RESEARCH ARTICLE

UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORMS AND THEIREFFECTIVENESS IN PROMOTING LOCAL TOURISM ESTABLISHMENTS IN THE MUNICIPALITYOF CALINTAAN

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the utilization of digital marketing platforms and their effectiveness in promoting local tourism establishments in the municipality of Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro. Employing a descriptive correlational research approach, the study provides a comprehensive analysis of the impact of Facebook, email, websites, and YouTube on brand awareness, patronage, and customer satisfaction within these establishments.

The findings reveal that local tourism establishments in Calintaan effectively utilize these digital platforms to engage with their target audiences. Facebook demonstrates a strong presence, offering information, amenities, and frequent updates. Email is found to be a valuable tool for communication, feedback, and promotions, while websites are considered useful for information and reservations. YouTube plays a pivotal role in attracting guests through engaging videos.

The results underscore the pivotal role of digital marketing strategies in enhancing the overall appeal of local tourism establishments, demonstrating their substantial impact on the tourism landscape in Calintaan.

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the effective utilization of digital marketing platforms by local tourism establishments in Calintaan and their profound impact on brand awareness, patronage, and customer satisfaction. These findings contribute to the understanding of digital marketing strategies and their role in shaping the tourism industry, providing insights for both practitioners and researchers.

Keywords: *Local Tourism, Marketing Platforms, Utilization*

INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing is a large aspect. There is no other development that would affect the tourism and hospitality business as quickly and significantly as digital technologies. Tourism and hospitality organizations who employ all digital channels and communication tools generate 25% more revenue on average than other companies in the sector. Marketing experts should consequently be proficient in digital marketing given the current state of the tourist and hospitality industries. A contemporary tool for marketing a travel and hospitality product, trademark, or brand through all digital media is digital marketing (Hristoforova et al., 2019)

The use of websites in content marketing produces an appealing online destination brand experience because, when created properly online information on websites is neatly categorized, making it easy to navigate the content to follow the tourism destination's attractions. Tourists now view content promoted on websites as more reliable than content on social media platforms since the quality of the information provided there has increased with time. This is because of the fact that official destination information makes up the majority of content on tourism websites. The goal of content marketing is to attract and keep customers by regularly producing pertinent and quality material that can alter or improve consumer behavior. Content developed for consumers should have this objective. A trend that is anticipated to keep growing in popularity is letting customers produce and share their own content. Customers are likely to participate considerably more actively in the creation of digital content that may be utilized for marketing because of the rise of user generated content (UGC) platforms. This is since relationships are formed and grown through UGC, decisions about travel are made, and daily travel experiences are shared through the usage of images, videos, blogs, and reviews (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020).

The fundamental purpose of this research is to make tourist establishments appear more appealing, hence increasing the number of individuals who visit local tourism establishments in the municipality of Calintaan. Out of all the areas here in San Jose Occidental Mindoro, the researchers promote the beauty and abundance of this spot through the use of social media for the goals of this study. The findings of this study were to provide insight and encourage local tourism establishment owners to continue using social media if we can confirm its usefulness. It allows visitors to find, grow, and engage with the tourism establishments they want to visit.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive correlational research approach to collect original data regarding the utilization of digital marketing platforms and their effectiveness in promoting local tourism establishments in Calintaan municipality. Unlike experimental or normative approaches, this method focuses on providing insights into existing conditions, events, and observations. The descriptive approach is commonly used across scientific disciplines and social sciences to outline and analyze observed situations and phenomena.

Study Site

This research was conducted in Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro. Specifically, to the municipality's well-known tourism establishments: Apo Reef Club, Erona Beach Resort, Camper's Point, Holiday Ocean Resort and Labros Adventure Camp & Waterfront.

Sample

This research utilized purposive sampling to select participants based on specific traits or experiences relevant to the study's purpose. The researcher personally approached potential respondents during visits to tourist attractions, inviting them to participate. The method was repeated until a minimum of 50 willing participants were secured.

Research Instrument

The study utilized a self-administered questionnaire that was subjected to validity and reliability of the test. The instrument was submitted to the research instructor, adviser, data analyst and critic reader to ensure its legitimacy and consistency. Using questionnaire, the information that is being needed in this study classifies the task and the intentions that seek to nurture the attention of the five (5) selected local tourism establishments in the municipality of Calintaan. The research questionnaire has two major parts. The first part determined the level of the utilization of digital marketing platforms in the municipality of Calintaan and it has twenty (20) questions which are equally divided among the four indicators for the independent variable. And the second part determined the level of effectiveness in promoting local tourism establishments in the municipality of Calintaan and it has fifteen (15) questions which are equally divided among the three indicators for the dependent variable. Responses were recorded on a four-point Likert scale from 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3= agree, and 4= strongly agree. This was designed through a checklist type of questionnaire as the data collection instrument for this study.

Data Collection

The researchers collected data based on the accessibility and willingness of target respondents. Permission letters were granted by tourist attraction owners for data collection. Face-to-face interactions were used to distribute questionnaires, following safety protocols, including wearing masks and maintaining a one-meter distance from respondents. Upon approval, the questionnaire was administered, and the study's objectives were explained to build trust. Confidentiality was assured. Respondents had ample time to complete the instrument, and inquiries were addressed for data validity and reliability. Questionnaires were collected and sent for statistical analysis.

Ethical Consideration

Prior to data collection, the researchers obtained formal permission from the owners of the participating tourist attractions. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, with an assurance of data confidentiality. All interactions with respondents adhered to safety protocols recommended by the Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) to ensure the well-being of all

parties involved. This study also adhered to ethical standards, such as respect for the autonomy and privacy of the respondents, ensuring their voluntary participation, and addressing any inquiries or concerns they may have had during the research process. The collected data were treated with the utmost care and used exclusively for research purposes, with no harm or discomfort inflicted on any of the participants.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive data such as mean, and standard deviation, were calculated. Kendall's tau-b (τb) correlation coefficient was used to assess the correlation between the variables, with statistical significance set at a p-value of ≤ .05.

RESULTS

The findings revealed that on Facebook, these establishments demonstrated a strong presence (mean=3.96±0.20), providing information, amenities, and frequent updates. Similarly, email (mean=3.24±0.40) was found to be effective for communication, feedback, and promotions. Websites (mean=3.16±0.47) were considered useful for information and reservations, although slightly lower in guest access. YouTube (mean=3.49±0.23) played a pivotal role in attracting guests through videos, and their consistency in posting content contributed to their recognition. Overall, local tourism establishments in Calintaan showcased a good digital marketing presence (mean=3.49±0.23), indicating their effectiveness in utilizing these digital platforms to promote tourism.

Table 1. Utilization of digital marketing platforms.

Indicators	Mean	SD
Facebook		
1. The local tourism establishments in Calintaan have Facebook pages that they use to promote their hotels and resorts.	3.96	.20
2. The local tourism establishments' phone number is located on their Facebook page for guests who require more assistance or information.	3.89	.33
3. Links to the website for additional information and direct bookings are provided on the "About" page of the local tourism establishment's Facebook page.	3.80	.40
4. The amenities of the local tourism establishments are displayed on the Facebook page for the comfort of the guests.	3.80	.40
5. The Facebook page is updated frequently with fresh and interesting content to promote tourism to nearby businesses.	3.67	.56
Weighted Mean	**3.82**	**.19**
Email		
1. Providing email for each establishment is helpful for the guests where they can send their inquiries and ask for further information about the local establishments in Municipality of Calintaan.	3.54	.50

2.	Email is one of the most important methods of connecting with guests, such as asking for feedback throughout their stay at a tourism establishment and currently utilize by the tourism establishments.	3.16	.62
3.	Email marketing is a simple and effective way to draw clients and gather customer information.	3.04	.57
4.	Establishments send their customers promotional discounts and special offers that help tourism establishments in Calintaan to stand out from others	3.20	.67
5.	The email enhances communications by quickly disseminating information and providing fast response to customer inquiries.	3.24	.72
	Weighted Mean	**3.24**	**.40**

Website

1.	Website is one of their social media platforms where it gives essential details about the local tourism establishments.	3.46	.61
2.	Website easily locates tourist attractions as well as additional information for reservations online.	3.32	.65
3.	There is a convenience where tourist and guests can access the website that appear online provided by tourist establishments in Calintaan.	3.02	.71
4.	The availability of website is strictly provided to guests where it provides a map.	2.92	.70
5.	The website is always available since it provides a map or directions to their local tourism establishments.	3.10	.71
	Weighted Mean	**3.16**	**.47**

Youtube

1.	Guests are pleased and picks interest in the beauty of local tourist establishments by watching video posted in YouTube.	3.92	.27
2.	The local tourism establishments of Calintaan is consistent in updating new and attractive videos about the hotel and resort via YouTube.	3.80	.40
3.	The YouTube video's original and inventive material always assist local tourism businesses become well-known.	3.82	.39
4.	The accessibility, activity, safety, and cost are heavily promoted through YouTube the aids for visitors' decision.	3.46	.56
5.	YouTube provides link that will direct guest to the site for further information and direct bookings.	3.50	.58
	Weighted Mean	**3.49**	**.29**
	Overall Mean	**3.49**	**.23**

The study investigated the digital marketing impact on brand awareness, patronage, and customer satisfaction in local tourism establishments. The findings indicate that these establishments effectively use social media platforms to enhance brand awareness (mean=3.45±0.45), including promoting promotions, sharing guest experiences, and customizing

advertisements for different audiences. Regarding patronage (mean=3.32±0.45), they employ various strategies such as offering discounts, souvenirs, complementary services, and newsletters with special offers to foster customer loyalty. For customer satisfaction (mean=3.16±0.47), establishments provide easy booking and high-quality e-services, encourage feedback, and use digital marketing for prompt responses. The overall mean rating is 3.48±0.35, suggesting that digital marketing plays a significant role in promoting local tourism establishments, enhancing patronage, and ensuring customer satisfaction.

Table 2. Effectiveness in promoting local tourism establishments.

Indicators	Mean	SD
Brand Awareness		
1. The tourist establishment's social media outlets notify subscriber, if there is a promotion posted.	3.78	.41
2. The customers have found that using social media to raise awareness has benefited them in making better decisions when it comes to choosing a local tourism establishment.	3.44	.70
3. The local tourism establishment owners advertised what Calintaan businesses have to offer guests to attract potential guests and generate sales.	3.30	.68
4. The customers become aware of the brand and the products/services offered by local tourism establishments, and they use social media to share their experiences or to recommend it to others.	3.34	.63
5. Local tourism businesses that use social media advertising customize their adverts for their intended audience (e.g. bloggers, social media content creators, foreign and local tourists).	3.40	.67
Weighted Mean	**3.45**	**.45**
Patronage		
1. The local tourism establishment's reward repeats guests with discounts and referrals to value the loyalty.	3.70	.51
2. The local tourism businesses give loyal clients free gifts like souvenirs, especially when they visit on special occasions (e.g. holidays).	3.10	.65
3. The local tourism establishments provide complementary services to the regular customers to appreciate the patronage.	3.06	.68
4. The local tourism businesses pay close attention to every interaction with customers to express their gratitude for their business.	3.22	.76
5. To express gratitude for their business, the neighborhood tourist attraction distributes newsletters to regular clients that include special offers for the season.	3.52	.58
Weighted Mean	**3.32**	**.45**

Customer Satisfaction

1.	The local establishments provide an easily booking reservation through social media where destinations could fulfil the guest's desire.	3.68	.51
2.	The local tourism establishments upload films containing what activities/entertainment to meet the satisfaction of the guests.	3.46	.50
3.	The local tourism establishments provide high-quality e-services to its guests through utilizing social media platforms.	3.46	.54
4.	The local tourism establishments encourage customers to post feedbacks online to know if they meet the guest's satisfaction.	3.40	.64
5.	The local tourism establishments use digital marketing as a tool to respond on client questions in order to assure customer satisfaction	3.42	.67
	Weighted Mean	**3.16**	**.47**
	Overall Mean	**3.48**	**.35**

The results revealed that Facebook demonstrated negligible correlations with brand awareness (r=-0.002, p-value=0.985), patronage (r=-0.032, p-value=0.780), customer satisfaction (r=0.088, p-value=0.455), and overall effectiveness (r=0.006, p-value=0.957). In contrast, email (r=0.368, p-value=0.001) and website (r=0.369, p-value=0.001) displayed significant positive correlations with all effectiveness indicators, emphasizing their pivotal role in enhancing brand awareness, patronage, and customer satisfaction. Youtube exhibited only minor correlations with patronage (R=0.086, p-value=0.447) and customer satisfaction (r=0.240, p-value=0.037). The overall analysis highlighted the effectiveness of email, website, and digital marketing platforms in significantly influencing brand awareness, patronage, and customer satisfaction within local tourism establishments.

Table 3. Correlation between the utilization of digital marketing platforms and their effectiveness.

Digital Marketing Platforms	Effectiveness							
	BA		P		CS		OE	
	R	p-value	R	p-value	R	p-value	R	p-value
Facebook	-.002	.985	-.032	.780	.088	.455	.006	.957
Email	.368**	.001	.503**	.000	.240*	.031	.536**	.000
Website	.369**	.001	.543**	.000	.325**	.003	.597**	.000
YouTube	.033	.776	.086	.447	.240*	.037	.124	.261
Overall	.346**	.001	.494**	.000	.325**	.003	.564**	.000

Legend: Brand Awareness (BA); Patronage (P); Customer Satisfaction (CS); Overall Effectiveness (OE)
**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

DISCUSSIONS

The results show that according to the table of 50 respondents, Facebook, Email, Website, and YouTube are the digital marketing platforms used by tourism establishments in promoting. Most customers are accustomed to selecting the local tourism establishments they desire from among the four parameters, and they believe that Facebook and YouTube provide all the information. It is simpler to access even the reservations or inquiries they require because these platforms are also widely used. Because customers can make a reservation and pay online, they do not need to physically visit the establishment in the municipality of Calintaan, which makes it more convenient. Then they simply go to the tourism establishments they wish to have a suitable time. According to Mkwizu (2019) digital marketing, mobile, and content marketing opportunities are stimulated by technology users such as Facebook and YouTube subscribers. Digital marketing benefits customers in a wide range of ways, which include quicker access to product information. Sales and customer satisfaction have increased because of digital marketing efforts.

Customers' satisfaction stands out among the three parameters since every local tourism establishment uses social media to offer a variety of services to satisfy customers. Every customer should have a positive experience and suggest local tourism establishments to others because they were delighted with the high-quality services they received and the prompt response to their queries. Companies with a higher level of digital marketing practice achieve better business performance (Al-Dmour et al., 2023).

Local tourism establishments can benefit by using digital marketing platforms to better understand how customers utilize internet resources like Facebook, email, websites, and YouTube to make destination choice. It is more efficient to continue promoting the establishments to customers through brand awareness, patronage, and customer satisfaction. It might have a significant influence on customers and local tourism establishments in the municipality of Calintaan. According to Magano and Cunha (2020) digital marketing is critical for those who want to succeed in the tourism and hospitality industries. Consumers can now communicate with other internet users and their favorite brands. As a result, opportunities for new collaboration among stakeholders have emerged. To succeed in the industry, tourism organizations must grasp digital marketing and take advantage of mobile technology's possibilities. Customers are heavily impacted by the factor of confidence when looking for relevant information online.

The limitation of this study was the fact that the study focuses primarily on local tourism establishments in the specified area of Calintaan, Occidental Mindoro. However, like any other existing research study, this research paper has limitations, primarily due to the limited local tourism establishments that offer amenities and accommodation, as well as the pandemic. Because of the strict health protocol, there may be a limited source of information and difficulty gathering responses and data. Furthermore, the researchers must adhere to their timeline and schedule of completing the study within the academic year 2022-2023.

CONCLUSIONS

This study sheds light on the digital marketing strategies employed by local tourism establishments in Calintaan and their impact on customer behavior. It is evident that Facebook stands out as a preferred platform for customers to engage with local tourism services, owing to its user-friendly interface and accessibility to information about desired amenities. Customer satisfaction is nurtured through the receipt of positive feedback, contributing to a more immersive guest experience. While patronage levels may vary, with rewards and complementary services reserved for select clients, this approach strategically piques interest in visiting the charming tourist destinations of Calintaan. The comprehensive findings affirm the effectiveness of digital marketing platforms, encompassing Facebook, email, website, and YouTube, in elevating brand awareness, patronage, and customer satisfaction for local tourism establishments. This research underscores the pivotal role of digital marketing strategies in enhancing the overall appeal of these local establishments, demonstrating their substantial impact on the tourism landscape.

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