sustainability, and the use of immersive technologies. According to Clemons et al., (2006), reputation is defined as the achievement of prosperity or fame. By merging these definitions, the digital service portfolio's role in ORM can be interpreted as the set of standards or principles that can lead to favorable outcomes within defined goals. As such, an effective ORM implementation necessitates the creation of novel marketing communication strategies that specifically cater to tourism, hospitality, and destination managers. It involves monitoring and responding to online reviews and feedback, addressing customer complaints and concerns, and actively engaging with customers on social media platforms. It requires a comprehensive approach that takes into account all aspects of a business's online presence and reputation (Horster & Gottschalk, 2012). Whereas; effective ORM involves more than just developing innovative strategies for tourism, hospitality, and destination managers to tailor marketing communication: This also includes monitoring and evaluating the sentiment of user-generated content on various online platforms, such as social media, travel and restaurant websites, and online marketplaces (Cillo et al., 2021). Managers have the ability to recognize potential issues that might have negative impacts on their online reputation and can create effective solutions to address them. Proper implementation of ORM aids in refining the initial impression of visitors during their decision-making process, thereby aiding managers in strengthening their business strategies and enhancing competitiveness. Therefore, ORM is a crucial tool for businesses that want to track how their products or services are being perceived by the consumers on the internet (Cillo et al., 2021). ORM requires skills such as search engine optimization, content creation, and social media management. While there is no clear definition of success in the context of ORM, effective strategies and clear communication of expectations can help businesses to improve their online reputation and achieve their goals. Over the last decade, researchers have shown a growing interest in monitoring and measuring ORM. The measures of ORM have changed significantly during this time, with a focus on accurate business listings, relevant advertisements, and engagement with consumers. A detailed examination of ORM as a valuable resource that can produce benefits for businesses was conducted by Pollák et al. (2021). The establishment of an online reputation necessitates continuous monitoring. When evaluating corporate

reputation, companies must take into account unique features. As research in this area continues to expand, this paper aims to bridge gaps by delivering an analytical assessment of the future of ORM.

In addition to other techniques, content analysis is an important component of the monitor and measurement process for ORM. Analyzing written material like guidebooks and visual content such as pictures in travel brochures can provide useful insights into the portrayal of tourist destinations. Samara et al., (2021) suggested an "online social network interactions solution" that leverages sentiment analysis methods to evaluate, track, and display social media content for ORM purposes. Machine learning, lexicon-based, hybrid-based and graph-based approaches are the four methodologies for sentiment analysis as illustrated in Table 10.

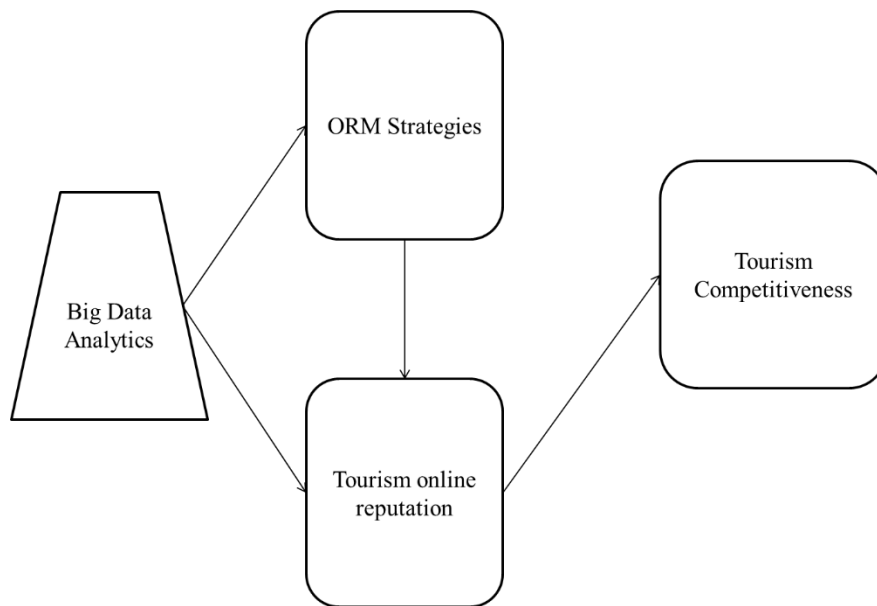
Table 10: Approaches to measure ORM

Approaches	Definitions	Examples
Machine learning approaches	Machine learning approaches employ algorithms to collect data and study companies' online reputation by analyzing text and sentiment behind the mentions. These approaches use data from social media platforms and online review sites to acquire insights into what people say about a company	Sentiment Analysis Predictive analysis Personalization Image and speech recognition
Lexicon-based approaches	Lexicon-based approaches involve sentiment analysis of social media posts and other online content to understand what people feel about a particular brand. This approach also involves Natural Language Processing techniques to analyze text-based data and identify the emotional tone of the author.	customer sentiment Identifying common themes Reputation Monitoring Competitor Analysis
Hybrid approaches	Hybrid approaches combine both machine learning and lexicon-based methods to provide more comprehensive insights into a company's reputation. This method is effective in analyzing the sentiment behind individual mentions and the overall reputation of the brand.	Automated and human-based techniques Personalization
Graph-based approaches	Graph-based approaches rely on network analysis and machine learning techniques to identify the connections between entities. This method is useful in comprehending the spread of information on social media platforms and analyzing the sentiment of their posts.	Personalized Recommendations

Source: Compiled by author's (adapted from Samara et al., (2021))

Technology approach is also considered to be essential element of ORM. In the opinion of Cillo et al., (2021), ORM should be examined through various technological lenses. They developed a framework that ties together big data analytics, niche tourism online reputation, and competitiveness of niche tourism destinations, and suggested that BDA can be highly beneficial for ORM, promoting and enhancing the reputation of niche tourism destinations. A representation of the technology aspects of ORM is demonstrated in Figure 22.

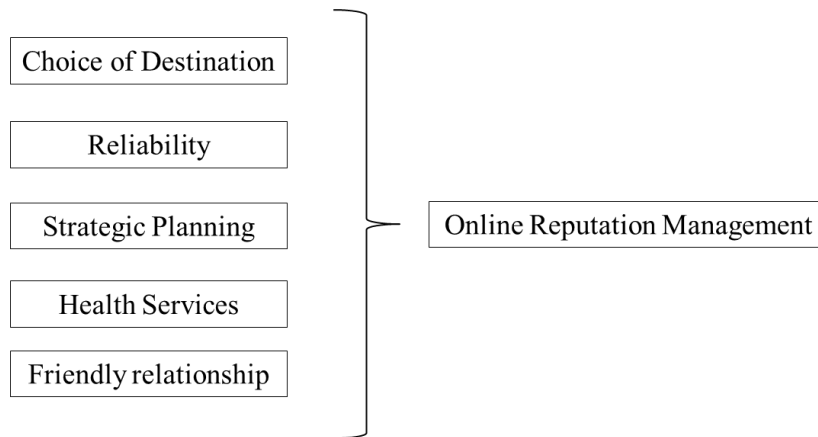
Figure 22: Impact of Big Data analytics (Technology) capable information systems on ORM strategies



Source: Adapted from (Cillo et al., 2021)

Furthermore, in the context of the hospitality industry, a comparative analysis has been conducted to evaluate the pre- and post-pandemic impacts. Syed et al., (2023) investigated the effects of media-driven perceptual destination attributes during the pandemic on the commitment to plan and follow through on trips. Additionally, they explored the influence of reliability, strategic planning, health services, and friendly relationships on ORM for destinations, depending on visitors' prior experiences. It is critical for hospitality organizations to be fully aware of customers' power through social media platforms. Tourism is likely to evolve as businesses develop innovative strategies to capitalize on the digital world and create greater opportunities. Figure 23 illustrates the success dimensions and metrics proposed by Syed et al., (2023).

Figure 23: Impact of visitors' previous experiences elements on ORM



Source: Adapted from (Syed et al., 2023)

4.2.1. Rethinking KPI as the measure for ORM

ORM has become a crucial facet for businesses and individuals, given their expanding online presence and its impact on reputation. KPIs are often used to evaluate the efficacy of ORM strategies. However, several studies suggest that, rather than just monitoring ORM, KPIs should be construed as an ORM measure that helps businesses and individuals identify avenues for improvement.

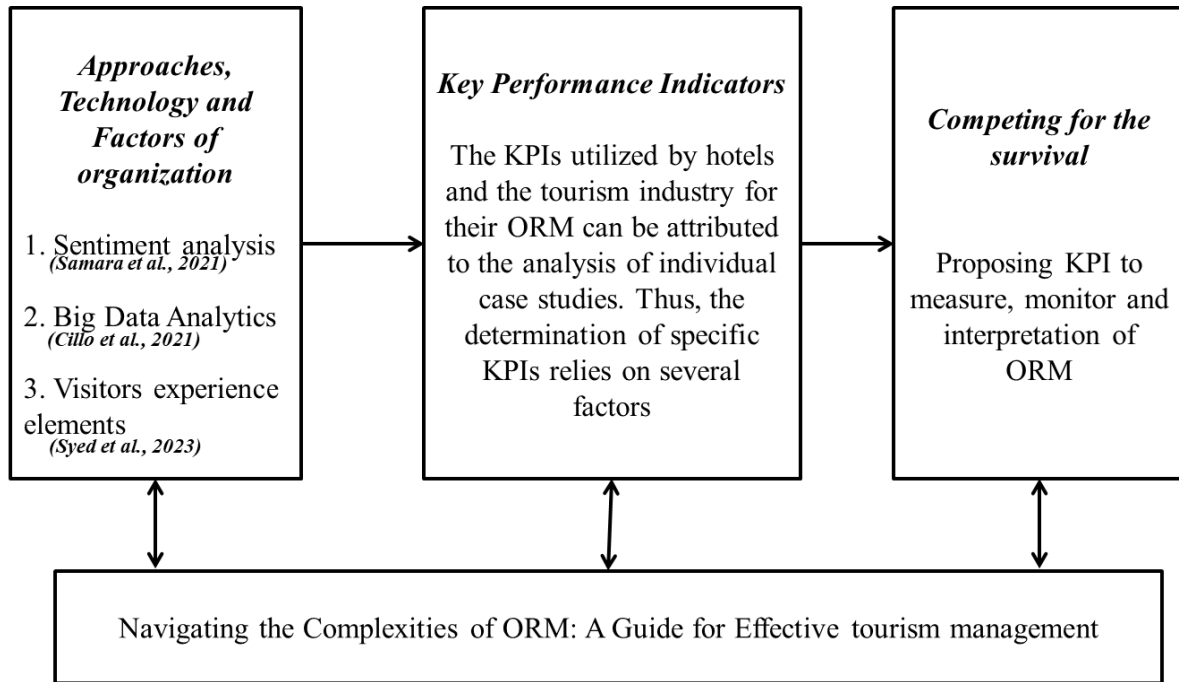
In hotel management, KPIs such as room revenue, total revenue, operating cost, cost per occupied room, gross operating profit, average rate index, and market penetration index serve as important metrics for tracking and improving hotel performance. Regular tracking and analysis of these KPIs can automate certain hotel functionalities, such as revenue management, hotel marketing, and operations, thereby enhancing the bottom line of the property.

The concept of an ORM measure is predicated on the notion that KPIs should offer a comprehensive view of the online reputation of an individual or business, including both positive and negative aspects, to identify areas of improvement proactively. An ORM should also measure and monitor changes over time and provide actionable insights. For instance, a business ORM might include KPIs for customer satisfaction, social media mentions, online reviews, website traffic, and search engine rankings that help companies understand their online reputation and make informed decisions to enhance it.

Similarly, ORM measures can also be useful for individuals by providing insights into personal branding, social media interaction, search engine results, and online activity that govern an individual's

online reputation. Rethinking KPIs as an ORM measure is beneficial for businesses and individuals as it offers a holistic view of their online reputation, tracks changes over time, and offers insights into improvement and competitive advantage as depicted in Figure 24.

Figure 24: ORM begins with establishing a link between ORM approaches with KPI for the organization.



Source: Own elaboration

4.2.2. A New framework for Online Reputation Management

KPIs can also be implemented in Marketing, human resource management, supply chain, Accounting and finance, service area, R&D and technology of hotels industry to help ORM. We highlighted important KPIs from each departments of hotel industry which should be consider as important factors for successful ORM. The important factors are following:

- Marketing KPI

Marketing KPIs are quantifiable goals that help measure the success of marketing efforts. Marketing KPIs can be used to monitor and analyze brand reputation, assess reputational risk, and influence stakeholder perceptions and public conversations about an organization and its brands (Aliotta, 2022). Examples of marketing KPIs include website traffic, social media engagement, online reviews, and sentiment analysis (Golightly, 2022). By tracking these KPIs, tourism businesses can gain insights into their online reputation and take proactive steps to improve it.

- Human resource KPI

It is essential to know how human resource KPIs are contributing to the organization (Vulpen, 2019; Factorial, 2022). Human resource KPIs may not directly measure ORM; they can indirectly impact it by measuring employee engagement, training and development, and company culture. For example, employee engagement KPIs can measure the level of employee satisfaction and loyalty, which can impact the quality of customer service and ultimately the online reputation of the tourism business. Similarly, training and development KPIs can measure the effectiveness of training programs in improving employee skills and knowledge, which can also impact the quality of customer service and online reputation.

- Supply chain KPIs

Supply chain KPIs can indirectly impact it by measuring factors such as product quality, delivery times, and customer satisfaction (Jenkins, 2021). For example, delivery time KPIs can measure the speed and reliability of product delivery, which can impact customer satisfaction and ultimately the online reputation of the tourism business. Similarly, product quality KPIs can measure the effectiveness of supply chain processes in ensuring high-quality products, which can also impact customer satisfaction and online reputation (Buckman, 2019; Jenkins, 2021).

- Accounting and finance KPI

Accounting and finance KPIs may not directly measure ORM for tourism; they can indirectly impact it by measuring factors such as revenue, profitability, and return on investment. For example, revenue growth KPIs can measure the effectiveness of marketing and sales efforts in generating revenue, which can impact the financial health of the tourism business and ultimately its online reputation. Similarly, return on investment KPIs can measure the effectiveness of investments in marketing, advertising, and other areas, which can also impact the financial health and online reputation of the tourism business.

- Servitization KPI

Servitization KPIs can indirectly impact it by measuring factors such as customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and revenue growth (Golightly, 2022). For example, customer satisfaction KPIs can measure the effectiveness of service offerings in meeting customer needs and expectations, which can impact customer loyalty and ultimately the online reputation of the tourism business. Similarly, revenue

growth KPIs can measure the effectiveness of service offerings in generating revenue, which can also impact the financial health and online reputation of the hospitality business.

- Technology KPI

Technology KPIs are metrics used to measure the success of technology-related efforts in a business or organization. In the context of ORM for tourism, technology KPIs can be used to measure factors such as website traffic, social media engagement, online reviews, and sentiment analysis. For this purpose, monitoring digital platform is very essential as they may represent a strategic tool for the development of affected industries, as they may have a significant effect on their performance and capacity (Marrucci et al., 2022). For example, website traffic KPIs can measure the effectiveness of website design and user experience in attracting and retaining visitors, which can impact the online reputation of the tourism business. Similarly, social media engagement KPIs can measure the effectiveness of social media marketing efforts in engaging with customers and building brand awareness, which can also impact the online reputation of the tourism business (Burkhard, 2018; Microsoft, 2019; Golightly, 2022; Aliotta, 2022).

By monitoring these KPIs, you can gain valuable insights into your hotel's online reputation and take actions to improve it. For example, if you notice that your sentiment analysis is trending negative, you can address any common complaints or issues that guests have mentioned in their reviews. Similarly, if you notice that your response rate is low, you can make changes to your processes to ensure that you are responding to reviews in a timely manner. Table 11 shows the division of all highlighted each KPI tools with according to various area of hotel and hospitality industry. With these factors in mind, a set of KPIs including objective indicators and subjective ones is developed to measure the performance of ORM success. Objective indicators refer to quantifiable and measurable data points that are grounded in facts and figures, typically with numerical values that enable straightforward comparison and analysis. In contrast, subjective indicators are derived from individual opinions and perceptions, which can vary significantly from person to person and are typically challenging to measure (Chan & Chan, 2004).

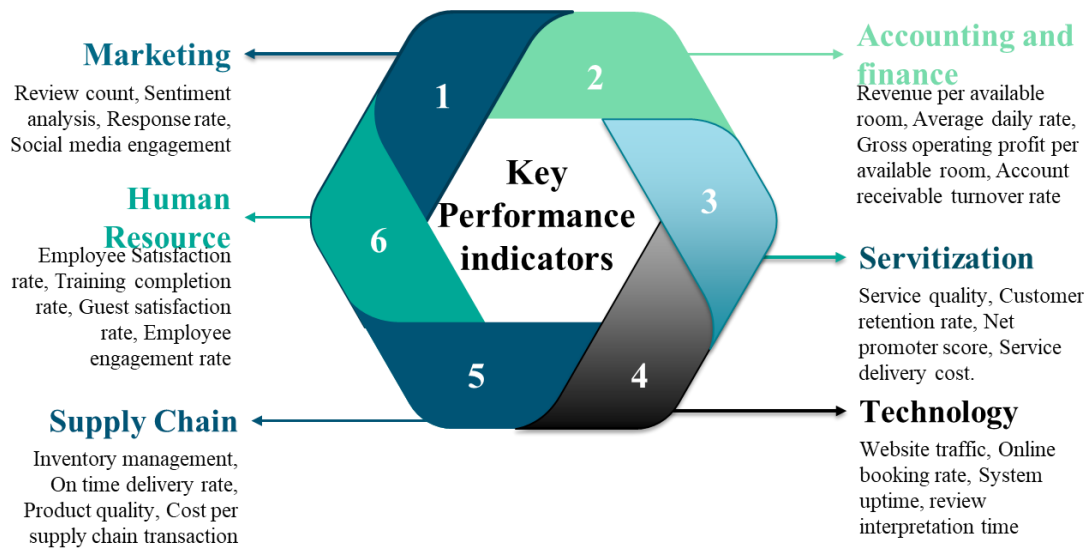
Table 11: KPIs

Area	KPIs	
	Objective	Subjective
Marketing		Review count, Sentiment analysis, Response Rate, Social media engagement
Human Resources	Training completion rate	Employee satisfaction rate, Guest satisfaction rate, Employee engagement rate
Supply chain	Inventory management KPIs, On-time delivery rate, Product quality, Cost per supply chain transaction	
Accounting and Finance	Revenue per available room, Gross Operating Profit per Available Room, Accounts Receivable Turnover Ratio	Average Daily Rate
Servitization	Service quality, Customer retention rate, Service delivery cost	Net promoter score
Technology	Website traffic Online booking rate System uptime	Review interpretation time

Source: Own elaboration

We suggested that logic of measuring and monitoring ORM through KPIs consists of six categories as shown in Figure 25:

Figure 25: KPI indicators to measure ORM of hotel and tourism industry.

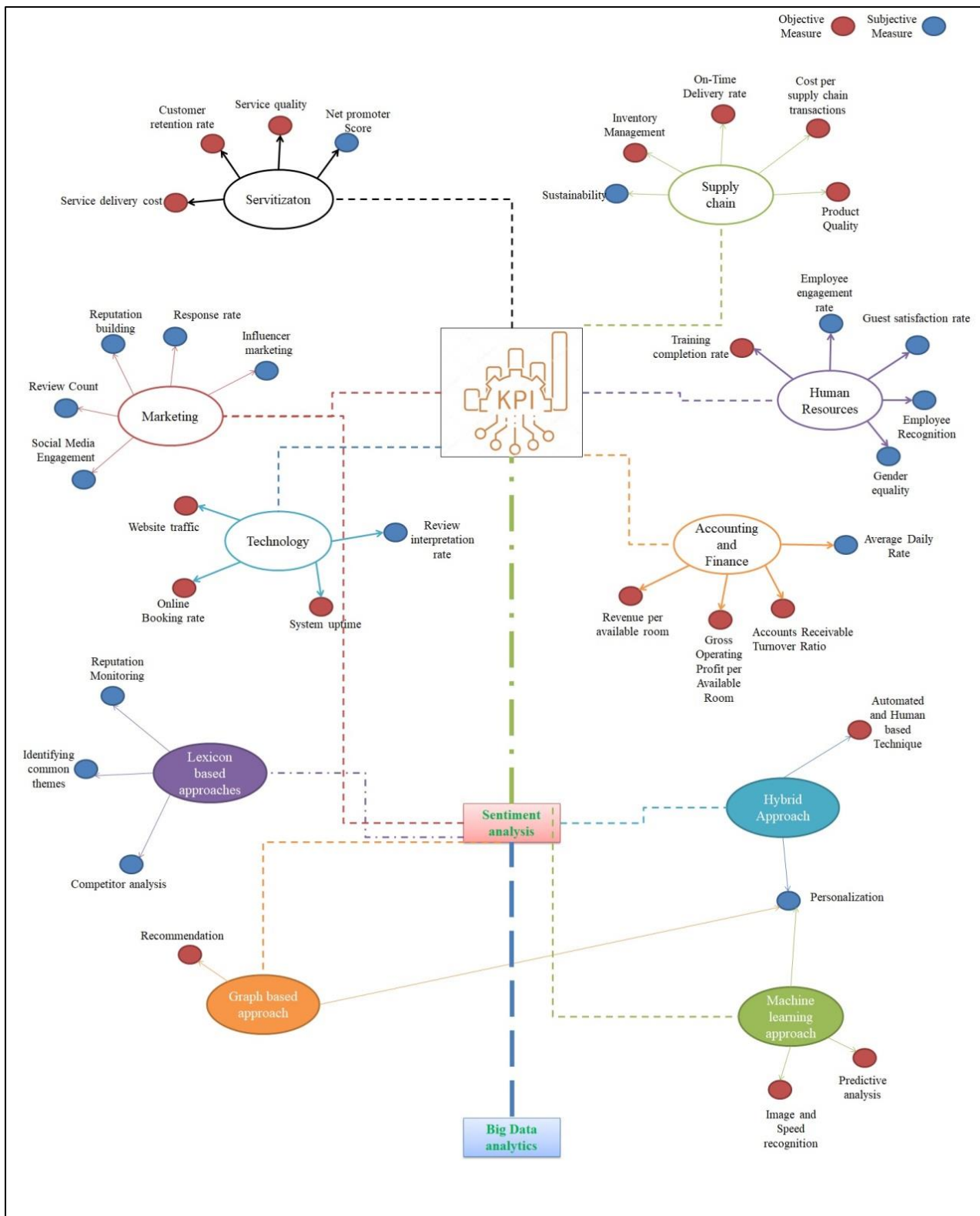


Source: Own elaboration

4.2.3. Conceptual map for measuring and monitoring ORM

The concept of ORM has been a prominent area of study in the field of hotel and tourism management for several years. An examination of ORM-related literature reveals that KPIs, including Marketing, HR, Supply Chain, Accounting and Finance, and Technology, are fundamental and most critical factors for monitoring and assessing ORM. Other methods like sentiment analysis, big data analytics, and user experience are also gaining traction in this field. Based on an extensive review, a comprehensive set of KPIs that integrate objective and subjective measures were established. Three case studies on hotels were conducted to determine the practicality and effectiveness of these indicators, demonstrating that these KPIs are generally reliable markers of ORM. This provide a framework (see figure below) for monitoring and evaluating ORM for future research, and offer hotel and tourism managers, employees, and other stakeholders valuable insights for effectively implementing ORM. Over the past decade, scholars have set forth various standards for evaluating ORM success, and a merged framework for evaluating ORM success is exhibited in Figure 26.

Figure 26: Conceptual map for measuring and monitoring ORM by mapping KPIs



Source: Own elaboration

Reputation is a contentious issue that requires in-depth exploration. Within the hotel and tourism industry, ORM has primarily been evaluated based on sentiment analysis, big data analytics, and user experiences. However, during the past decade, divergent ideas and viewpoints have been proposed, necessitating a comprehensive review of KPIs. To achieve exceptional ORM, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of reputation and good performance metrics for accomplishing it. In the absence of a clear definition of what counts as having a good reputation, hotel managers and personnel will be operating on nothing more than their subjective opinions, with uncertain outcomes. The framework that we propose offers an unequivocal approach to monitoring, measuring, and managing online reputation, promoting understanding among personnel and other stakeholders of how to engage with ORM effectively. It is also beneficial to the managers and stakeholders by providing them with useful information for realizing a successful ORM. Additionally, this study establishes a baseline for evaluating ORM as a benchmark for future research, especially in determining reputation factors. This paper provides an overview of reputation metrics that may be relevant to various hospitality industries like the hotel industry and tourism.

4.3. Online Reputation Management and Analysis Tools

As stated earlier, Online Reputation Management (ORM) is becoming an increasingly important tool in digital marketing and communications. It is the process of managing the reputation of a business, person or brand online, which involves monitoring, analyzing and optimizing the information and feedback that is spread about the business or person online.

In today's digital age, it is easy to find information about any person or business online. However, if this information is not managed properly, bad reviews, false information or negative comments can spread quickly and damage the reputation of the entity. Therefore, it is necessary to regularly monitor and optimize this information so that it is as positive as possible.

Online Reputation Management and Analysis Tools are software that help businesses and individuals manage their online reputation. These tools allow tracking and monitoring of customer feedback, data and sentiment analysis, as well as providing various features for social media management and review management across platforms.

For cross-platform review management, there are a number of specialized programs that allow businesses to track and manage their reviews. Among the more widespread ones we can include, for example, ReviewPro, GuestRevu, TrustYou, Revinat, ReviewTrackers, or Hotellistat. These tools offer various functions for monitoring reviews, managing reputation, analyzing data and interacting

with reviewers, or offer other additional functionalities such as a chatbot or connection to PMS and CRM.

The choice of software itself is usually influenced by personal preferences and experience, budget, functionality and support, and of course also the size of the accommodation or restaurant itself.

In terms of features, review management software should include the following components: review aggregation, semantic analysis, KPI reporting, competitor analysis, and customer communication management.

4.3.1. ReviewPro

ReviewPro is a software for managing and monitoring online reviews from the Shiji Group, which has been operating in the market since 1998 and currently has branches in more than 80 countries around the world. In the hospitality industry, its products are used by more than 91,000 hotels and more than 200,000 restaurants. Products included in ReviewPro allow companies to track their reviews from various online platforms (including TripAdvisor, Booking.com, Expedia, and others) and obtain useful information about customers and automate operations related to managing reviews on online platforms.

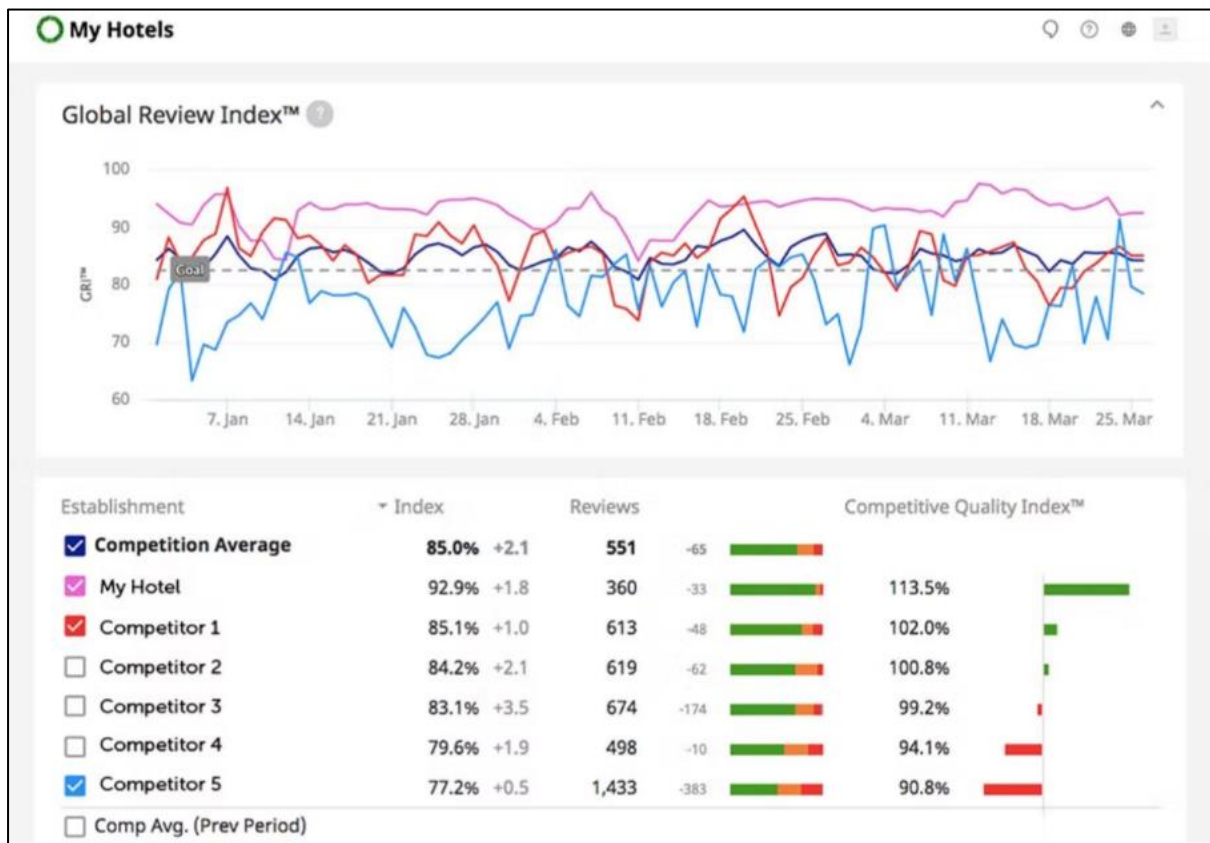
The basic building block of ReviewPro is the use of an indicator that the company developed itself and which it calls The Global Review Index - GRI. GRI takes into account many factors, including the number of reviews, the content and quality of texts, user ratings, and other factors that affect the overall rating. This index is derived from more than 175 OTAs (online travel agencies) and review websites in more than 45 languages. In addition to this indicator, ReviewPro also uses the NPS (Net Promoter Score) index.

In 2022, the Global Review Index™ for the global data set was 84.3%, 1.7 points lower than in 2019 and 0.5 points lower than in 2021. The GRI™ was highest for 5-star hotels (88.4%) and lowest for 3- star hotels (80.8%). Hotels in the Middle East & Africa region had the lowest GRI™, at 82.8%, and hotels in the Asia Pacific region had the highest GRI™, at 86.4% (Shiji ReviewPro Global Hotel Review Benchmark, 2022).

Global review volume grew by 20.3% from 2021 to 2022. However, 2022 volume was still 29.3% below 2019. The Middle East & Africa region came the closest to recovering 2019 review volume, falling just 16.3% short. The Asia Pacific region was the furthest from recovering 2019 volume, with 44.9% fewer reviews in 2022. Of the 66 sources from which reviews were aggregated, Booking.com accounted for an incredible 41.8% of global review volume in 2022, an increase of 12.9

points over 2019. Google generated 29.4% of reviews, losing 2.2% of 2019 share. Together, Booking.com and Google accounted for 71.2% of reviews posted in 2022. In third place was Tripadvisor, with 11.8% of market share in 2022, a decrease of 1.8 points over 2019. Of the five regions, Booking.com generated the highest proportion of reviews in Europe, at 58.6%. Of the top review sources, the highest global Source Indexes came from Ctrip (91.1%), Trip.com(89.3%), and Hotels.com(85.0%); however, review volume for these sources was relatively low. Booking.com had the lowest Source Index, at 81.5%, which is significant given that it generated 41.8% of reviews. Department Indexes Globally, all major Department Indexes were down in 2022 relative to 2019. The Value Index had the lowest score, at 81.1%, falling 1.4 points from 2019. The Room Index had the second lowest score at 84.4%, falling 0.5 points from 2019. The Cleanliness Index fell 1.5 points to 87.2%. Decreases were most pronounced among 3-star hotels (Shiji ReviewPro Global Hotel Review Benchmark, 2022).

Figure 27: ReviewPro screen



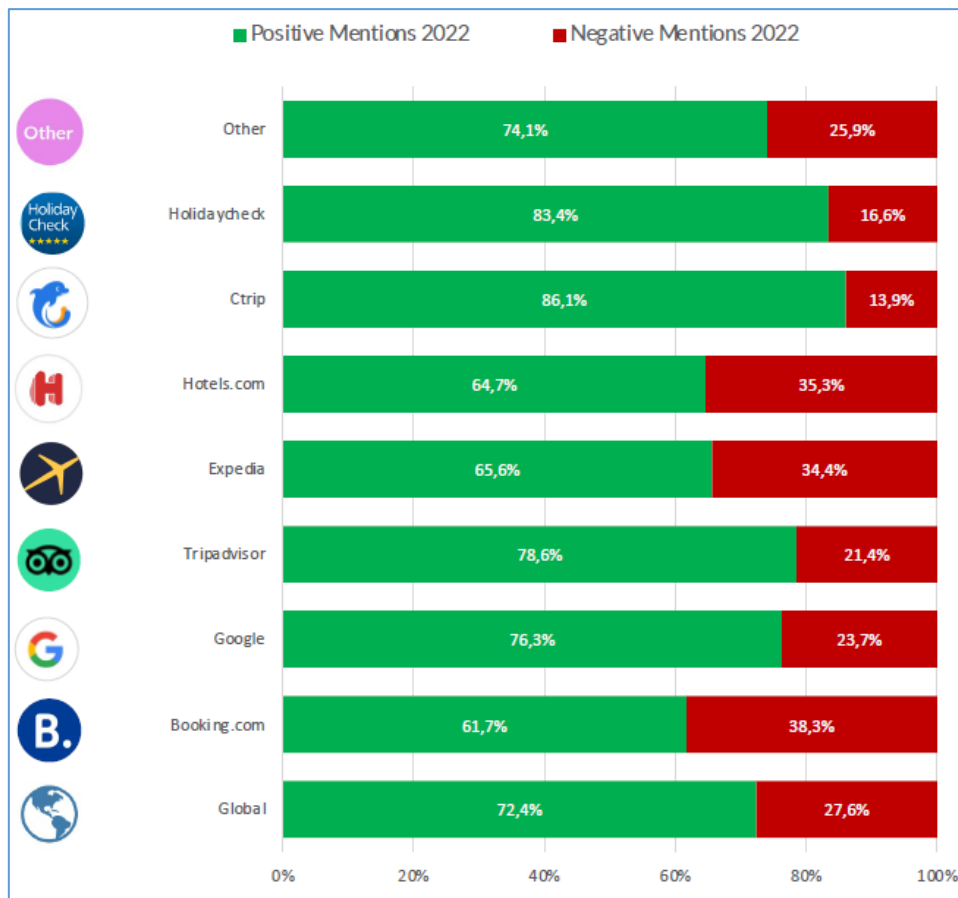
Source: ReviewPro internal materials

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a metric that measures how likely a customer is to recommend a particular hotel to their friends or family. Customers answer a question about how likely they would be to recommend the hotel on a scale of 0 to 10. Ratings of 9 and 10 are considered positive, ratings of 7 and 8 are neutral, and ratings of 0 to 6 are negative. The NPS is calculated by subtracting the percentage of negative responses from the percentage of positive responses. The resulting number ranges from -100 to +100. A higher NPS indicates that customers are more satisfied with the hotel and are more likely to recommend it.

Both of these metrics are useful for hotels to monitor their online reputation and customer satisfaction and take action to improve them. The ReviewPro platform allows hotels to monitor and analyze both the GRI and NPS in real-time and compare them with competitors in a given region and market segment.

Global Semantic Analysis Comments in reviews provide insights into guest sentiment not offered by guest ratings. ReviewPro's Semantic Analysis tools scan review comments, group them into Categories and Concepts, and qualify the sentiment as positive or negative. This turns freeform commentary into quantifiable metrics and can be highly valuable for drilling down on strengths and weaknesses at a more granular level. Within the global data set, ReviewPro analyzed over 20 million mentions in review comments posted in 2022. Of these mentions, 72.4% were classified as positive and 27.6% were classified as negative. Almost one-third of mentions (32.8%) came from Tripadvisor reviews, whereas 28.0% came from Booking.com and 20.7% came from Google. Booking.com generated a higher proportion of negative mentions than the other top sources in 2022, at 38.3%. Negative mentions were also relatively high on Hotels.com (35.3%) and Expedia (34.4%) (Shiji ReviewPro Global Hotel Review Benchmark, 2022).

Figure 28: Positive/Negative Mentions Per Source 2022



Source: ReviewPro Global Hotel Review Benchmark, 2022

Of over 20 million mentions in review comments in 2022, the majority (64.4%) were written in English, whereas 8.9% were written in German and 7.7% were written in Spanish. Of the major languages, the highest proportion of negative mentions was written in Portuguese (34.1%), followed by French (29.8%). The third highest proportion of negative reviews was a tie between English and Italian reviews, both at 29.0%. The highest proportion of positive mentions was written in Chinese (86.4%) and German (78.5%) (Shiji ReviewPro Global Hotel Review Benchmark, 2022).

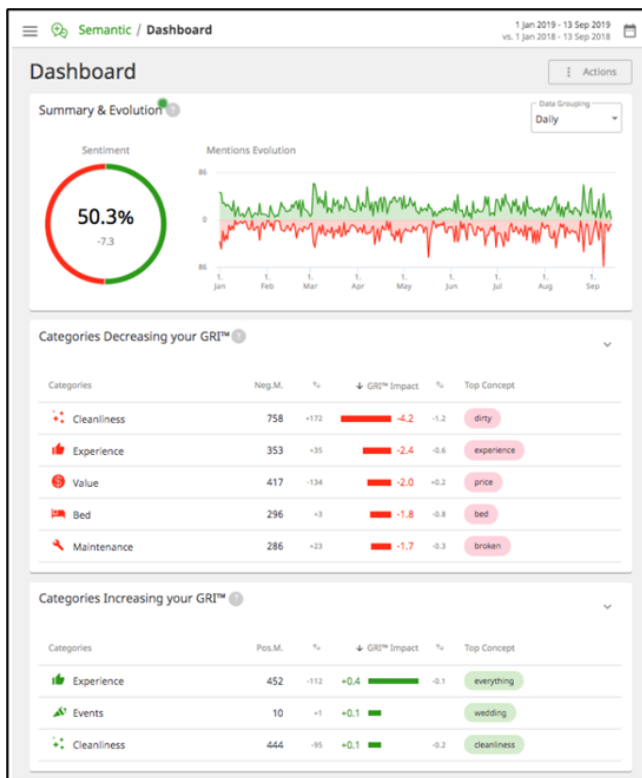
ReviewPro offers the following products: Hotel Reputation, Guest Experience Platform, Guest Surveys, Case Management, and Guest Communications.

Both the Guest Experience Platform and Hotel Reputation are part of ReviewPro's portfolio for managing online reputation and improving customer experience, but they differ in the specific market segment they target and the tools and features they offer.

The Guest Experience Platform is focused on various industries such as hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and others, and offers a wide range of tools for collecting and analyzing customer reviews, monitoring online reputation, and interacting with customers.

On the other hand, Hotel Reputation is a specific product for the hotel industry and is focused on monitoring and managing hotels' online reputation. It offers features and tools that are specific to this market segment, such as monitoring competition, collecting and analyzing customer reviews and ratings, and creating customer satisfaction surveys.

Figure 29: ReviewPro Dashboard

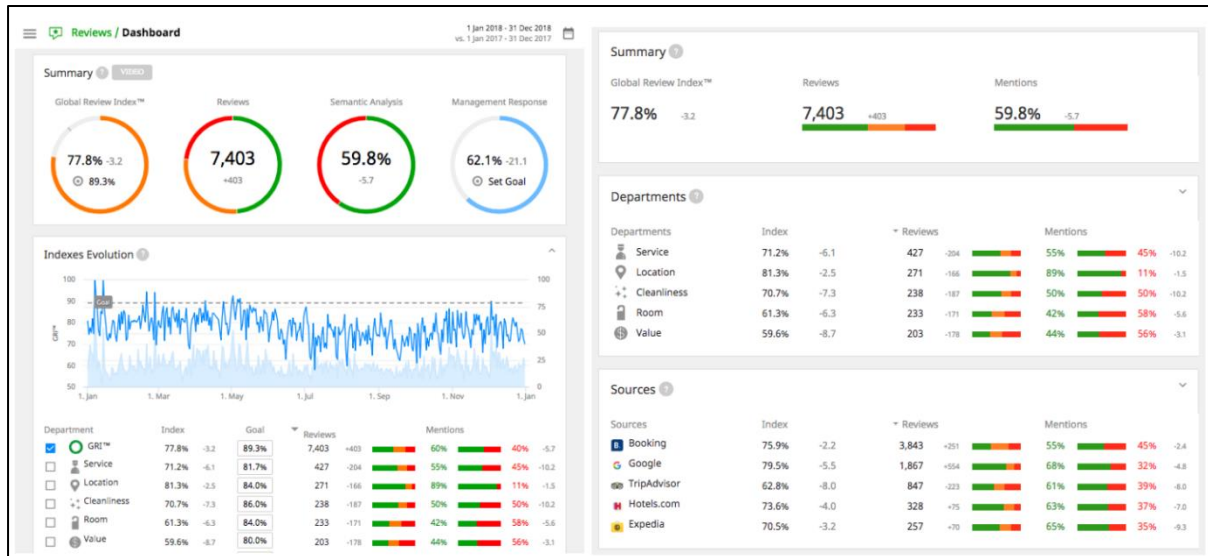


Source: ReviewPro

Hotel Reputation by ReviewPro is a specific product for the hotel industry that serves to monitor and manage hotels' online reputation. It allows hotels to track and analyze customer reviews and ratings on various online platforms, including social networks, review portals, and others. This enables hotels to respond to customer reviews and queries and improve their services to meet customer needs.

Another advantage of Hotel Reputation is the ability to compare the performance of one's hotel with that of competitors and track trends in customer reviews over time. This data can be very useful for improving marketing strategies and hotel business development.

Figure 30: ReviewPro metrics



Source: ReviewPro

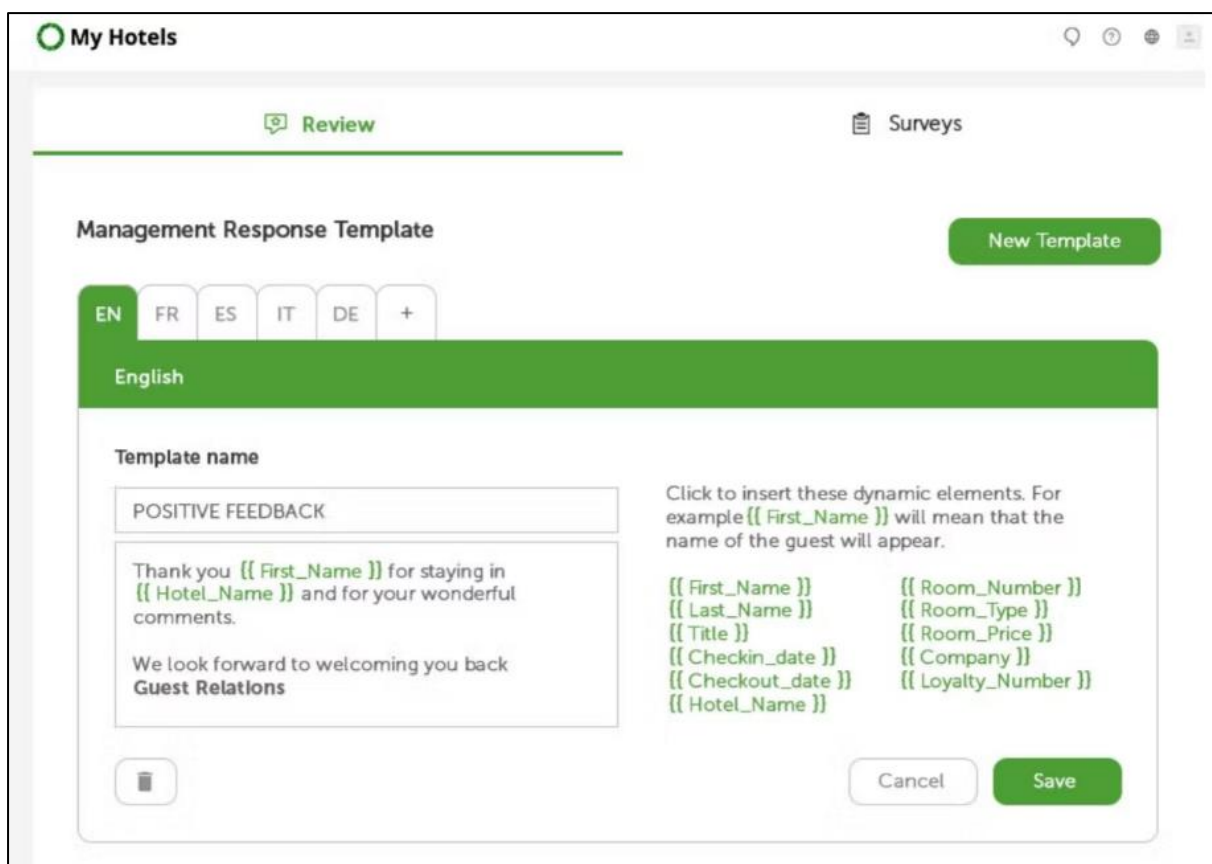
The Guest Experience Platform is a solution for managing online reputation and improving customer experience for various industries, such as hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and others. The platform enables these businesses to acquire and analyze customer reviews from different sources, monitor their online rating and reputation, and communicate with their customers through various channels. This allows businesses to respond to reviews and customer inquiries, send personalized messages, and offer special deals and discounts. The platform also allows for creating customer satisfaction surveys and monitoring competitor performance. With these tools, businesses can improve their services and increase customer satisfaction, which can lead to increased profit and business growth.

Guest Surveys, Case Management, and Guest Communications are additional components of the ReviewPro portfolio that complement the Guest Experience Platform and Hotel Reputation by offering additional tools and features for improving customer experience and managing online reputation.

Guest Surveys allows hotels to collect and analyze customer feedback through surveys and questionnaires designed to provide valuable insights into what customers appreciate and what could be improved.

Case Management allows hotels to manage customer complaints and inquiries received through various channels such as email, phone calls, or social media. This tool enables hotels to respond quickly and efficiently to complaints and inquiries by allowing them to assign cases directly to specific employees or departments within the hotel's management structure. This can lead to a faster response to reviews or inquiries and higher customer satisfaction.

Figure 31: ReviewPro feedback



Source: ReviewPro

Guest Communications allows hotels to communicate with customers through various channels, such as email, SMS messages, and push notifications. This tool allows hotels to send personalized messages and offers to customers based on their behavior and preferences, which can lead to increased sales and greater customer satisfaction.

So it is evident that Guest Surveys, Case Management, and Guest Communications complement Guest Experience Platform and Hotel Reputation by providing additional tools and features that allow hotels to better manage their online reputation and improve the customer experience.

In terms of content, the mentioned tools include the following components:

- **Sentiment Analysis:** ReviewPro allows you to analyze the sentiment of reviews and determine whether they are positive or negative. A firm can also track how sentiment changes over time.
- **Respond to reviews:** ReviewPro allows businesses to respond to reviews directly from the app. The business may also set up automatic responses to certain types of reviews.
- **Competitor Tracking:** ReviewPro allows you to track and compare your competitors' online reputations.
- **Report generation:** ReviewPro generates useful reports and graphs that allow businesses to analyze performance and clearly display the results of their online reviews.
- **Integration with other tools:** ReviewPro allows integration with other tools such as PMS, CRM systems, revenue and upsell, Booking engine and others.

To improve interaction with guests, ReviewPro also offers the option of integrating an AI-driven hotel chatbot. An AI-driven hotel chatbot is a chatbot that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to interact with guests in a hotel environment. This chatbot allows guests to easily communicate with the hotel and get the necessary information without having to look for the phone and call the reception. ReviewPro's AI-driven hotel chatbot also uses machine learning and natural language processing (NLP) to be able to recognize and understand guests' questions and requests. This chatbot also learns from previous guest interactions and allows hotels to track and analyze guest feedback.

In general, a chatbot can be programmed to answer a variety of guest questions, such as booking information, hotel service offerings, hotel room amenities, or even tips on nearby restaurants and places of interest. Thanks to the use of artificial intelligence, the chatbot is able to adapt to the specific needs of the guest and provide personalized answers. Using an AI-driven hotel chatbot can reduce staffing costs and improve customer satisfaction as guests get quick and efficient answers to their questions. An AI-driven hotel chatbot can also be connected to other hotel systems, such as the reservation system or room management, to provide more comprehensive information and offers to guests.

4.3.2. TrustYou

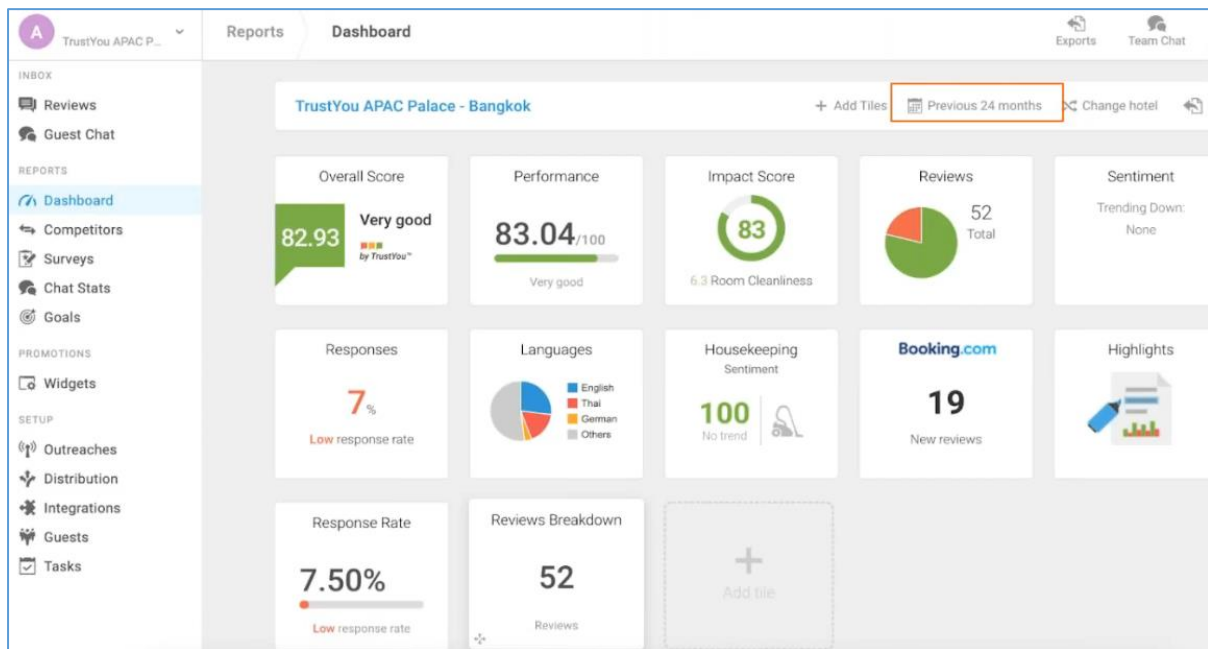
The company TrustYou is among the leading providers of ORM products. It was founded in 2008 as a software company with the goal of providing reputation management and review solutions for the hotel industry. Its founders, Benjamin Jost, Jakob Riegger, and Steffen Wicker, set out to create a platform that would help hotels gather, analyze, and leverage guest reviews and ratings from various online sources.

The core functionality of TrustYou's products is similar in nature to other ORM-focused products. The TrustYou platform provides hotels with tools and analytics that allow them to monitor and evaluate their online reputation. It collects reviews and ratings from various sources, including online booking websites, social media, review sites, and other online channels. This data is then analyzed and processed using artificial intelligence algorithms that identify key trends, topics, and sentiments in the reviews.

The foundation of the platform is a tile-based dashboard that offers considerable flexibility in terms of the desired information. It allows users to monitor results across the complexity of utilized channels or customize data based on a specific source. It also provides the ability to set time frames for the monitored data, enabling comparisons with previous periods (e.g., comparing data with the previous quarter or year). The platform offers a simple, intuitive interface where selecting a tile leads to more detailed information, such as trend development, the number of new reviews and responses, and a view of the distribution channel shares.

Additionally, the platform offers a group hotel reporting feature, allowing users to manage individual hotels within their account.

Figure 32: Dashboard TrustYou

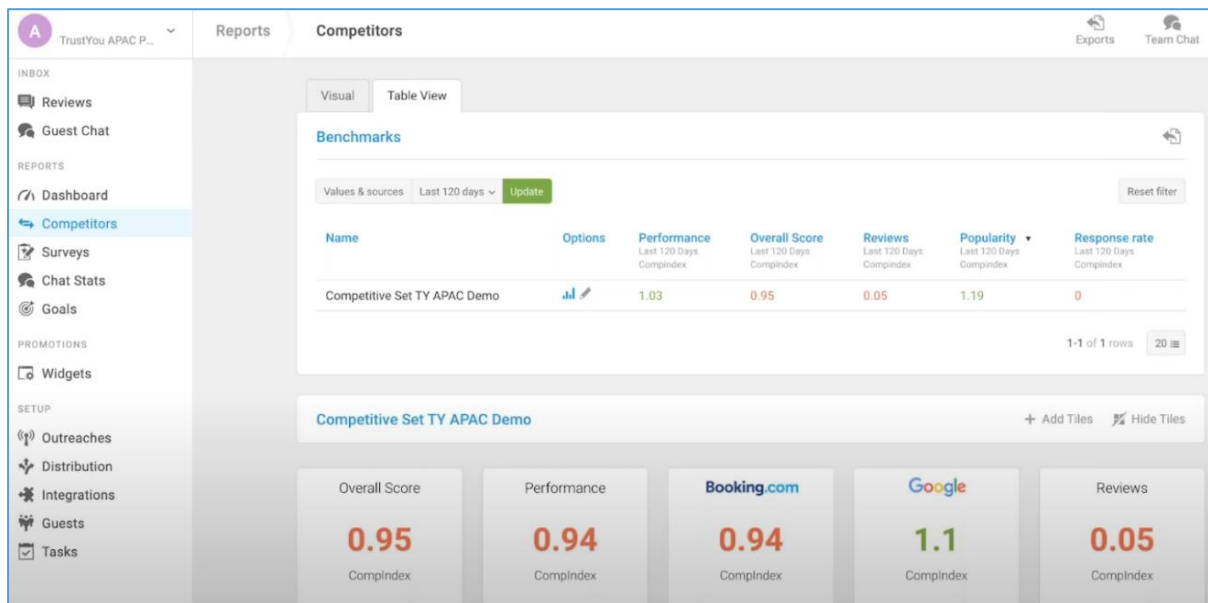


Source: <https://resources.trustyou.com>

TrustYou enables hotels to better understand the opinions and needs of their guests. The company provides tools for monitoring reviews, responding to them, and managing reputation. It allows hotel operators to quickly identify issues and shortcomings related to their services and take appropriate measures to improve them.

Through TrustYou, hotels can also gain valuable insights into their competition and the overall perception of their brand compared to other businesses in the industry. The company focuses on helping hotels optimize their reputation and provide a better guest experience. TrustYou uses its own index, called Compindex, to determine a hotel's position. In this display, users can access detailed information by clicking on the respective tile.

Figure 33: TrustYou - Competitors



Zdroj: <https://resources.trustyou.com>

The platform also offers extensive options for directly working with reviews, providing a wide range of filters that allow for flexible management and potential delegation of responses to other individuals or departments, including setting deadlines for resolving cases. It is possible to track the fulfillment of these deadlines and set goals to be achieved.

TrustYou, like other competing platforms, includes a module that offers a variety of guest satisfaction surveys to gather feedback. The platform focuses not only on post-stay surveys but also provides solutions for interaction while the guest is still on the premises. This approach brings greater flexibility and interaction between the hotel and the customer, which can positively impact subsequent reviews. An example of this approach is the Guest Chat module, which facilitates collaboration in resolving guest issues or requests. For post-stay surveys, the platform offers a range of predefined options that simplify the evaluation of feedback.

TrustYou, along with many other products in this field, is built on advanced natural language processing and sentiment analysis technologies. Its platform is used by thousands of hotels worldwide, helping them better understand guest needs and improve their services based on the feedback received.

TrustYou also offers a mobile application designed to provide hotels with quick and easy access to key features and information related to reputation management and customer feedback.

The application allows hotels to monitor reviews and ratings from guests across various online sources, including review websites, social media, and other platforms. Hotel staff can easily see which reviews have been published and the ratings received. The application also enables hotels to manage responses to reviews directly from their mobile devices. Hotel staff can quickly and easily reply to reviews and communicate with guests through the application.

It is essential to note that the application allows for sentiment tracking. TrustYou utilizes sentiment analysis to determine the overall attitude and mood of guests towards the hotel and monitor how guests are responding to their services.

The mobile application provides notifications and alerts for important events, such as new reviews, rating changes, or guest responses. This allows hotels to stay updated and respond to relevant feedback in real-time.

The application enables hotels to generate reports and statistics related to their online reputation and customer feedback. This provides clear and structured information about the hotel's performance and helps identify areas for improvement.

Among other reputation management products, we can include **GuestRevu**, **Hoteliistat**, and **Revinat**. In principle, the functionality and individual components of these products are very similar. However, each product may have its specific features and tools it offers. For example, GuestRevu may emphasize functionality for managing review responses, while Hotellistat may focus on more extensive sentiment analysis, and Revinat may concentrate more on marketing and communication aspects. Each product may also have slightly different user interfaces and ways of presenting data and information. This can affect usability and the ease of working with a particular product.

Products may also offer different integration options with other hotel systems, such as reservation managers, CRM systems, or marketing platforms. It's important to consider how well a product integrates with existing systems and processes in the hotel.

Additionally, products may differ in availability in various markets and pricing policies. It's advisable to consider whether a particular product is available in the hotel's operating area and if its price fits within the planned budget.

Last but not least, the level of support and training provided by product suppliers also plays a role. It's beneficial to find out what type of support is offered and how accessible it is.

It is evident that carefully considering these factors and comparing how each product aligns with the specific needs of a hotel is crucial to achieve the best results.

4.4.E-WOM as a tool for innovation and continuous improvement

The importance of innovation has been extensively discussed and analyzed by authors from various disciplines. Macroeconomists (Schumpeter, 1934) have underlined its ability to trigger economic growth, strategy scholars (Porter, 1985) have highlighted its contribution to achieving a sustainable competitive advantage, and marketing researchers (Kotler & Keller, 2006) consider it a means by which it is possible to obtain the extension of the product life cycle.

Also in services, innovation has assumed a central role and has become a predominant objective for companies (Hu et al., 2009). In particular, hospitality and tourism enterprises face highly competitive environments, and innovation is crucial in improving their competitiveness (Morrison & Winston, 2017; Chou et al., 2018; Hallak et al., 2018; Xie et al., 2020). According to Saengchai and Jemsittiparsert (2020), innovation will positively impact customers' perceptions of service quality and improve their image by introducing new consumption experiences and emotions in purchases.

By continuously introducing innovative products, services, and experiences or changing consolidated business models, companies can create unique value propositions and improve customer satisfaction, with benefits in maintaining the customer base and increasing their market share (and profitability). A satisfied customer is likelier to recommend the business to others, resulting in positive word-of-mouth and further enhancing the company's competitiveness (Neuhofer et al., 2014).

4.4.1. A market-oriented innovation approach

The sources of inspiration regarding the possible innovations to be introduced in the company can derive from macro-environmental factors such as new scientific discoveries, the diffusion of new technologies, social changes, political and legislative changes, and economic situations. Still, they can also emerge from observation and analysis of the behavior of its competitors as well as the collection of information regarding the company's current and potential customers.

The attention paid to the latter aspect constitutes the focus of the literature on market orientation (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Narver & Slater, 1990; Cadogan & Diamantopoulos, 1995). In particular, Kohli & Jaworski (1990) suggest the adoption of a market orientation operating model in which the

firm should pursue the interaction between the following three activities: 1) the creation of a system of market information that facilitates knowing actual and future customer needs; 2) the dissemination of the knowledge gained through this information system at all levels of the company; 3) the use of this knowledge for the implementation of consequent corporate actions and behaviors. Considering this, for a company that intends to adopt a market-oriented approach, one of the main sources of information on current or potential consumers is represented by the feedback from customers of the service offered, which can manifest itself through direct contact with the accommodation facility, the traditional word of mouth, or, more widely, through the electronic WOM.

In the service sector, word of mouth (WOM) represents a crucial means of influencing customer behavior and gleaning valuable insights from your customers. At a managerial level, evaluating perceptions, expectations, and satisfaction with the service can allow management to improve or even innovate the services offered.

Marketing experts have always been interested in collecting the customer's voice. To do this, they have resorted to numerous techniques, from market research to focus groups, to in-depth discussions, to textual analysis, and, more recently, big data analysis (also with the use of solutions based on artificial intelligence).

The emergence of eWOM has led to the exponential expansion of the consumer's voice. Before the development of review sites, guest feedback came to the service provider through one-to-one communications or guest rating sheets. The scope of these conversations was limited to the sender and the recipient. Consumers who wanted to share their experiences could do so through the traditional WOM with a small circle of personal contacts. The power of this communication was important, but the range of influence was very limited. With the development of sites and applications dedicated to collecting reviews, feedback reaches the service provider indirectly through the aforementioned platforms and, at the same time, reaches millions of other potential consumers. If, in the first phase of diffusion of these feedback collection services, the managers of the hospitality structures focused on the threats connected to the publication of unfiltered comments, however, as observed by Litvin et al. (2018), in reality, such concerns have generally proved to be unfounded. And this is mainly for companies committed to offering high-quality services. In fact, for these realities, the encouragement towards the generation of eWOM can have the effect of an increase in engagement with their customers, a better public image, and, last but not least, an important source of information gathering about preferences, expectations and the level of satisfaction experienced by its customers.

4.4.2. Unlocking innovation potential: Harnessing the power of e-WOM in the tourism sector

E-WOM provides valuable insights and feedback that can drive innovation in the tourism sector. By monitoring and analysing e-WOM platforms, management can gain a deep understanding of consumer preferences, emerging trends, and areas for improvement (Park & Nicolau, 2015). It is also a valuable source of market research and competitive analysis. By observing online discussions and reviews about competitors, it is possible to gain insights into strengths, weaknesses, and areas where companies can differentiate themselves through innovation (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014). Positive e-WOM can enhance the reputation and brand image. By engaging with customers and encouraging positive reviews, managers can leverage e-WOM to build trust, attract new customers, and create a perception of innovation and excellence (Sigala, 2017). E-WOM feedback can inform product development, service enhancements, and overall marketing and innovation strategies.

Advancements in technology have facilitated customer value co-creation through digital platforms and tools. Online communities, social media, and collaboration platforms enable customers to interact with companies, sharing ideas, feedback, and recommendations. These platforms provide a space for ongoing co-creation, extending the relationship beyond individual service encounters.

Empowering customer value co-creation through e-WOM

As concepts of consumption change, customers now seem to be “value co-creators” rather than pure “consumers” who create value for organizations (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). While customers benefit from personalized and tailored solutions, companies gain insights, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage through co-creation. It becomes a win-win scenario where both parties contribute and extract value from the collaboration. They participate in various stages of the service delivery process, such as problem identification, idea generation, customization, and feedback, influencing the outcome. It involves open communication, transparency, and a willingness to involve customers in decision-making processes.

Companies actively engage with customers, listening to their input and considering their ideas. This fosters a sense of partnership and shared ownership in the value creation process. Customers possess valuable knowledge about their needs, preferences, and context, which they contribute alongside their resources, skills, and experiences in order to co-create value. Companies recognize and leverage this customer knowledge to design and deliver customized services that align with individual customer requirements. By incorporating customer insights, they can deliver more relevant and

personalized experiences, enabling personalization and customization of services to meet individual customer preferences. This level of customization leads to a higher perceived value for customers, as they receive solutions that are uniquely suited to their needs, resulting in greater customer engagement, satisfaction, and loyalty. Customers feel valued and appreciated when their inputs are acknowledged and incorporated, leading to a stronger emotional connection with the company.

Service innovation should contain multiple aspects to enhance customer value creation, including new service concepts, client interfaces, and technological options (Mahmoud et al., 2018). In particular, the customer value co-creation can be related to the following areas:

- Idea generation through online reviews

One of the key ways e-WOM can generate ideas for innovation and co-creation in the tourism industry is by analysing online reviews. Through monitoring reviews on platforms such as TripAdvisor, Yelp, or Google Reviews, tourism managers can gain insights and valuable information into customer desires and expectations, preferences, satisfaction levels, and specific areas where improvements can be made (Xiang et al., 2017a). By identifying recurring themes or suggestions in online reviews, new ideas for innovative initiatives can be generated. For example, a hotel owner might discover that many guests desire more eco-friendly amenities. This feedback can inspire innovative initiatives, such as implementing sustainable practices and offering eco-friendly services.

- Co-Creation of experiences

E-WOM platforms also provide opportunities to involve customers in the co-creation of experiences. Social media platforms, in particular, can serve as channels for interaction and collaboration. For instance, a tour operator can use platforms like Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter to seek customer input on new tour itineraries or activity offerings. This approach allows customers to contribute their ideas and preferences and fosters a sense of ownership and engagement. Technology catalyses change in the tourist experience, enabling tourists to share ideas and experiences and fostering co-creation and innovation (Neuhofer et al., 2015).

- Crowdsourcing ideas

E-WOM platforms facilitate crowdsourcing of ideas, allowing tourism managers to tap into the collective wisdom of their customers. Ideas and suggestions can be gathered from a wide audience such as customers, industry experts, local communities, and technology enthusiasts, by posing questions, conducting surveys, or hosting online discussions. This approach sparks creativity and encourages out-

of-the-box thinking. This diversity of perspectives stimulates innovation by bringing together different experiences, backgrounds, and expertise to solve challenges and generate creative solutions. Unique tourism products, services, and experiences can be generated to feed differentiation strategies. Buhalis & Law (2008) highlights the progress of information technology and tourism management and emphasize the potential of e-WOM platforms in crowdsourcing ideas for innovation. By leveraging the power of collective intelligence, diverse perspectives and creative insights can be collected. For example, destination management organization might use social media platforms to ask travellers for ideas on improving local attractions or designing unique visitor experiences.

A second advantage that can derive from crowdsourcing is the ideas' early validation and feedback: ideas can be validated at an early stage. By sharing prototypes, concepts, or ideas with the crowd, feedback and insights can be collected before fully developing or launching a product or service. This early validation helps in identifying potential improvements, unanticipated challenges, and new opportunities. This feedback helps make informed decisions about refining or adapting the innovations to better align with market preferences and demands. By leveraging crowdsourced insights, risks can be minimized, and the chances of successful innovation implementation can increase.

Embracing crowdsourcing as a strategy empowers tourist companies to tap into external expertise, deliver customer-centric solutions, and drive continuous innovation in the dynamic and evolving tourism industry.

- Feedback-driven innovation

E-WOM platforms allow customers to provide real-time feedback on their experiences, enabling managers to identify areas for improvement and develop innovative solutions (Xiang et al., 2017b). Monitoring and responding to customer reviews and comments promptly make easier address issues, resolve complaints, and make necessary adjustments in real-time. For example, monitoring online reviews can help a restaurant owner identify common customer complaints or suggestions related to menu options. This feedback can inform menu changes, leading to innovative and customer-centric dining experiences.

- Collaborative Innovation Initiatives

By using online communities or forums, customers can share their ideas, participate in discussions, and contribute to innovation initiatives. On line communities provide a space for stakeholders to interact, engage in discussions, and collaborate on various initiatives. Businesses can partner with customers and influencers to co-create content, launch marketing campaigns, or develop

new tourism products. This collaborative approach can lead to innovative solutions, increased customer engagement and builds loyalty, advocacy, and long-term relationships, creating a supportive ecosystem for innovation. Engaged communities are more likely to contribute valuable insights, participate in beta testing, and spread the word about innovative tourism offerings. Sigala (2015) highlights the potential of e-WOM platforms for gathering customer insights and fostering collaboration. For example, a travel agency could establish an online platform where customers can share their dream travel itineraries or provide recommendations for unique destinations. This collaborative approach encourages customers to actively engage in innovation, leading to co-creating new travel offerings.

How to maximize the potential benefits of e-WOM in promoting innovation and continuous improvement in the tourism industry

One of the significant challenges associated with e-WOM is the issue of trust and credibility. Consumers often face difficulties discerning the reliability and authenticity of online information, including reviews and recommendations. Trust significantly influences consumers' acceptance and reliance on e-WOM, emphasizing the need for companies to establish trustworthiness in their e-WOM platforms (Jalilvand, Samiei, & Mahdavinia, 2012).

To address this challenge, it is fundamental to implement robust verification mechanisms and encourage genuine user-generated content (Xiang et al., 2017b). Others practice to follow are:

- Engage and respond to customers: Actively engage with customers by responding to online reviews and feedback, demonstrating a commitment to customer satisfaction and continuous improvement (Litvin et al., 2008).
- Utilize social listening tools: Employ social listening tools to monitor and analyze e-WOM conversations, enabling managers to gain insights into customer preferences, emerging trends, and areas for improvement (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2018).
- Foster online communities: Create and nurture online communities or forums where customers can share their ideas, experiences, and suggestions, fostering collaboration and co-creation (Buhalis & Law, 2008).
- Embrace influencer marketing: Collaborate with influential individuals or social media influencers with a strong tourism industry following to amplify positive e-WOM and drive innovation initiatives (Kim & Ko, 2019).

- Personalize and tailor experiences: Utilize e-WOM data to personalize and tailor experiences, incorporating customer preferences and feedback into product development and service enhancements (Sigala, 2015).
- Implement data analytics: Employ data analytics tools to analyse e-WOM data and extract valuable insights, enabling evidence-based decision-making and targeted innovation strategies (Xiang et al., 2017a).

Harnessing the power of e-WOM in the tourism sector is crucial for unlocking innovation potential. By leveraging customer insights, fostering co-creation and collaboration, conducting market research, managing reputation, creating and adopting innovative marketing strategies with authentic and engaging campaigns, and embracing a culture of continuous improvement, tourist companies can stay ahead in a rapidly evolving industry.

Exploring the limits and risks of e-WOM in driving innovation

In exploring the limits and risks of e-WOM in driving innovation, it is important to consider both the potential challenges and drawbacks associated with this powerful form of online communication.

E-WOM platforms can be susceptible to biased or unreliable information, including fake reviews or malicious content, which can negatively impact decision-making and hinder innovation efforts (Filiari et al., 2019). Moreover may not capture the opinions and experiences of all customer segments, resulting in a potential bias toward a particular demographic or customer profile. This limitation can restrict the range of innovative ideas and hinder the inclusivity of co-creation efforts (Xiang et al., 2017a).

The volume and speed of e-WOM feedback can make it challenging for companies to effectively manage and respond to all customer opinions and suggestions, potentially leading to missed opportunities for innovation or customer dissatisfaction (Litvin et al., 2008). In some cases, E-WOM platforms can provide limited context and nuance regarding customer experiences, making it difficult to understand the underlying reasons behind certain feedback or suggestions. This limitation can hinder the development of targeted and effective innovation strategies (Sigala, 2015).

Finally, e-WOM platforms share personal experiences and opinions, raising concerns about privacy and data security. These concerns can impact the willingness of customers to provide feedback, limiting the availability of valuable insights for innovation (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2018).

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5. Online reputation management in hotels

The hospitality industry is impacted by various uncertainties such as prices, occupancy, satisfaction, social media presence, health pandemics, and financial crises. Such factors greatly influence the effectiveness of ORM. The concept of ORM has been developed to set criteria and standards for the tourism and hotel industry to improve their online reputation. ORM involves effective digital marketing strategies to improve the online presence of tourism enterprises. However, this concept has remained ambiguously defined among hotels and tourism professionals. Many hotels and tourism managers still manage their online reputation in an intuitive and ad hoc fashion, allocating resources across various reputation areas. Therefore, ORM has become increasingly important in the hospitality industry, and managers are paying more attention to the importance of reputational levels (Rialti et al., 2023).

Although there have been a number of researchers exploring the concept of ORM in hospitality industry, there is no general agreement on the best practices and solutions to the challenges faced by businesses in measuring and monitoring ORM. The concept of reputation management has varying interpretations, and the criteria for it continue to evolve. Consequently, there is a need for a structured assessment of the existent literature that can establish a system of standards for measuring ORM through quantitative and qualitative measures.

The purpose of this chapter is to establish a set of essential performance metrics- called key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate ORM based on the previous work of Rialti et al., (2023). First, the chapter will establish the meanings and development of ORM, followed by a comprehensive review of literature from the previous decade. The proposed KPIs will then be formulated based on past research, and case studies will be examined to illustrate its application. Significance of the KPIs application will then be addressed.

5.1. Effects on the hotel's performance

In the contemporary digital landscape, the hospitality industry faces a substantial shift in consumer behavior, with an increasing reliance on online information to make informed accommodation decisions (Sigala, 2018). ORM which encompasses monitoring, analyzing, and managing a hotel's online presence, has emerged as a vital determinant influencing hotel performance (Moro et al., 2018). This paper aims to provide a concise examination of the impact of ORM on hotel performance, offering insights for management scholars. Several studies have established a positive relationship between effective ORM and hotel performance, particularly in terms of occupancy and revenue (Blal & Sturman,

2014; Ye et al., 2009). Online reviews, ratings, and user-generated content significantly influence potential guests' perceptions of a hotel's quality and value proposition, ultimately affecting booking decisions (Sparks & Browning, 2011). Hotels with favorable online reputations are more likely to secure higher booking rates, achieve higher occupancy levels, and generate increased revenue (Xie et al., 2014). Additionally, ORM serves as a valuable tool for driving operational improvements, which can subsequently impact performance (Abrate & Viglia, 2016). By continuously monitoring and analyzing online feedback, hotels can identify areas of dissatisfaction, uncover service gaps, and develop targeted strategies to enhance guest experiences (De Pelsmacker et al., 2018). Implementing these improvements bolsters a hotel's online reputation and creates a virtuous cycle, leading to better overall performance (Moro et al., 2018). In this sense, we want to propose a short description of the three main factors that go to affect the overall performance of the hotel and on which ORM can play a crucial role: prices, occupancy level, and finally, RevPar.

- Prices

Online reviews, ratings, and user-generated content play a pivotal role in shaping potential guests' perceptions of a hotel's quality and value proposition (Sparks & Browning, 2011). These online reputation indicators can significantly affect a hotel's pricing strategy, as guests tend to associate higher ratings and positive reviews with superior quality and are often willing to pay a premium for such accommodations (Ye et al., 2009). Consequently, hotels with favorable online reputations can command higher prices without adversely impacting demand (Xie et al., 2014).

- Occupancy

In terms of occupancy, a positive online reputation has been shown to correlate with higher booking rates, as potential guests rely on online information to make informed accommodation choices (Blal & Sturman, 2014). Hotels that proactively manage their online reputation, including addressing negative reviews and engaging with customers on social media platforms, can enhance their image and attract a larger share of potential guests, thereby increasing occupancy levels (De Pelsmacker et al., 2018).

- RevPar

Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR), a key performance indicator in the hospitality industry, is influenced by both average daily rate (ADR) and occupancy levels (Noone et al., 2011). As ORM affects both pricing strategy and occupancy rates, it can directly impact a hotel's RevPAR (Xie et

al., 2014). A favorable online reputation enables hotels to command higher prices and attract more bookings, contributing to an increase in RevPAR and overall hotel performance (Ye et al., 2009).

However, management scholars must recognize the challenges associated with ORM implementation. Managing online reputation demands significant resources, including time, personnel, and technology (Duan et al., 2008). Moreover, the dynamic nature of the online environment and the rapid proliferation of user-generated content make ORM a complex and ongoing process (Sparks et al., 2016). Thus, hotels must balance investments in ORM with ensuring tangible benefits in terms of improved performance (Phillips et al., 2015). We want continue to explore the relationship between ORM and hotel performance, focusing on identifying the most effective ORM strategies and understanding the nuances of ORM in various hospitality market segments.

5.2. Managerial decision making

During the pandemic of COVID-19, hotels reduced staffing and services to save costs. Contactless services, digital messaging, and self-service have all become an integral part of the modern guest experience. As travel and tourism rise, travellers are booking longer trips and spending more, but expectations are higher than ever. Faced with ongoing labour shortages, hoteliers must find creative ways to meet expectations with reduced staffing and resources and to increase their occupancy rates. It's the properties that provide great guest experiences that stand to recover most quickly.

The pattern of use of social media by customers of tourism and hospitality organizations can be divided into three main stages: pre-trip, during the trip and post-trip behaviour. Kushcheva N. and Eilola T-M. (2023) argues that each stage uses social media to help consumers in searching for travel information, and sharing personalized experiences with friends, relatives, or even unknown readers via user-generated content. Pre-trip can include the booking process when potential guests are still evaluating the property, which is why it's so important to have an online booking engine on the hotel website so it would be possible to own the booking experience from start to finish. During the trip stage includes the guest's arrival right through to departure and everything in between. It is important to say that the experience in this stage can vary broadly by property type and services offered. After departure, the guest experience continues with post trip feedback and communications, special offers to return, and hotel management responses to reviews. It could be used as an opportunity to encourage guests to continue to engage with the property by joining loyalty programs or following the property on social media channels if they haven't yet.

Great hotel reviews have a powerful influence on guests when deciding to book. There are more and more customer reviews that are creating value in hospitality. The Review Score does impact market positioning and thereby contributes to the pricing strategy. It also adds different dimensions towards guest perceptions on booking the accommodation against competitive set. Hotel online reputation is critical to the hotel pricing strategy. Reviews influence customer decisions to book or not, and it also influences customers' perceived value for money about hotel product. If a property consistently has a higher review score than their competitors, it is possible to use this in hotel's favour to price above competitor set.

Traditionally, the price has been one of the main Revenue Management tools, but of late, online reviews have also become a major influencing and deciding factor that affects a customer's decision. It is proven that a hotel with a high online review score generates bookings with a high ADR. A prospective guest is more likely to read the reviews of the hotel and what other guests have experienced, than focus on the location, price, or services. Not only good reviews impact the pricing strategy but also replying to both good and bad reviews add value to the property.

Review scores are an indication if the guest experienced a fair value exchange for the money, they paid for a hotel stay. Good or great reviews can be interpreted as a fair value exchange where the guest was satisfied or even delighted with the service and experience for the money they paid. The skilled revenue manager understands how to make this value exchange fair for both parties – the guest and the hotel. The review score has an impact on the overall price positioning of the hotel as good reviews indicate that the guest was happy with the experience, he/she paid for. Tactical pricing may not be so impacted by reviews as that is mostly driven by demand and available supply. Positive reviews of customers validate the overall positioning of the hotel in the market. Conversely, negative reviews indicate when the hotel is not delivering on the expectations of a customer. When a hotel wants to change its positioning by increasing rates to match a different set of competitors, reviews of the new customer segment will be one of the first measurements of success.

Guests always search for the best value for their money, therefore when shopping for a hotel stay, they will search for a property that guarantees a great experience. According to TripAdvisor (2022), the majority of respondents rated reviews as “extremely or very important” for accommodations (82%), attractions (77%), and restaurants (70%). These reviews have a direct impact on how guests perceive the rate and value offered by the property. Therefore, Reputation Management has a very close correlation with Revenue Management, as online reputation directly affects sales and conversion.

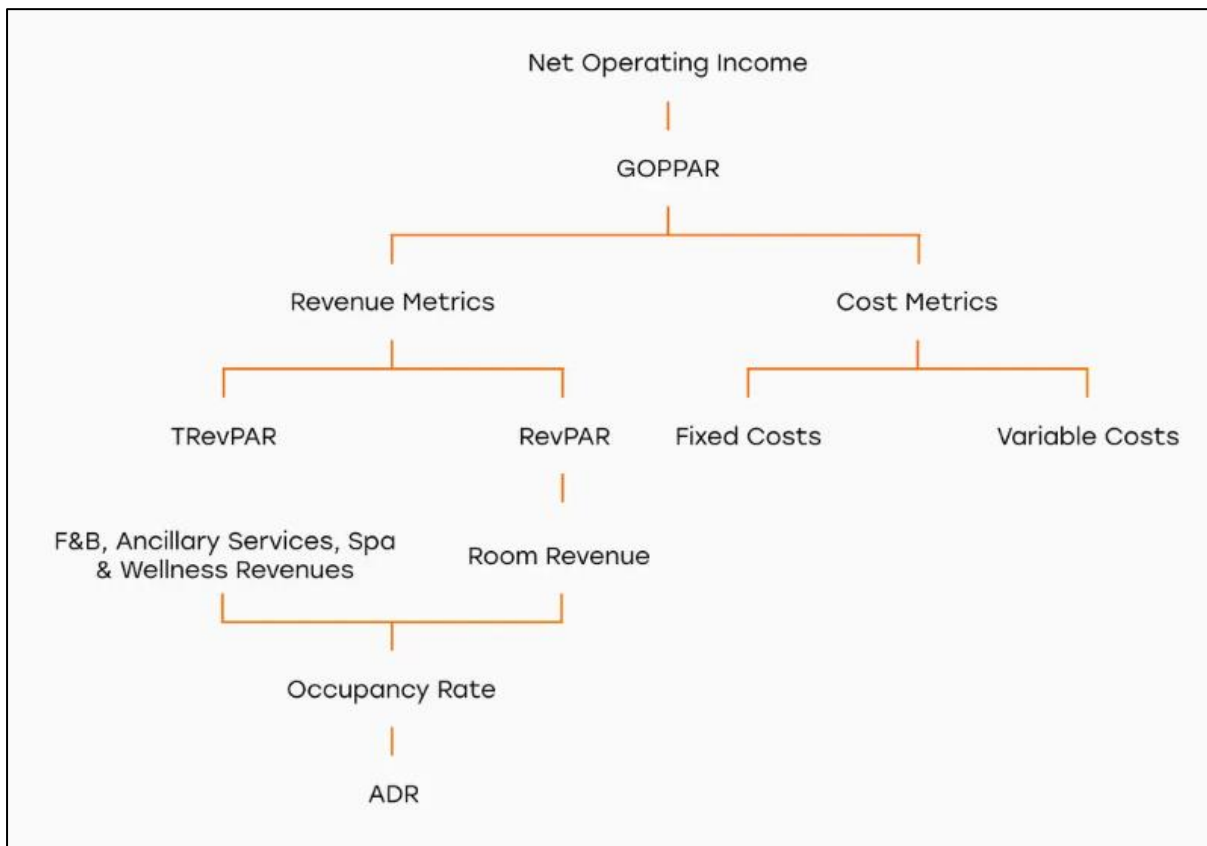
Strong online reputation:

- Improves CTR (click-through rate) and conversion
- Give revenue managers confidence in driving the rate up
- Improves the online / OTA's ranking and exposure
- Drives awareness of the hotel
- Attracts new customers
- Represents the value and quality
- Guests are more likely to purchase add-ons to enhance their stay further
- Free advertising – through word of mouth/online reviews
- Ancillary Revenue

Adversely, poor reputation and reviews can result in a decrease in CTR and therefore lesser conversion. If negative reviews dominate a hotel's online presence, the number of guests and reservations, and therefore revenue, will decline. Furthermore, it will also impact the hotel occupancy rate.

Customer surveys are an invaluable source of information about customer satisfaction. They allow hotels to track actions like customer complaints to management or number of customer reviews the hotel gets on external websites. When using customer surveys, however, it's important that questions are phrased "in a way that elicits specific responses that can be tracked as KPIs. On figure below the most important KPIs for hotels are exhibited.

Figure 34: The most important KPIs for analysing a hotel performance.



Source: Karkera S. (2022)

Effective hotel reputation management help hoteliers to stand out and gives potential customers the confidence that this property is the right choice for their trip.

The guest rating and pricing of the product or services perform is a backbone of the feedback. RevPAR is the most important consideration of any hotel, meaning trying to capture higher ADR, can have remarkable consequences. Guest Rating plays a major role in pricing decisions. Therefore, as the hotel being positively reviewed by a guest also creates opportunities for the hotels to increase their rates. TripAdvisor (2022) explained that 53 per cent of guests are not willing to book any hotels which do not contain reviews of the hotel and nor presented on the travel site. TripAdvisor also commented that 87 per cent of users found TripAdvisor reviews quite helpful confirming their decision towards selecting the hotel.

Since the digital age is developing, hotels aren't the only ones who can track (some) elements of a property's performance. As customers share their hotel experience online, hotels and their potential guests are able to track how well a property delivered on different guest experience metrics.

For this reason, hotels should monitor their online ratings and reviews very closely and use that feedback to improve both their operational procedures and guest experience standards. Indeed, online reviews not only provide a source of direct feedback from guests so hotels can adjust their services to meet guest expectations, but they can (and will) impact a property's bottom line as they affect future bookings.

5.2.1. Monitoring online reviews

Consumers are increasingly talking about the hotel in multiple online channels such as TripAdvisor, Yelp, OTAs – Expedia, Priceline, Travelocity, etc, and social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, and Youtube. Some of the reasons why hoteliers should care are:

1. Monitoring conversation – people are talking about the hotel. If the hotel don't take part in the conversation, it leaves open the possibility of people saying things that may not be particularly true. On the other hand, the hotel may miss opportunities to know what people find cool about the property.
2. Booking rooms – most consumers will check online reviews or pay special attention to their friends' recommendations prior to booking rooms.
3. Search Engine Placement – Google and other major search engines are giving increasing importance to reviews for placement of the hotel on search results.
4. Building a loyal customer base that provides constant feedback – interacting with online guests will help to build a loyal customer base.

These online channels provide real-time feedback about the good and the bad about the hotel. Online reviews will continue to increase in importance and will have a direct impact on the revenue and profitability. With the proliferation of channels where consumers are leaving reviews, the complexity of monitoring and managing such reviews increases significantly.

Aggarwal A. (2021) defines several online performance indicators that the hotel can monitor:

- Total reviews

It is important for hotels to get more reviews online as reviews become important part of search engine placement criteria. Hotels should encourage guests to leave more reviews on different online channels. The unfortunate reality is that most people who had a good time at the hotel are less likely to leave a review than those who are vengeful in their thinking. So, it is a key initiative to encourage all customers to leave reviews online. Hotel staff can request reviews during check-out or through signs posted in the guest rooms and lobbies.

- Positive reviews vs. negative reviews

It is important to understand the distribution of the hotel reviews. In general, most people understand that it is impossible to keep all the customers happy all the time. Experts assume that if 70-80% of the reviews are positive, that's regarded favourably by consumers. However, if 70-80% of the reviews are negative, there is an operations issue at the hotel that needs attention. Hotels should give special attention to identifying systemic problems that may be causing negative reviews.

- Keywords people are using while discussing the hotel

Online reviews provide key marketing information that hotels previously had to spend a lot of money to determine through focus groups and customer interviews. Monitoring the positive keywords gives the hotel opportunity to use them in many marketing messages. Likewise, it is important to find out the negative keywords that people use so that the hotel can focus on those issues in your operations.

- Responding to reviews

Just like when an unhappy guest walks up to the front desk and if staff manage the issue well, the guest leaves happy, it's critical that online reviews be responded to. It is recommended that hotel responds to every negative review and some positive reviews assuming that the channel allows the hotel to respond. By acknowledging the reviewer and assuring their concerns are being taken care of, an angry guest can be converted to a loyal customer. Responding to a positive review allows to further cement relationship with a guest and creates stronger loyalty to the hotel and the brand.

- Benchmark vs. competitors

It is a good practice to compare hotel's performance on key performance indicators against competitors. That gives the hotel staff a goal to target and is an indicator of how well the hotel is performing.

Monitoring and managing online reviews is key and will continue to increase in importance as search engines and consumers use reviews to determine the best hotels in a market. There are several tools in the market that provide easy reports to manage online reputation and cover a vast diversity of channels including OTAs, TripAdvisor, Yelp, and social media channels such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, etc. eBuzz Connect offers a simplistic view for early users as well as very detailed information for sophisticated users. By following these simple guidelines, hotels should see a significant improvement in online ratings and the placement on search engines, as well as websites such as TripAdvisor, Yelp, Expedia, etc. Better ratings and ranking directly translate to higher revenue and profitability.

5.2.2. Measuring employee performance

KPI is a way to quantify employee performance in an organization. The metrics are used to track employee productivity and to manage the team based on the requirements at work. It is critical to monitor and assess performance in a timely manner but finding details about one's duties proves to be a challenge.

This demands the use of the latest methods for developing KPIs for employees. Successful leaders should plan and adopt effective evaluation techniques for suitable results. Therefore, a lot of companies deploy KPI systems for performance reviews based on valuable insights. If you measure the value of employees with profit margins, it will give inaccurate and ambiguous results on productivity and performance.

Performance evaluation includes both qualitative and quantitative elements to get an appropriate outcome and includes more than just one's past performance. However, one can get qualified data only by using KPIs to motivate a team. Once you find a person's potency, you can assign tasks accordingly for the most effective results. The performance review will help in better understanding what motivates an employee and identifying weak points.

Using performance evaluation, pricing policy, project management, team management, and other elements allows identification of problems early on. However, KPIs help evaluate payroll operations when salaries of employees reflect the performance potential of an individual.

As Chellappa S. (2022) mentioned, KPIs alone cannot be used to evaluate an individual's performance. Performance appraisals are based on both qualitative and quantitative feedback from managers, which is more than just productivity. An employee's worth cannot be solely determined based on KPIs, and it extends beyond that.

Employee KPIs are high-level markers that show the level of employee productivity. It allows businesses to identify their potential and assign tasks to individuals or groups. This would help one focus on operational issues, having smooth workflow and resource availability.

For example, **performance reviews** are difficult to maintain regularly and take a lot of time. One of the primary benefits of deploying a people enabled platform is its flexibility and focus on user experience. Some of these are:

- edit reviews for sick or absent employees
- users can access and complete it on their own using its web version or app
- it saves drafts, allowing one to pick where they left

Quantity of feedback changed. As managers share real-time feedback with their employees or teams, it helps clarify expectations, share advice, and celebrate achievements. Not all employees manage to get feedback once a week, though real-time feedback can help them improve at a greater scale. Managers can help teams develop new habits. Management should set a feedback goal for better results. If giving continuous feedback is new to your company, set a goal to share feedback with at least one member of the team and slowly improve it. With this, track how often you give feedback and how it affects individuals and motivates the entire team.

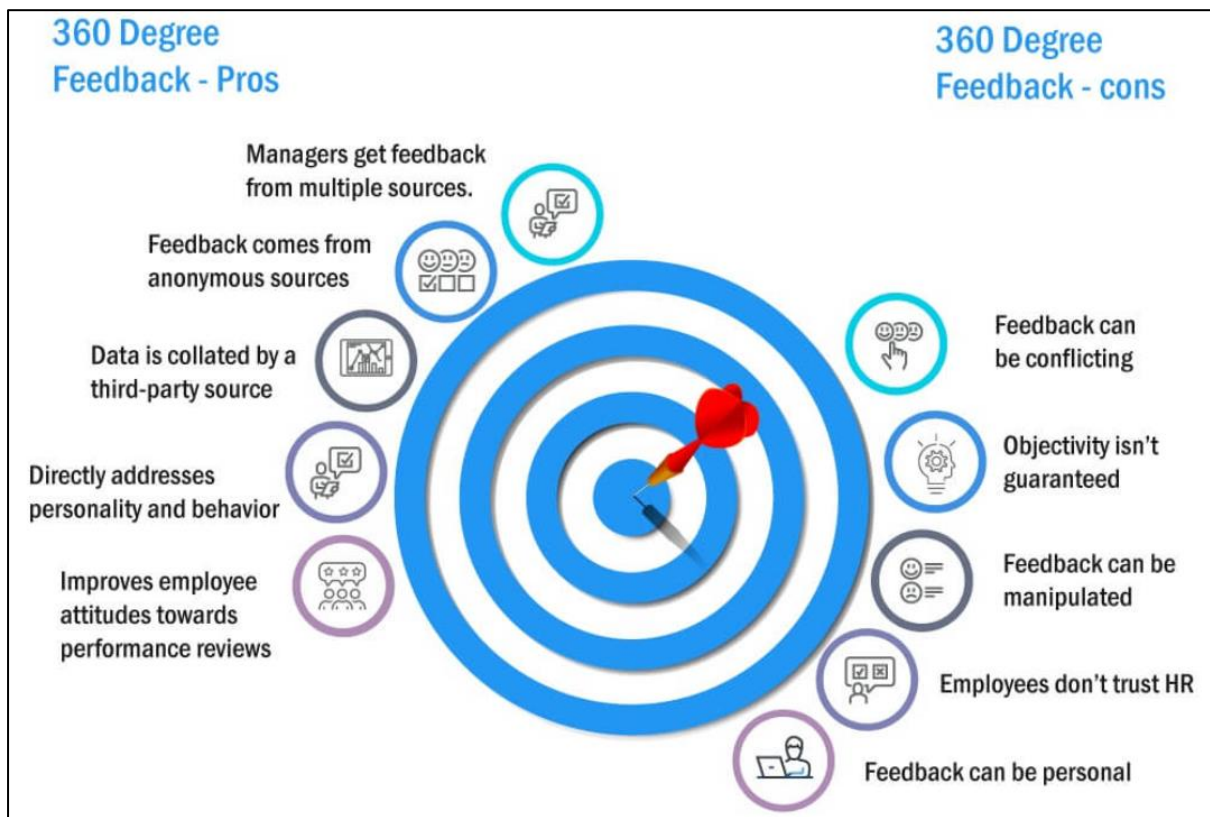
5.2.3. 360 Degree Feedback

In a 360-degree feedback employee performance review, a manager collects information about an employee's performance from coworkers, other supervisors, subordinates, and anyone customers to provide feedback about an employee for use in a 360-degree feedback review. It has become a popular tool to measure an employee's performance based on their working relationships within the company, as well as how they interact with third-party individuals. Instead of employee performance being based

solely on how a manager perceives an employee, this method of review gives them a more rounded view of an individual. It offers an unbiased and faithful evaluation of employee performance.

Managers create a list of 6-10 individuals who have regular contact with an employee, and these respondents are grouped depending on their relationship to that employee. They also consider sending these forms to third parties like customers, clients, or suppliers. Using a standardized feedback form based on the employee’s job role, they send this form to these individuals, asking them competency-based questions about the employee’s behavior and skills. These questions will usually be answered on a scale of 1-5, to allow for easy data collection. The employee who’s being reviewed also fills out the same form. The responses are anonymized and collated as an average by, typically, a trusted third-party source. Then the manager then presents this information to the employee and talks through the form responses with them. Together, they come up with a series of goals based on this data for the next review period. There are advantages and disadvantages of this feedback, which are performed on the figure below.

Figure 35: Advantages and disadvantages of 360 Degree Feedback



Source: What is 360 Degree Feedback & Why is it so Important?

360 Degree Feedback: Pros

- Managers get feedback from multiple sources:
- Feedback comes from anonymous sources
- Data is collated by a third-party source
- Directly addresses personality and behavior
- Improves employee attitudes towards performance reviews

360 Degree Feedback: Cons

- Feedback can be conflicting
- Objectivity isn't guaranteed
- Feedback can be manipulated
- Feedback can be personal

HR managers should always consider whether the feedback they're gathering is performance-focused, personality-focused, or both. All these options can be run by 360-degree feedback processes, but the organization's focus will greatly influence the choice of questions.

If the hotel wants meaningful KPIs for performance reviews, it is important to keep the team motivated with the help of incentives and training. It is important to measure employee recognition and rewards based on KPIs. For instance, if the goal is to attract new customers, KPI should be set to measure how many new customers the hotel gains in a week. Based on this, better to build a performance system to reward employees effectively.

Besides performance, managers must set objectives and targets that can be achieved by each individual and team. This is where performance management can help and understand who is working harder and who is not. Does the work to achieve the level that the organization requires maintaining? Key performance indicators help measure these by quantifying the performance level of an individual and a team. Check the goals and based the evaluation on the KPIs to get effective answers on each and work on the weak organizational areas.

Track performance metrics, set goals, reduce turnover, and try to improve performance. By establishing these, it helps the team clearly understand where they stand and what it will take to reach

the goals. Having clearly defined business goals will help set KPIs for thorough employee performance reviews.

There are so many preconceptions of what impacts hospitality business and its bottom line, but until the hotel start measuring relevant KPIs, it's all just speculation. For hotels, these KPIs range from operations to finances to guest experience. So, it's more important than ever, then, that hotels take stock of the KPIs available to them and implement the processes necessary to monitor and extract insight from them.

5.3. Case Studies – Application of KPI

In the preceding sections (4.2 and 4.3), series of KPIs were established. To illustrate how they can be applied in the hotel sector, the authors assessed three case studies. Each case study's performance in categories such as marketing, HR, supply chain, accounting and finance, servitization, and technology, as well as overall KPIs, will be analyzed. Table II summarizes the backdrop information as well the outcomes of various KPIs for each case study. The following paragraphs present a discussion of each case study's details and explanations.

5.3.1. Case study of 4-star luxury hotel industry – family business

The focus of hotel communication has shifted over time, especially after the pandemic. Rather than promoting single products, hotels are now emphasizing the destination and the various activities and events available to travelers. This shift is critical in attracting customers and encouraging travel after the pandemic. Customers in higher-end hotels expect high-quality service, which impacts hotel reputation building. Reputation is not only built through different communication channels, but it also involves several activities, such as cultivating relationships with banks, credit institutions and other hotel managers, as well as focusing on customer satisfaction, service, values, and social responsibility. Hotels emphasized on concentrating on several KPIs tools in various areas such as Marketing, Sustainability and HR. Amidst the pandemic, hotels focused their social media communication efforts on promoting their online conference offerings, which aimed to maintain a strong presence among customers. Travelling was not feasible during this period, so promoting the business was irrelevant. Nonetheless, the administration recognized the importance of maintaining contact with their customers while maintaining clear and consistent communication that aligned with the hotel's level. The staff intends to achieve this through social media leveraging bloggers and influencers, primarily to convey

an accurate experience of the hotel to potential customers. The administration believes that this approach makes the customer feel that the communication is authentic and genuine. However, care has to be taken to prevent the communication from appearing like direct advertising. Furthermore, hotels are using their sustainable communications to strengthen their brand by connecting tourists with the local community. They have a dedicated event for local artisans, where a competent jury appointed by the hotel evaluates the best work of art to recognize them with an award. This initiative helps to promote the hotel brand while providing visibility to the artisans who are essential to the local community. Furthermore, hotels have taken a significant step to buy only local products in the past year, even though it is more expensive. They believe that by supporting their country's products, they can enhance their reputation and practice sustainability. The hotel's decision is essential in supporting the local economy and preserving the fabric of artisan workshops. Hotels also recognize that their reputation also depends on HR and attracting new talents. They have launched various initiatives, such as training programs and certifications, to enhance employee skills, which are shared on social media to show their commitment to these initiatives. The hotels are also taking specific initiatives to encourage women to become hotel managers, highlighting their efforts to provide equal opportunities for all genders. The management believes that hiring talent from universities can have a positive impact on the hotel's reputation and bring fresh ideas to the industry. Overall, the hotel's HR reputation is critical in attracting and retaining talent and maintaining high-quality service standards. Conclusively, hotels are utilizing a tool that aggregates social media and review sites to highlight areas of improvement, such as sentimental and experience analysis, as well as objective metrics like room cleanliness. This tool helps the team understand their performance, helps them to identify areas that need improvement, and enables them to benchmark against comparable hotels. Additionally, the managers can use data from the tool to make informed decisions regarding where they need to improve. Currently, they are collaborating with a startup to develop a Big Data-based program that might replace their current tool. The hotels are internationally recognized for using the tool, which enhances their credibility and reputation with third parties. The use of such tools helps hotels maintain high-quality service standards and mitigate negative customer feedback.

5.3.2. Case study of 5-star luxury hotel and resort

The study investigated the communication activities of Hotel & Resort and their contribution towards building the company's reputation and customer satisfaction. The results showed that the company utilized multiple channels such as trade magazines, advertising, social media, bloggers and influencers to effectively communicate with their target audience. This resulted in positive customer reviews and the achievement of the desired level of performance within the 5-year timeframe. The annual reviews

and adherence to the budget were instrumental in maintaining the company's success. These findings suggest that an integrated communication approach and improvement in product and services are critical to enhance a company's reputation and customer satisfaction. Social media can provide an immediate advantage to hotels when it comes to building a brand reputation. However, Hotels & Resorts wanted to partner with an external agency to reposition their brand and appeal to customers in a new way. They aimed to become glamorous, timeless, and represent the ultimate in luxury. The communication strategy involved collaborating with the most popular influencer in Italy, a world-renowned influencer with over 29 million followers who is widely recognized and respected. Hotel & Resort believed that the most popular influencer in Italy was an ideal influencer who could consistently represent their values because she was a timeless icon rather than being fashionable for a short period. This way of using an influencer helped them attract new customers who previously didn't consider the structure as one of their choices. The right influencers help convey a hotel's values and style and can help customers fall in love with the accommodation. Finding the right influencer is vital in helping hotels build a strong and reputable brand image. Furthermore, crucial element for reputation is sustainability. Sustainability has been a crucial aspect of Hotel & Resort's operation for the past five to six years. The hotel is planning to introduce a sustainability index for their customers, reflecting the growing trend of environmentally friendly travel. The index will enable customers to assess the hotel's sustainability level and determine whether it is up to their expectations. Hotel & Resort has implemented various sustainable initiatives, such as energy panels, vegetable gardens, and the use of certified materials. Sustainability represents a significant value for the hotel, impacting customer satisfaction and the hotel's reputation. Therefore, Hotel & Resort plans to continue investing in sustainability initiatives to maintain high standards and appeal to environmentally aware customers.

Hotel & Resort recognizes the importance of communication integration where staff should present products and services consciously. However, being a seasonal hotel that hires different staff annually makes it difficult to ensure consistent quality in this regard. The hotel places a high value on gender equality and believes that competence should be the only factor determining staff roles rather than gender. They believe in making each employee feel valued and promoting well-being at work, leading to a better hotel reputation. During the season, the hotel encourages employees to develop projects of their own by reversing roles as a way of increasing engagement and morale. Hotel & Resort rewards its deserving staff with financial incentives and courses, leading to a growth path in their careers. Effective communication, gender equality, and employee recognition are critical factors in maintaining high-quality service standards and a positive reputation for hotels.

Hotel & Resort further used to have an external source for assessing their reputation. However, now they have a tailor-made program that runs a survey system comparing their performance with the competitors in the area. The program cross-references the data and helps the hotel to invest in the areas that require improvement. The hotel uses a three-day customer satisfaction questionnaire for services to check the level of satisfaction without disrupting the customer's vacation. They believe in listening to the customer's feedback as it is essential. Customers' responses are beneficial indicators in helping the hotel improve its service standards. Incorporating a tailor-made program with a survey system helps the hotel to monitor its reputation effectively and focus on improving areas to provide a high-quality customer experience.

5.3.3. Case study of 4-star Funky style hotel

In this case study, the Funky Style Four Star Hotel pays close attention to customer feedback and uses it to enhance customer experience, increase visibility, trust, and reliability, as well as uphold the hotel chain's brand image. To collect this valuable first-hand information, the hotel provides wireless internet in all guest rooms and public areas, which enables guests to share their experience and feedback easily. The hotel uses several online reputation management tools, including The Revinate and Facebook Business Suite, to monitor online reviews and maintain a good image and reputation. The Revinate guest data platform helps hotels to understand and know their customers better. Additionally, Facebook Business Suite is a free tool that brings Facebook, Instagram, and messaging tools together in one place. The hotel's manager believes that these tools have the potential to increase sales, improve visibility, and maintain a strong brand image.

The hotel believes it is important to respond to both negative and positive reviews to maintain a positive relationship with customers. They respond personally rather than using automated responses, and ensure to address potential negativity before it escalates. They identify and admit their mistakes, responding with a positive tone of voice and empathy. They also use Revinate's daily and weekly alerts to react quickly to reviews.

Several studies have found that there is a positive relationship between managerial response and the quality and quantity of future reviews. The manager responds personally to reviews and paraphrases the complaint to create a more personal and less generic response. This type of response creates a personality for communication, deepening the customer relationship, and creating loyalty.

Table 12: Summary of the background information and the results of different KPIs of these cases

	Case A	Case B	Case C
Nature of Hotel	Four Star Luxury Hotel - Family Business	Five star Luxury hotel and resort	Four Star Funky style hotel
Location	Bergamo, Bologna, Florence, Genoa, Milan, Naples, Parma, Roma, Soranno and turin	Lucca	Helsinki
Founded	1980	1926	1952
Reviews rating	4.2	4.4	4.2
Number of Reviews	1179	211	2011
Estimated Positive Reviews	990	177	1689
Percentage of Positive reviews	84%	84%	84%
Estimated Negative Reviews	189	34	321
Percentage of negative reviews	16%	16%	16%
KPI's Results	The KPI to measure and monitor ORM		
Marketing	Reputation building	Communication activities	Brand Image
<i>Case A: 2 KPI</i>	Social media communication		Marketing strategy
<i>Case B: 4 KPI</i>		Integrated communication approach	
<i>Case C: 2 KPI</i>		Influencer marketing	
		Tailor-made program	

HR	HR initiative	Gender equality	Staff reputation
<i>Case A: 1 KPI</i>		Employee recognition	Customer service
<i>Case B: 2 KPI</i>			
<i>Case C: 2 KPI</i>			
Supply chain	-	Sustainability	-
<i>Case A: 0 KPI</i>			
<i>Case B: 1 KPI</i>			
<i>Case C: 0 KPI</i>			
Accounting and finance	KPIs tools	-	Customer feedback
<i>Case A: 1 KPI</i>			
<i>Case B: 0 KPI</i>			
<i>Case C: 1 KPI</i>			
Servitization	-	-	-
<i>Case A: 0 KPI</i>			
<i>Case B: 0 KPI</i>			
<i>Case C: 0 KPI</i>			
Technology	Shift in hotel communication	-	Wireless internet
<i>Case A: 3 KPI</i>			
<i>Case B: 0 KPI</i>	Sustainable communication		
<i>Case C: 1 KPI</i>	Tools for improvement		

Source: own elaboration

It appears that the majority of the KPIs implemented in the assessment of the three cases were based on subjective measures, with a marked absence of objective measures to monitor and measure ORM.

5.3.4. Discussion on KPI results

When comparing evaluation criteria among Case A, Case B, and Case C hotels, the five-star Case B hotel outperforms the four-star hotels in terms of key performance indicators (KPIs) with four KPIs measured, while only two KPIs are evaluated for the other hotels. The KPIs for Case B include Communication activities, integrated communication approach, Influencer marketing, and Tailor-made program, which emphasize luxury, exclusivity, personalized service, engaging communication, and brand image management. In contrast, the KPIs for Case A and C are Reputation building, social media communication, brand image and Marketing strategy, which show more generic marketing and branding approaches for four-star hotels and lesser emphasis on personalized attention and interactions. Five-star hotels aim for quality and customization, while four-start hotels focus on more effective strategies to attract their audiences. These different criteria are reflective of the varying levels of competition and expectations in the hospitality industry. It is crucial for hotels to determine what criteria they need to prioritize to reach their objectives.

The analysis further identifies the KPIs for the different hotels evaluated as part of the HR metrics. Case B, a five-star hotel, has two KPIs, Gender Equality and Employee Recognition. Gender Equality is crucial in high-end establishments in the hospitality sector regarding the hotel's commitment to inclusivity and diversity. Employee Recognition remains central to staff motivation and satisfaction, which enable high-quality service delivery to customers. Case C's KPIs are Staff reputation and Customer Service, emphasizing a personal connection with guests and creating a positive environment for the company's employees to generate a more welcoming atmosphere to guests and better guest satisfaction. In contrast, Case A has only one KPI, HR Initiative, focusing on the importance of bettering the company's culture, processes, and procedures for HR management. While this KPI is necessary, it may not impact customer satisfaction or meet guests' expectations. The identified KPIs show how hotels need to prioritize areas based on their market niche and target clientele. While five-star hotels mainly focus on personalized services, emphasizing gender equality and employee recognition, four-star hotels concentrate more on developing Staff Empathy, Customer Service, and HR Initiatives, considering their distinct market.

Furthermore, the analysis identifies the critical supply chain KPIs for sustainability in Case B, whereas no KPIs were found for ORM in Cases A and C. This suggests that supply chain management and sustainability are more important for five-star hotels. Sustainability is an increasingly critical issue for high-end hotels, indicating their commitment to reducing their environmental impact while enhancing ORM (ORM). This aligns with five-star hotels' philosophy of delivering excellence through

creating positive social and environmental change. In contrast, four-star hotels may not give priority to reputation management of their online presence, possibly lagging in reputation management strategy.

Four-star hotels prioritize managing their online reputation through measured evaluations, while Case B does not have a KPI related to ORM. Case A's KPIs tools highlight the importance of structured and centralized online reputation measurements for data-driven decisions, and Case C's KPI Customer Feedback emphasizes engaging customers to enhance their experiences and foster online reputation. The lack of a KPI for measuring ORM for Case B does not necessarily mean it does not manage its reputation well, but it may prioritize other measures, such as traditional marketing, word of mouth, or a loyal customer base.

Technology KPIs are crucial to ORM for Cases A and C, while no KPIs were identified for Case B. Case A's Shift in Hotel Communication, Sustainable Communication, and Tools for Improvement and Case C's Wireless technology show that four-star hotels prioritize using technology for managing their online reputation. The lack of KPIs for Case B does not mean the hotel is oblivious to its online reputation, but it might rely on other strategies such as refined services and offerings, ensuring guests view it positively.

Servitization, the integration of services with the product offering, was not identified as a key priority for the evaluated hotels. Although it is considered essential for hotels, the concept is not widely understood among stakeholders, and it did not emerge as a crucial KPI for the cases.

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What is 360 Degree Feedback & Why is it so Important? <https://www.profit.co/performance-management/360-degree-feedback-how-to-make-it-work/>

6. Online reputation management in destinations and attractions

This chapter focuses on destinations and attractions. The specifics, especially in case of destinations, lead to different possibilities in and approaches to reputation management. The destinations are not evaluated as a whole in online platforms, however, the tourists' impression is even more complex than in case of hotels or restaurants. The attraction like museums and historical monuments are special in terms of the product and types of visitors. Online reputation management of destinations and attractions, hence, requires a special attention.

6.1. Specifics of destinations' and attractions' reputation management

Online reputation is very important in tourism and therefore it is necessary to manage it. Information gained from online reviews can help the visitor to decide about the place to visit and can give important feedback to attractions, companies and destinations about the perception of their activities. Positive tourist destination reputation enhances the competitiveness of the destination, making it easy to compete for visitors, events, resources, investments. Positive reputation makes a destination a place worth to be visited and lived in. Nowadays online reputation is a crucial factor in generating repeat visits to destination.

Online reputation management in destinations has some specifics compare to online reputation management of companies. These specifics are based on the specifics of the management of the destination in comparison to the corporate management. Both units, the company or the destination represent competing units that compete in the tourism market. Both have several common features which are based on the basic functions of management - planning, directing, organizing, controlling, in which they have to respect the influences of both the external and internal environment. The specificity of destinations is that they bring together a large number of diverse entities with their own legal personality, therefore reputation management is more challenging than in the case of a company. Destination management decisions are the result of a certain consensus among as many stakeholders as possible, including the local population. Unlike corporate management, destination management is intended to contribute to the development of the associated units, whose members can operate in a competitive position within the territory. The individual profit-seeking interests of business operators often make it difficult to achieve the common goal of the destination (Gajdošík & Šebová, 2020).

Due to the large number of stakeholders in the destination, management is carried out by specific organizations set up for management and cooperation purposes, the so-called destination management organizations (DMOs). The idea is to have representation of all stakeholders in tourism development (both from public and private sector), who are involved in decision-making together. In this respect, a DMO is a more open entity than a business; management is more complex and less transparent than in a business. Measuring performance is difficult, and controversial objectives are often manifested, resulting from the fact that DMOs have limited ability to influence individual members (especially tourism service providers) who have legal personality. The influence of interest groups (local population, entrepreneurs, hoteliers, environmental activists, etc.) is more pronounced in destination management. At the same time, the legitimation of DMOs in the socio-economic environment is essential. For these reasons, destination reputation management is also more challenging.

The role of the DMO is to lead and coordinate activities in the destination in accordance with the formulated strategy (strategically oriented approach). Destination management organizations contribute through their coordination and marketing activities to link relatively independent tourism actors into an association which, depending on the regional context, can perform tasks ranging from the coordination of the marketing products of the territory to the management of the visitor. The aim is to meet the needs of the visitor, to build the reputation of the destination and at the same time to realise the economic benefits of sustainable tourism development.

Online reputation management of destinations has some specifics and needs specific solutions (Morgan et al., 2011). The reputation of destination is depending not only on customers' satisfaction with their services but also on the reputation of tourism service providers, whose services they offer and mediate either individually or in the form of their own product.

In terms of destinations and their specifics in the context of online reputation management, the impact of online reputation on the visit to destination is mainly analysed (Rachmawati et al., 2021), the impact on repeat visitation to the destination (Deyá-Tortella et al., 2020; Mirzaalian & Halpenny, 2021), the building of visitors' trust to the destination (Abubakar et al., 2017), visitors' attitude towards the destination and the overall image formation of the destination (Gosal et al., 2020).

In the tourism industry, visitors' attitude towards visiting a tourism destination is an important factor in choosing a particular tourism destination, regardless of previous experience with that destination. Nowadays, the information provided through online space is becoming a vital source of information about the tourism destinations that tourists want to visit and that also influences them in

their decision-making process. Visitors seek information provided through electronic word of mouth mainly for convenience, relying on easy-to-process information, believing that they can reduce the risk of making the wrong decision of choosing a service and a place, and can plan their stay at a tourism destination more effectively.

The role of online reputation management is to respond not only to positive but also to negative information. This risk is all the greater because a range of service providers influence the overall satisfaction of the visitor at the destination and a negative experience of one service can affect the overall impression gained by visiting the destination. It is important to note that not only the organisation but also the visitor informs and gives feedback. This can be both positive and negative and it is the role of DMO's online reputation management to respond to and manage it.

It is important to focus on building a positive reputation, creating a favourable image of the tourism destination, reducing promotional and marketing expenditure and increasing trust in the tourism destination.

Visitors search for information about tourism destinations on social networks, travel websites, official destination websites and travel blogs. Social networks contain opinions and experiences of other users, and less space is devoted to posting information about tourism destination places. Official websites of the destinations provide more comprehensive information on the tourism destinations and logistical issues, such as transport, timetables, etc. Many of these sites allow users to post comments and provide information about their experiences with the tourism destination, thus enriching the content of these sites and providing other users with everything they need without having to search for information on other websites as well. Blogs focused on tourism destinations not only contain information related to the place itself, but also offer travel tips that can be useful to a diverse readership. In addition, blogs give users the opportunity to read feedback and comments from other users in the form of articles or specific sections about travel experiences, thus providing very complete content.

The Internet and digital technologies are nowadays major factors influencing visitor behaviour in destination places. It is important to pay attention to building online reputation. Many consumers use the Internet to plan their trips, search for information about destination places, find accommodation, book flights and activities, as well as to communicate with other travellers and share their experiences on social media. As a result, visitors can influence the awareness and image of businesses, organisations, tourism attractions as well as destinations. It is therefore essential for destination management organisations to know the preferences of visitors and to adapt their products and services to their

potential demand in order to build and maintain their brand reputation and become more competitive in the market.

Websites and social media have changed the way visitors travel and search for travel information. Websites and social media have become an important source of information for visitors in the tourism industry because they allow the sharing of experiences and reviews of destination places and tourism businesses. Visitors often use them to make decisions about where to travel and where to stay, and to obtain information about local attractions and activities. As this trend increases the importance of websites and social media, it is important that representatives of destination management organisations pay attention to this trend. Visitors are using the internet and social media to find information about tourism services and attractions, and are increasingly booking these services through electronic booking systems.

Social media plays an important role in many aspects of tourism and are also very influential channel on building the reputation of destination or attractivity. These include information seeking, decision making based on consumer behaviour, tourism promotion and focusing on the most effective practices in interacting with consumers of tourism services (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014). The use of social media presents many benefits and opportunities for tourism businesses and organisations. According to Abbasi et al. (2023), social media is cheaper than traditional media, allows interactive communication, reaches a larger audience in a shorter time, and is considered more democratic. However, it also brings challenges for organizations in the form of figuring out how to make their social media content valuable to their customers and therefore be more appealing and successful. It is social media that provides the space to build a positive reputation.

As we know, technology has reshaped the travel industry. It has an essential impact on shaping travellers' experience. Today's travellers have many alternatives when planning their trips, especially since they have more money, time and can use better transportation than ever before. Tourist destinations are competing to influence the process of making travel decisions, and their online reputation management is one of the important tools. The Internet has had a momentous influence on the tourism sector. On the supply side, the Internet has become a primary tool for destination management organizations to interact and communicate with current and potential travellers and online marketing has been a focus of the majority of destinations. On the demand side, travellers now depend on the Internet to access travel-related information, including destination comparisons, planning their trips, buying travel products and services, sharing their travel experiences, and contacting people from different destinations (Xiang et al., 2015). It is also expected that the technology will continue

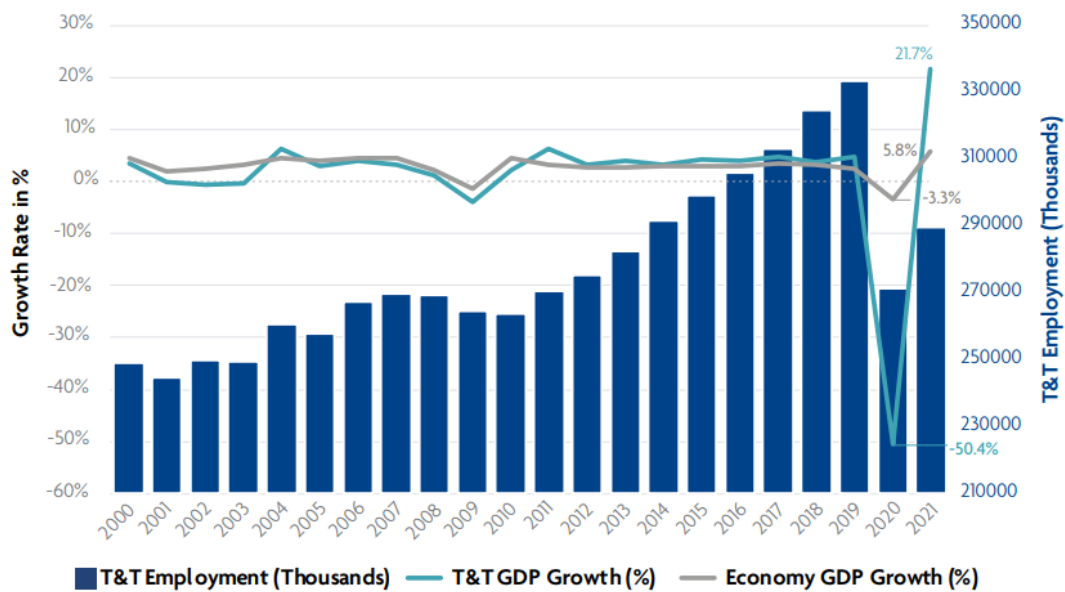
revolutionizing the tourism industry and will be the main determinant for the future (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Tourism is a reputation-dependent sector; on the demand side, potential travellers without previous experience of a destination face certain risks when determining their travel options. An accurate perception of the destination's reputation helps minimize the risk of unsatisfactory travel experiences. On the supply side, a favourable tourist destination reputation enhances the destination's competitive advantage and helps it to compete for visitors, investments, and skilled human resources. Despite the importance of tourism destination reputation, attempts at developing a definition or even a model to assess it has been somewhat limited by an overreliance on theories of corporate reputation.

6.2. Effects on destination's visitation

One of the primary aims of each and every DMO's marketing activities is to create a loyal customer (visitor) willing to spread positive word of mouth about the destination and to enhance his/her repeated visit. Visitors' loyalty is therefore demonstrated not only in his/her positive attitude (Carneiro et al., 2019) but also in his/her behaviour (recommendation & repeated purchase). While for the first visit the predominant motivational driver is the novelty-seeking (Fakeye & Crompton, 1991), in case of repeated visit of a familiar destination a wide range of factors, join the game such as visitor characteristics and motives, his/her perception of the destination and requirements for quality and the feeling of satisfaction. In the post COVID-19 era, the competition for visitor has strengthened, as tourism sector was the first to be hit and the last to be recovered. The destinations' ability to recover from this disruption depends on their flexibility to adapt appropriate measures, to understand the changing needs of visitors and to invest wisely into tourism.

Why does the online reputation matter for tourism destinations? As illustrated in Fig. 36, the COVID-19 outbreak smashed tourism into year 2011. The slight increase and wake-up after 2020 and 2021 is marked by a strong competition for visitor and shortage of work force.

Figure 36: The economic impact of tourism from 2000 - 2021



Source: World Travel & Tourism Council: Travel & Tourism Economic Impact Global Trends 2022.

Previously described challenges of destination management (6.1) resulting from large number of stakeholders involved and their contrary needs and goals also affect the way destinations communicate with visitors. Strategic approach to online reputation management may ease the impact of certain critical situations. As followed, we would like to focus on a specific approach to online reputation management at macro level. The example represents type of ORM of immediate crisis- one that was defined being unexpected by Parsons (1996) where little or no warning exists therefore it is impossible to research the problem or prepare a plan before the crisis hits- a natural disaster.

6.2.1. Restoring positive reputation after disasters - is it possible?

Natural disaster and Turkish willingness to remain among top attractive tourism destinations

An unexpected hit of force majeure such as earthquake at the beginning of high season has the power to completely erase destination's well managed reputation. The limitedness of today's online environment and the eagerness of online users to quickly share information decrease destination's ability to control the situation. With no time to preparation and extraordinary plan B, in case of a natural disaster, the destination can react only afterwards. And it is obvious that in a crisis, what matters the most is the life rescue, the ORM becomes a side effect for a while. However, Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA) – the official national marketing body of Turkey, remained still & inactive for longer than desired period in the first part of the year.

Turkey being strongly dependent on tourism where international visitors in 2022 spent more than \$13 billion, awaited another positive year and bright future of international arrivals. The overall number of foreign visitors (table 13) visiting Turkey was slightly over 44.56 million in 2022 (the total number of arriving visitors was 51.39 million comparable to the pre-COVID-19 numbers in 2019 with 51 747 199).

Table 13: Number of arrivals into Turkey from 2018-2022

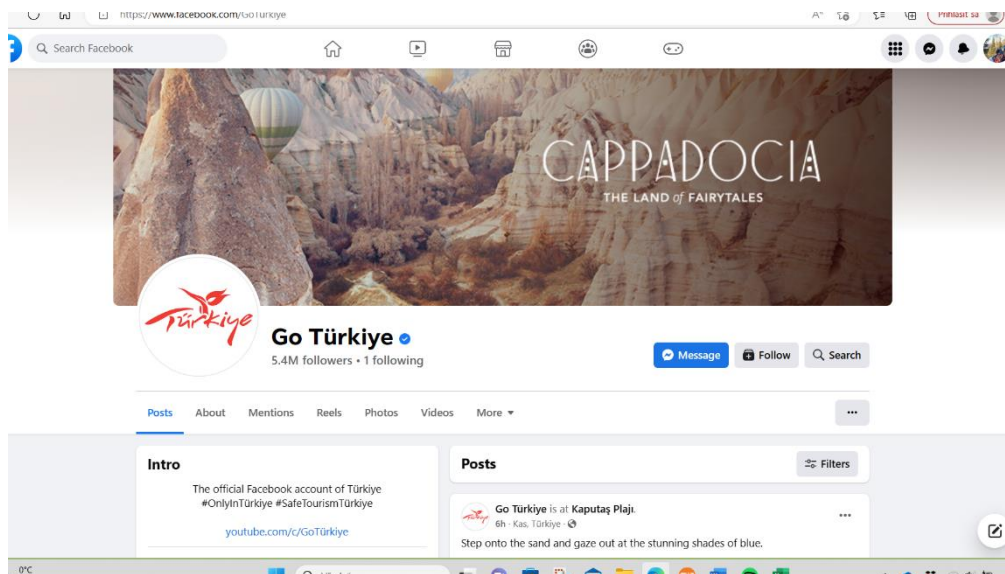
Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total number of arriving visitors	46 112 592	51 747 199	15 971 201	30 038 961	51 387 513

Source: Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Turkish Statistics Institute, 2023.

This represented an increase of 80.3% compared to year 2021, based on statistical data of Turkey's Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Turkish Statistics Institute, released only a couple of days before the earthquake. On February 6th, town Gaziantep in southeast Turkey close to Syrian borders faced a 7.8-magnitude earthquake with a collapse of 6000 buildings. The town being as far as 850 km from Istanbul does not belong to the main touristic destinations of the country. However, the loss of 50 000 lives from Turkey and over 7 000 from Syria evoked an immediate global response. More than 14 million Turkish people were affected and rescue teams from all over the world hurried to the country to help search the ruins.

Proved by the situation in Turkey, the effective management of crises and disasters is vital for the tourism industry, which is often impacted negatively by external political, economic, social, and technological factors often beyond the industry's immediate control (Ritchie, 2004). How did the TGA react to the situation? When checking the activity and posts on its official Facebook page Go Türkiye (Fig. 37), Twitter, Instagram and YouTube channel, no information about the earthquake can be found.

Figure 37: Facebook page of Tourism Promotion and Development Agency (TGA)



Source: Go Türkiye Facebook page, 2023.

Crisis communication and control is mainly concerned with providing correct and consistent information to the public and enhancing the image of the destination faced with a crisis (Ritchie, 2004). The importance of the crisis did not affect neither disrupt the consistency of online self-presentation of this destination. No interaction between the followers and the page administrator/owner Go Türkiye may be found. The communication is strictly one way. The only moment proving that something was going on was the stop of daily post on Facebook page from February 6th (day of the earthquake) to February 27th. For three weeks the page remained inactive, previously posted information was only commented by followers, such as: “So sorry to hear about the massive earthquake in central turkey. Blessings to you and all those impacted. I hope Australia can help if needed” (Facebook, 2023). This proof of empathy did not encounter any reaction. In three weeks the pre-earthquake tone of voice was restored and the regular upload of posts continue. No change in the pattern or content of the posts may be observed after the urgent crisis set up.

The same strategy of showing solely positive recreation& vacation related images was used by Go Türkiye on Twitter. Here, the tweets stopped for even longer after the earthquake, the activity was revived on March 15th. And the very first tweet led the attention to the region of Antalya (Fig. 38).

Figure 38: First tweet after natural disaster published on March 15th



Source: Twitter, 2023.

This contrasts with other private tweets occurring when entering the word Turkey into search. The first information that occurs is the video of a baby that after the earthquake survived 5 days under ruins and his mother thought to be dead, who was treated in another hospital. Short tweet uploaded with emotions, evoking interest, and compassion. The use of storytelling with all its positive effects is evident such as real-life story and emotional tie were present. Neither Instagram nor official YouTube channel do not mention the devastated truth about the country, only happy faces.

Being overlooked by TGA, the users of TripAdvisor succeeded immediately. Visitors' concerns from the day of this natural disaster covered safety of trips in following days, airlines operation and the accommodation capacity of hotels in adjacent regions which were subsequently used for those who remained homeless. The reactions on such concerns vary from reassuring that the affected area is 600 km far away to the critical ones proposing to completely postpone pleasure journeys and trips (Fig. 4).

Figure 39: Example of user generated content on Tripadvisor following the days after earthquake on February 6th.

The screenshot displays a forum thread on Tripadvisor. The main post, titled "Is it safe to travel to Antalya?", is from user Unoisha K (London, United Kingdom) dated Feb 7, 2023, at 6:21 AM. The post asks for advice on whether to cancel a 4-night trip to Antalya. Below it, there are 44 replies. Three replies are visible:

- Reply 1:** From GullibleGourmand (Istanbul, Turkiye), dated Feb 7, 2023, at 6:36 AM. The user states they are 600km from the earthquake and the nearest damage is 400km away.
- Reply 7:** From Lyn341 (Essex, United Kingdom), dated Feb 8, 2023, at 4:54 AM. The user expresses sympathy for the Turkish people and suggests that holidays and trips might be affected.
- Reply 8:** From vipfamily (Antalya, Turkiye), dated Feb 8, 2023, at 5:50 AM. The user mentions an announcement that hotels in the Antalya area would be used for displaced people, suggesting a change in holiday plans.

Source: TripAdvisor, 2023.

A concrete sentiment and tone of voice analysis of emotions prevailed in the days following the earthquake would be interesting. The reason is the fact that people believe reviews by other people

more than they trust commercial advertising (visitscotland.org, 2023). Comparable method using text mining and approach was conducted, specifically a SA by Rita et al. (2022), who investigated nearly 40.000 Booking.com and TripAdvisor reviews using sentiment analysis to understand reviewers' satisfaction and feelings about hotels. The authors underline that online reviews have bridged the gap between traditional word-of-mouth and viral communication, influencing peer's decision processes (Rita et al., 2022, p. 1). Text mining is used to extract knowledge from a substantial amount of non-structured textual data, uncovering patterns and relevant information (Ramos et al., 2019). SA analyzes people's opinions, evaluations, attitudes, and emotions towards products, services, or organizations, revealing a positive, neutral or negative reaction (Rita et al., 2020).

This may be helpful in the pre-purchase decision-making process of visitors because 90% of them claim considering electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) before performing their final purchase decision (Akhtar et al., 2019).

With the high season approaching, TGA remains in difficult position to restore the damaged reputation of Türkiye as a safe and dreamed summer vacation destination. The consistency of online reputation management disrupted by the unpredictable crisis is getting on its right path. However, the national tourist board should act more enthusiastically and profit from the eWOM as a part of the ORM. Users' willingness to share the emotions with others as defined by Nam et al. (2020) comprise instant availability and persistent digital footprint, anonymous character, which can motivate other people to share information and possibility to create social networks.

DMOs understood the importance of ORM and support the businesses and organizations within their geographical area to actively react to positive and negative feedback from visitors. VisitScotland (www.visitscotland.org, 2023) for example explains on its webpage in a detailed and comprehensible way the essence of digital marketing to the partners and stakeholders. ORM and the usefulness of TripAdvisor lies in aggregation of information and reviews on attractions and businesses and thus giving tourists an insight into the destinations they want to travel to. The importance of online feedback is recognized as followed:

- immediate feedback highlights successes, or areas for improvement and development;
- intensifies decision-making for other potential customers;
- positive conversation online is very attractive to customers;
- engaging with feedback builds trust and loyalty with customers and encourages repeat business;

- search engine optimisation (SEO). Individual businesses with positive reviews may be weighted higher in search engine rankings.

Reviews give feedback on customer expectations. They also provide information to help visitors to make informed decisions and to service providers to meet customer expectations and exceeded them in the future (www.visitscotland.org, 2023). To enhance destination trust Abubakar (2016) proposes increasing the credibility of eWOM by including user identity, or by using referral systems, in line with trust transfer theory propositions.

Having explained the benefits of ORM to destination stakeholders, the destination itself encounter positive effect which lies in: increasing number of visitors, positive destination image, ameliorated online reputation of the whole destination, elevated competitiveness on the international tourism market.

6.3. Case studies

As an example of online reputation management exploitation in the destinations we have chosen two case studies from different countries. First one shows how online reputation management is understood in Slovakia, the case study shows the Destination management organization Vysoké Tatry Region. The second case study compares two destination management organizations representing the capital cities – one from Austria and one from Czech Republic.

6.3.1. Case study 1: Online Reputation Management in DMO Vysoké Tatry Region

Introduction

System state support of the tourism development in Slovakia is regulated by Act no. 91/2010 Coll. on the support of tourism in the Slovak Republic, which defines the rights and obligations of natural persons and legal entities operating in tourism, the creation of conceptual documents and financing the development of tourism. According to the law, the fulfillment of tasks in tourism is ensured by the ministry, self-governing regions, the municipalities, regional destination management organizations, local destination management organizations and tourist information centers. Tourism in Slovakia belongs to the competence of the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic. The ministry plays an important role in the development of tourism in Slovakia and provides direct and indirect and financial and non-financial support of the organizations operating in tourism.

There are currently 8 regional and 39 local destination management organizations in Slovakia (2023). Destination management organization should support the development of tourism in the area

and are oriented on various groups of stakeholders – the visitors, who come to visit the destination and buy the products and services in the destination, can help to expand the reputation of the destination, local entrepreneurs, and businesses, who provide the services and products for the visitors and also local inhabitants. One of the local organizations operating in the most visited region of Slovakia is DMO Vysoké Tatry Region. The region is visited by a large number of visitors every year and is one of three most visited regions in Slovakia, together with the Slovak capital Bratislava and the neighboring Liptov region.

Figure 40: Region Tatry



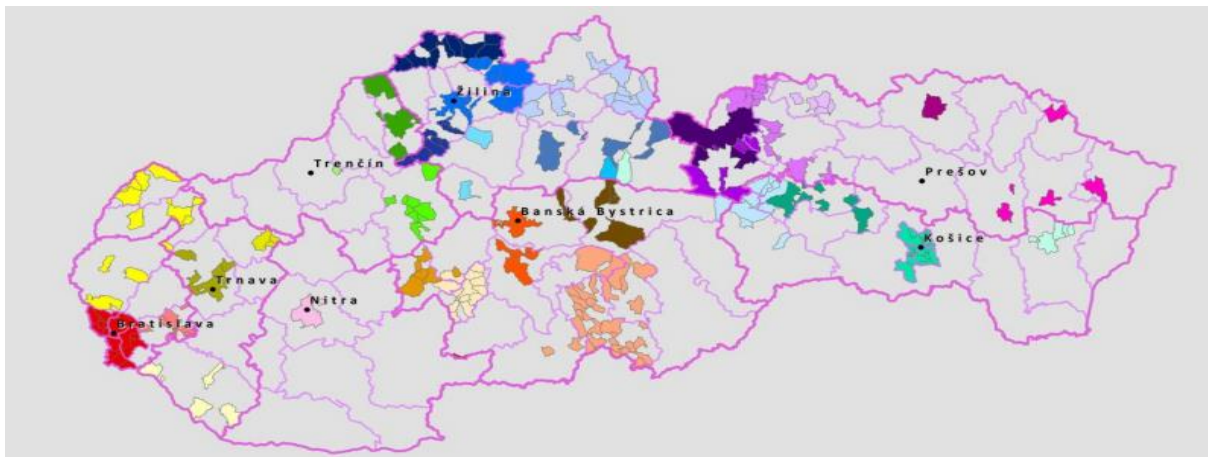
Source: <https://horami.sk>, 2023.

Problem description

Destination management organization Vysoké Tatry Region was established on December 19th 2011. The organization focuses on promoting and creating conditions for the development of tourism, with the intention to build a significant and internationally renowned tourism destination in the area of the organization.

However, there are currently a total of three local tourism organizations operating in the High Tatras (DMO Vysoké Tatry Region, DMO Vysoké Tatry – Podhorie, DMO Tatry – Spiš – Pieniny – located in Prešov self-governing region), which can be confusing for the visitor.

Figure 41: Destination management organizations in Slovakia



Source: mindop.sk, 2023.

It is questionable whether the visitor perceives the action of these multiple organizations and whether it is the tourism organization that has the greatest influence in building awareness of the destination. Would it be more effective if there was only one tourism organization operating in the area? Would it have an impact on the destination's image and visitor perception? However, the organization is currently not interested in linking up with organizations operating in the region but is interested in building a positive awareness of the destination as a whole.

Figure 42: Logos of different organizations in the region



Source: Own elaboration, 2023.

Objectives

The aim of the destination management organization Vysoké Tatry Region is to maintain its position on the tourism market in Slovakia and to be a destination where visitors feel comfortable and where they like to return. It would like to be a leader among mountain destinations in Slovakia. They would like to create a clearly legible brand and communicate that all entities in the region are as one family. They are interested in the opinions of visitors. Visitor opinion on tourism development in a destination is important due to determining the future direction of development and the preparation of strategic plans. Sources of information and ways of planning and booking a trip in destination are guiding factors for targeted destination marketing. It is therefore important to get feedback from visitors. The organization recognizes the importance of building a good reputation in the online space. So, we investigated how they manage their reputation in the online space.

Results

DMO Vysoké Tatry Region has a website <https://regiontatry.sk/>, is active on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/RegionVysokeTatry/>), Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com/regionvysoketatry/>) and has a YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmT0xkr6Om28sI5Fm2y4DNA>). On Facebook the organization has currently a rating of 4.8 based on the opinion of 191 people. Instagram of the organization is followed by 3 581 people. Their YouTube channel is followed by 224 subscribers.

Figure 43: Logo of DMO Vysoké Tatry Region



Source: www.regiontatry.sk, 2023.

The DMO thinks that feedback from other people is crucial when choosing a destination. They see online platforms as important because they allow them to gather information efficiently on which

individual organizations can base decisions to deal with situations. However, they could not answer the question which online platforms are most important to them. In terms of feedback, they consider feedback from experts to be more valuable compared to general feedback. They base their reputation primarily on verified and up-to-date information, photos from the destination and providing quality information to visitors. They moderate their media presence through social networks.

They also attend trainings, even not directly aimed on online reputation management, and continuously strive for improvement. A strategy to promote their activities in order to increase their reputation is to provide always up-to-date information through social networks, websites and newsletters. Currently the organization does not have any corporate social responsibility or environmental strategy to enhance its reputation. Services and their quality, according to the organization, are the most essential for reputation building. In the case of the organization, the information provided to visitors as well as to businesses in the region is essential. Responses and reputation are monitored by the organization on an ongoing basis. It does not have a specific procedure for monitoring it, but it tries to check all the outputs and correct any shortcomings. In terms of online reputation monitoring tools, the organization uses google analytics to monitor the website. If there is any reputation crisis, which can be for example an inappropriate comment on social media, then they try to resolve the situation in a nice, constant way with the commenter, even if the topic is sometimes difficult. The organization tries to resolve negative feedback calmly with adequate response. When asked how they know real negative feedback from fake feedback, they replied that it does not make a difference to them. The organization does not have a special reputation manager position. All employees respond to feedback. They respond to both negative and positive feedback. However, there are very few negative ones. The organization regularly informs the different actors and members of the organization about its activities. It tries to maintain its identity while continuously improving its image for example new branding, marketing campaigns at home and abroad, presenting the organization at exhibitions and fairs, etc. The organization does not engage in staff training and reputation management training.

Guidance questions

- Do you consider the attention paid by DMO Vysoké Tatry Region to online reputation management to be sufficient?
- Do you think that destination management organizations are the ones that are decisive in building the image of a destination?

- According to your own experience, what do you think has the greatest influence in a visitor's decision to visit a destination - the DMO's activity, their previous experience with the destination, or recommendations from family and friends?
- Do you think that activities of DMO Vysoké Tatry Region related to online reputation management will convince current/potential visitors to stay/visit this destination?
- What activities would you recommend the organization to implement in order to build a positive reputation?

Teachers' notes:

Tourism organizations have an irreplaceable place in the development of tourism in the region. The destination management organization coordinates the interests of the different actors in the destination. Visitors are becoming more educated and informed, and their purchasing behavior is also influenced by the ability of the destination to assert itself in a competitive tourism market, to be able to communicate both with visitors and with other stakeholders in tourism in the destination. Several authors agree that it is the destination and its offerings that motivate visitors to participate in tourism and not individual tourism establishments. The destination management organization is supposed to coordinate the actors involved in the creation of the visitor offer, it is supposed to be the communication channel towards the visitors. It is important that the organization pays sufficient attention to feedback from visitors. As the online space is of great importance for reviews and feedback, it is necessary for organizations to monitor and guide the feedback of visitors also in the field of online reputation management.

6.3.2. Case study 2: Comparison of External Sources of the Online Reputation of Prague City Tourism and Vienna Tourist Board

Introduction

In recent years, the internet has become an increasingly important tool in influencing consumer behavior. Many authors argue that visitors are increasingly relying on electronic word-of-mouth to select a tourism destination and also share their experiences of the services they have used during their visit. That is the reason the destination management companies have to give credit to their online reputation management. The sources of the reputation can be external (i.e. blogs, feedbacks etc.) or internal (i.e. service, structure, amenities etc.)

Problem description

In this case study we are dealing with the external sources determining the online reputation of the selected destination management organizations in Czech Republic and Austria. We have chosen the best players on the market, the destination management organizations operating in capital cities – Prague City Tourism in Czech Republic and Vienna Tourist Board in Austria.

Objectives

The aim is to determine the main factors from external environment influencing the online reputation of the selected destination management organizations in different countries. We have collected the data by interviewing the representatives of both organizations. The way of the research was qualitative research. We have asked following questions:

- Do you think that visitors consider other people feedbacks as fundamental in their choice?
- Do you think that online platforms are fundamental for collecting feedbacks? If yes, which ones are the most relevant for you?
- Among the individuals providing feedbacks, do you deem more valuable the ones from experts/influencers or general ones?
- Which are the constituents of your social media reputation management strategies?
- How do you moderate your media exposure?
- Which are the main strategies you implement to promote and increase your reputation?

Results

Both organizations belong to the leaders in the field of destination management. Different extent of the activities was performed in selected organizations regarding acknowledging and monitoring external sources of reputation.

Figure 44: Vienna Tourist Board Logo



Source: <https://www.wien.info/>, 2023.

Figure 45: Prague City Tourism Logo



Source: <https://www.praguecitytourism.cz/>, 2023.

Basic characteristics of the DMOs regarding number of employees and number of visitors in the years 2019 to 2022 are in the table.

Table 14: Number of employees and visitors in DMO

DMO	Prague City Tourism	Vienna Tourist Board
Number of employees	17	90
Number of visitors (2019)	8,044,324	7,900,000
Number of visitors (2020)	2,178,267	4,934,794
Number of visitors (2021)	2,352,530	2,076,729
Number of visitors (2022)	5,976,267	5,597,133

Source: <https://www.praguecitytourism.cz/>, <https://www.wien.info/>, 2023.

We introduce the answers of the representative of both DMOs.

The answers from DMO Prague City Tourism, Czech Republic:

a) Do you think that visitors consider feedback from other people to be essential in their choice of destination? Yes.

b) Do you think online platforms are essential in gathering feedback? If yes, which ones are most important to you? Yes. Form of reviews: Google Maps.com (verbal, Czech + foreign), TripAdvisor.com (verbal, foreign), Kudyznudy.cz (non-verbal, Czech), Firmy.cz (non-verbal, Czech). Community management, news: Instagram, Facebook. Mail.

c) Among the people who provide feedback, do you consider those from experts/influencers or generalists to be more valuable? We tend to focus more on client reviews of our products and monitoring their satisfaction and needs.

d) What are the components of your social reputation management strategies? The overall reputation of the organization must be consistent with the reputation on SOME. The method of communication is often derived from a shared post containing the topic and opinion of the management. Our strategy is to minimize negative reactions from followers and build/maintain a supportive community on both CZ and international profiles. Communication must never be vulgar, abusive, attacking... every reaction on profiles reflects the reputation and principles of PCT.

e) How do you moderate your media presence? On a daily basis, see the following question.

f) What are the main strategies you apply to promote and enhance your reputation? Our media presence impacts the site's fans. We try to present Prague to them as a bohemian city that offers both modern and typical culture, interesting gastronomy and as a place where something interesting is always happening. We want to show our followers that besides the historically valuable monuments, Prague is moving and developing really fast and there are X new places worth visiting. We also use strategies that target different age groups and people occurring in different places to promote and enhance reputation, so it's important to choose the right words across cross-cultural differences, this helps to reduce the risk of negative reactions growing. The organisation works with many institutions that are attractive to visitors and sharing these helps to maintain a strong community that is interested in regular updates about Prague.

Following are the answers of DMO Vienna Tourist Board, Austria:

a) Do you think online platforms are essential in gathering feedback? If so, which ones are most important to you? Yes, they are essential. It is important to gather them from both the physical and online worlds. In the physical world we have our tourist centers and mobile centers where we get feedback directly. In the online world, we get feedback from visitors who have visited Vienna on all online platforms. On almost all of them we also have a robot that can answer basic questions from visitors. We also have a team of people who are purely dedicated to surveys (but this is not under my department) and this team directly focuses on our target group and gets feedback from them directly. We get feedback on a regular basis and most often through direct contact. We consider instagram, facebook, pinterest to be the main platforms in the online world. In China, we use WeChat and Weibo. We also use youtube, but we don't get as much feedback there. From America, visitors use Twittter and

LinkedIn the most. We have a really broad portfolio, but of course we can't be equally active on all of them. However, these platforms have different focuses. For example, we use Instagram more for marketing and LinkedIn more for B2B.

b) Of the people who provide feedback, do you find those from experts/influencers or generalists to be more valuable? It's hard to judge, this is more for the department in charge of surveys. But I can say that it is not often that we are rated by influencers or influencers. However, if they do, we pass this information on to shareholders and entrepreneurs in Vienna so that we can improve our offering if necessary. Rather, we focus on ordinary visitors.

c) Which main strategies do you apply to promote and enhance your reputation? We have a digital channel strategy where we can identify the objectives, target audience, business sector and content focus for each channel separately. We have a clear profile about each channel, which supports the overall reputation. We have pinpointed where we will operate as B2B, B2C. We have a social media tool that allows us to see how people see Vienna and if there is something critical, we can quickly fix it.

d, e, f) answered in above.

Guidance questions

- Which external sources of the online reputations are the most important for both DMOs? Can you compare their answers? Are there some differences?
- Do they cooperate with influencers in the area of online reputation? Do the DMOs consider the influencers and their feedback to be crucial for the building of their reputation?
- Which strategies are followed by DMOs in order to enlarge the online reputation?
- Can you make some recommendations for both DMOs? Do you know some examples of best practice among destination management organizations?

Teachers' notes:

Destination managements organizations should pay attention to online reputation. The focus of the investigated studies in the field of the destination tourism organizations is mainly on the impact of electronic word of mouth on visitors' decision to visit a destination, the impact of electronic word of mouth on the tourism offer, and the reception and delivery of electronic word of mouth related to a destination. It would be efficient to study the dependency between the number of visitors of the

destination and number of online reviews and to study the dependency between number of employees of organizations and number of reviews.

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Conclusion

Online reputation and its demonstration in form of reviews and ratings is inevitably connected to the quality of the product, and the reputation in online world is a picture of the offline reputation.

The research and project have revealed new trends and contexts to the reputation. The conducted in-depth interviews in Italy, Finland, Czech Republic and Slovakia with hotel and destination managers brought an insight into the topic. Most issues are presented in the previous chapters. To conclude and highlight the outcomes we would like to mention two main trends that were identified.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) becomes one of the key factors in reputation building. Especially hotel managers mentioned this as a part of their strategy. CSR represents business values and becomes core of the brand identity, especially in high-standard hotels and chains. Their commitment to environmental responsibility and protection is also presented in the communication. Smaller and individual hotels do not pay attention so much to this topic. However, we can expect that the standards also in this field will develop and what we see now as a trend will be a necessity in the future. The situation in destination is different. The destination managers and organisations deal mostly with marketing issues. Except Finland, the interviewed destination management organisations (DMOs) do not pay much attention even to reputation and the corporate social responsibility comes in the second or even third line. The attractions like museums care for their collections, presentation of the heritage and communication with target groups. They mostly struggle with financial resources, know-how and expertise in these fields. There are exceptions (like museums in Florence), where the opposite problems occurs – the tourists are so eager to have the pictures that the management does not have to make any effort – no innovation, no social responsibility – only “open the door”. However, this has an impact on relationship with locals.

The second identified trend is caring for employees and paying attention to the internal reputation and employer reputation. The relationship between motivated and professional employees, proudness of working in the hotel or resort and reputation was mentioned by several hoteliers. The employees are not only trained in the appropriate competences but their satisfaction is monitored as well. Their role in customers’ satisfaction and through it also in reputation is incontrovertible.