Chapter 9
Social Media and Creativity: How to Engage Users and Tourists

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ABSTRACT

The usage of social media is vital part of businesses practices and lives of individuals today, tourism being not exception. Yet, despite the wide reach of social networks there is a lack of understanding which factors contribute to becoming an influencer on social network services. This chapter particularly focuses on the largest video-sharing platform YouTube. It analyzes common success factors in three different countries: Canada, Germany, Italy and concludes by explaining which factors can be considered as relevant in order to succeed on YouTube. The objective is to find common factors which enable Youtubers to succeed. Predict which quantitative and qualitative elements can actually influence the success of a Youtuber and through ANOVA, Descriptive Analysis and Linear Regression find if there’s actually a link between these elements and the number of subscribers. Lastly, it will try to assess on three case studies, how different tourist destination use the power of YouTube.

INTRODUCTION

The usage of social media is vital part of businesses practices and lives of individuals today, tourism being not exception. Social media, also known as social network services (SNS) is rooted in our current cultural positioning and technological advance. New media not only introduces new ways of communication, but also new forms of self-awareness, reflecting on who we are and how we relate to others. YouTube videos are special in that regard as they allow open access /customized privacy settings notwithstanding/ to anybody on the web. This new “invention” revolutionized the way we communicate, share information, enjoy our free time and gather information – in almost all aspects of human life.

Decision makers, as well as individuals try to identify ways in which they can make profitable use of applications such as YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. Yet, despite the wide reach of social networks there is a lack of understanding which factors contribute to becoming an influencer on social network services. This chapter particularly focuses on the largest video-sharing platform YouTube. YouTube does not only allow to consume content as a passive observer, it allows users to create content and make it ac-
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Social media is accessible to the world wide web. To understand why it begins by describing the social media phenomena, specifically applied to YouTube. Based on those concepts it analyzes common success factors in three different countries: Canada, Germany, Italy. Finally, it will conclude by explaining which factors can be considered as relevant in order to succeed on YouTube.

The objectives of the chapter are to present answer to following questions: Are there any common factors which enable Youtubers to succeed? Which quantitative and qualitative elements can actually influence the success of a Youtuber? Through ANOVA, Descriptive Analysis and Linear Regression find if there’s actually a link between these elements and the number of subscribers. How different tourist destination use the power of YouTube?

BACKGROUND

Social media is considered any site that provides a network of people with a place to make connections (Pavlicek, 2014). Social media is the collective of online communications channels dedicated to community-based input, interaction, content-sharing and collaboration. Websites and applications dedicated to forums, microblogging, social networking, social bookmarking, social curation, and wikis are among the different types of social media. (Techtarget.com, 2016)

The most prominent examples of social media include:

- Facebook is the most popular social networking website. Internet users spend more time on Facebook than any other website /statistics from the Nielsen Group/.
  - 1.5 billion monthly active users, 1.3 billion monthly active mobile users
  - Users share 3 million links every hour
  - Revenue US$ 18 billion in 2015
  - 3rd most visited site according to Alexa.com

- Twitter is a microblogging service that broadcasts short posts called tweets. Twitter members can broadcast their own tweets, or distribute (re-tweet) the messages from other users they follow.
  - 289 million active users
  - Micro blogging social site that limits posts to 140 characters
  - Largest penetration in the US but spreading slowly and steadily in Europe as well
  - 9,100 tweets happen every second
  - 9th most visited site according to Alexa.com

- Google+ is an interest-based social network owned and operated by Google, designed to replicate the way people interact offline more closely than is the case in other social networking services. Google+ is Google’s fourth attempt to break into social networking business (following Google Buzz /2010 – 2011/, Google Friend Connect /2008 – 2012/, and Orkut /2004 – 2014/).
  - 300 million active users
  - Allows for brands and users to create circles
  - Google implements Hangouts, Picasa Photos and other services into the system to get more users
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