**Planning your trip abroad using Facebook**

**Abstract**

Social media in General and Facebook specifically have changed tourism planning. This research is based on questionnaires filled by participants in Facebook’s groups of travelers to different destinations. The model included several variables that explain the perceived utility, perceived ease of use and the use of Facebook to plan trips. Using Structural equation model to analyze the data indicate that perceived utility and Media effects the use of Facebook. Media, trust, and perceived ease of use effects perceived utility, while trust negatively effects perceived risk. The research results expand the understanding of the decision to use Facebook groups to plan trips.

**Introduction**

Social media (SM) in General and Facebook specifically have changed the way tourist plan their trips. Facebook is a leading social media platform with 2.98 billion users active monthly in the first quarter of 2023 (Statista, 2023). In the stage of planning the trip which require a lot of information Facebook serves as a major source of information (Jadhav, 2018). Most of the content on Facebook was created by the users (Nguyen 2023, Dedeoğlu, et al 2020). This content is usually considered a word-of-mouth recommendation and is considered as a more enjoyable, updated and reliable than content created by the firms and (Hyung-Park et al., 2007).

On one hand, Facebook provide businesses an easy way to share information with travelers, promote themselves and allow the users easier access to their services (for example, using Messenger) and book the services (Mariani, Ek Styven, and Ayeh, 2019). On the other hand, Facebook allow its user to share their experiences and opinion with others during and after the trip (Kim & Fesenmaier, 2017, Mendes-Filho, Mills, Tan, 2018, Narangajavana et al 2017). The use of Facebook is relatively easy and therefore, people can use Facebook to plan their vacation based on other people recommendation. This allow the tourists a way to reduce the risks and uncertainties related to traveling due to the ability to relay on the experiences of other travelers while planning the trip (Jadhav 2018, Kim & Fesenmaier, 2017, Mendes-Filho, Mills, Tan, 2018, Narangajavana et al 2017 ). Cox et al (2009) divided the travel planning process to three stages: before the trip, during the trip, and after the trip. The first stage refers to the time the tourist search for information online to form expectations and make plans regarding the destination. The second stage is the actual conduct of the trip, and the third stage is the purchase evaluations. People use Facebook in all three stages (Singh et al 2023).

There are many papers that deal with the effects of social media. However, most of them deal with sites directly related to tourism like TripAdvisor or Booking. Very few papers deal with the theoretical framework that predict the use of the social media in general and Facebook specifically to plan trips and therefore more information is needed regarding the factors that affect the use of Facebook for travel planning (Sakshi, 2020).

Among the studies that focused on the theoretical background, most research used only a few constraints. For example, Yoo and Gretzel (2010) focused on trust while Agag and El-Masry (2016) focused on the correlation between relative advantage, compatibility, perceived ease of use (PEOU), perceived usefulness (PU), attitude and positive word of mouth.

Using theoretical models to understand travelers’ intention to use Facebook Mariani, Ek Styven, and Ayeh, (2019) focused on two European countries (Italy and Sweden) to study the intention of young people to use Facebook for travel decision making. They found that the conventional Technology acceptance model (TAM) construct like perceived usefulness, perceived enjoyment, and intention are valid, however, ease of use was irrelevant. Likewise, Sakshi et al (2020) developed a model that contains several variables from different theoretical models such as trust, perceived risk, from the utility framework; perceived ease of use (PEOU), perceived usefulness (PU), behavioral intention towards SM usage, from the technology acceptance model (TAM); media richness from media richness theory; and the actual SM usage for travel planning. Moreover, Singh et al (2023) tested what effects Indian travelers to use social media while planning their trips. There model included the TAM, Social capital (SC), PEOU, PU the perceived trust.

The current research makes several contributions to the existing theory. First it fills the gap in the literature by focusing on actual trip planning and not intentions to plan like previous research did. Second, the research focuses on Facebook and test participants from all ages that involved in the Facebook groups in order to plan their future trips and share experiences regarding past trip. Third, although the tourist origin is a single country the destination countries analyzed include different countries around the world in different continents. Some of them are developed countries, and some of them are not.

**Literature review**

Technology acceptance tries to explain how people accept and use information systems and adopt new technology. To understand this several theoretic models were developed, the one most commonly used is Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). In this model developed by Davis (1989) there are two main components. perceive usefulness (PU) and perceive ease of use (PEOU).

**Perceived usefulness**

The perceived usefulness is defined as the way people use the technology since they believe it will help them perform the task better. According to Singh & Srivastava (2019) people will not use sites that are difficult to use. Likewise, Mariani et al (2019) define it as the users’ expectations that the use of social media will improve their traveling decisions. The travelers consult with multiple sources in order to reduce the risk of traveling failure. Therefore, they will use the social media for trip planning if they think it is more useful than traditional sources (Mariani, Ek Styven, and Ayeh, J. 2019). This model was used by many researchers. for example, Lam et al (2007) for upscale hotels, Huh et al (2009) for information systems in hotels, or by Narangajavana et al (2017) for reservation systems used by travel agents and use of social media in travel intention for planning a trip.

Many researchers reported that the availability of information on social media saves time, effort and money and therefore strengthen the intent to use social media (Jadhav, 2018). The direct connection between perceived usefulness and intention were also verified (Mariani, 2019, Singh et al 2023, Kurniawan et al 2022, Shao 2020, Singh and Sinha 2019, Akbari et al. 2020, Kurniawan et al 2022). In research that focused on travelers it was found that there is an indirect correlation between the perceived usefulness and intention to use, and a direct correlation between the intention to contribute to the virtual travelers’ communities (Dieck, 2017). In addition, it was found that travelers who though that the content created by the users is valuable are more likely to use it for traveling purposes (Rauniar, 2014).

Based on this I hypothesize that:

H1 : PU will affect travelers use of Facebook for trip planning.

**Perceived ease of use**

Perceived ease of use (PEOU) is defined as the way people believe that technology is more useful when it is easy to use (Mariani, Ek Styven, and Ayeh, 2019). This was researched and validated by many researchers who found that PEOU effect peoples intention to use social media (Lim et al, Mendes-Filho et al 2018, Ayeh, 2015; Ayeh et al., 2013b; Amir et al 2020, Shao 2020, Akbari et al. 2020). However, some researchers found that compared to PU the PEOU is less consistent (Venkatesh and Davis 2000, Kim (2016). Likewise, Mariani, Ek Styven, and Ayeh, (2019) found that PEOU is not relevant for the intention to use of Facebook to trip planning. On the other hand, other researchers found that higher PEOU leads to higher PU (Moslehpour et al 2018, Raza et al 2017). In the current paper PEOU is the way travelers believe that using Facebook will be easy and require minimal effort and therefore the hypothesis is:

H2: PEOU has a positive correlation with PU.

H3 PEOU of using Facebook for trip planning will positively influence its use.

**Technology convenience**

Technology convenience is defined as something that contribute to people comfort because it is easy to use (Berry et al 2002). When the complexity of using the technology increase than the perceived convenience decreases. On the other hand, Lee et al (2008) claimed that when the convenience of technology use increases more users understand the ease of use and adopt the technology. They found positive correlation between ease of technology and ease of use. Likewise, other researchers found that technology convenience is a good predictor of PEOU (Lee et al. 2018, Kansakar et al 2019). However, Singh et al (2023) found only indirect effect of PEOU on the intentions. Based on the above I hypothesize that:

H4: Technology convenience has a positive effect on PEOU.

H5: Technology convenience has a positive using Facebook for trip planning.

**Media richness**

A common theory that explains the influence of the type of media on PU is the media richness theory. Media richness was defined by Papathanassis and Knolle (2011) as diversity and quantity of information needed to fulfill the persons requirements for being informed. On the other hand, Ayeh (2013) defined it as the perception regarding the information source capability to have rich information. The common ways to measure the media richness are feedback competence, cues, personalization, and variety in language. The media channel is considered to be rich if it provides immediate feedback (Ayeh 2013)

There is a lot of uncertainty in the information search and the media channel should bridge the gap between what the tourist is looking for and the information that is supplied. The information on the social media allows the tourist to use it and to evaluate the experiences and information provided (Ayeh 2013). It was found that about 80% of the social media users found that the content made by users is helpful in reducing uncertainties (Gretzel et al 2007). Therefore, my hypothesis is that:

H6. Media richness positively influences PU.

**Trust**

Trust is defined as the way individuals are willing to accept the vulnerability that comes from positive expectation for the intention or behavior of others in situations defined by risk and common dependence (Ennew et al 2007). Travelers seek information using social media related to tours, weather, hotel recommendations, recommendation on tour guides, car rental, public transportation, restaurant and prices. Researchers found that people have more trust in information found on social media than information provided by travel agents (Ip et al 2012). Trust has a positive correlation with use of social media for information search (Hau et al 2017) and can also affect PEOU and PU (Jalilvand et al 2012). On the other hand, it has a negative influence on the perceived risk (Leung et al 2013). Gefen et al (2003) found positive correlation between trust and PU and claimed that trust enhance specific characters of the perceived usefulness. Some researchers (Sharma et al 2020, Sotiriadis, & Van Zyl, 2013, Kurniawan et al 2022) found that higher trust will increase PU and intention to use social media. Singh et al (2023) found indirect effect in the intention to use the social media. Agag & El-Masry (2016) found that PU, PEOU and trust are very important in tourists’ intention to participate in virtual communities. Based in the above, I hypothesize that:

H7: Trust has a negative influence on perceived risk.

H8: Trust has a positive influence on PEOU.

H9: Trust has a positive influence on PU.

H10: Trust has a positive influence on using Facebook.

**Perceived risk**

The perceived risk is defined as the uncertainty in the outcome (Cox 1967). Most research on the subject connects perceived risk to safety/privacy, performance, social, time, financial and psychological loss (Cunningham,1967). While using social media to receive information related to traveling the perceived risk is related to the inaccuracy in the content advertised by the users and the vulnerability that information seekers can be exposed to (Hua et al 2017). According to researchers when the perceived risk is lower the perceived usefulness will be higher (Gretzel 2008, Wu 2014). Some researchers claimed that privacy issues effect risk and then the behavior intentions (Tandon & Kiran 2019). Schroeder et al (2013) and Pennington-Gray et al (2013) found a negative correlation between perceive rick and PU while searching travel information on the social media. Sharma et al (2020) found that perceived risk influence intention among millennials. Hua ey al (2017) found a direct correlation between risk, PU and PEOU to using social media when choosing a destination. Based on the above I hypothesize that:

H11. Perceived risk has a negative effect on using Facebook for travel planning.

The estimated model including the hypothesis is presented in figure 1.

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Figure 1: Theoretical model

**Data and methodology**

This research is based on self-administrated questionnaire posted on travelers’ group on Facebook. There are many Facebook groups focusing on traveling to a specific destination each group have thousands of members, However, it is hard to calculate the exact number of active members as many people stay as inactive members in the group after they complete their trips, and most people are members of more than one group. A post was placed on the Facebook group on different dates where it was explained to the participants what the purpose of the research is, that the questionnaire is anonymous, and the results will be used for research purposes only. The post included a link to the questionnaire and the participance could choose whether to fill the questionnaire. The data were collected from July to September 2023. A total of 389 questionnaires were filled 347 out of them valid. The study was approved by the ethic committee in the academic institute the author belongs to.

The questionnaire included several sections:

The first section included questions regarding the demographic data of the respondent (gender, age, number of children, education, income etc.). The second part included questions regarding the use of the Facebook group (such as: when did you join the group, do you post questions and information in the group, do you stay in the group after completing the trip, etc.) The third section includes questions regarding theoretical models. Those questions are based on a five-point Likert scale with 1 indicating that the respondent does not agree with the statement, and 5 pointing out that the respondent fully agree with the statement. Questions regarding the perceived ease of technology use are based on Lee et al (2008) and includes questions like: “using social media is difficult for travelers”. Questions regarding the perceived enjoyment are based on Ayeh et al (2013) and include questions like “I have fun using information on Facebook”. Questions regarding the perceived risks are based on Bauer et al (2005) & Nusair et al (2013) and included questions like Using social media violates personal privacy. Questions regarding the richness of media are based on Ayeh et al (2013) and includes questions like “Social media allows exchanging feedback online”. Questions regarding trust are based on Gefen et al (2003) and includes questions like: “Social media content is trustworthy”. Perceived ease of use is based on Ayeh et al (2013) and include questions like “It is easy to learn how to use social media”. Questions regarding the Perceived usefulness of content are based on Ayeh et al (2013) and includes questions like “Using information on travel websites will make my travel planning faster”. In addition, there are questions regarding the use of Facebook for purchasing different services, for getting or sharing advice and experiences. The dependent variable, the use of Facebook for trip planning is based on the number of actual services the participant is using Facebook for including car rental, hotel, attractions, tour guides and tour consultants and whether the respondent is asking for advice.

The model was tested using Structural equation model (SEM) on R. This research used SEM to study whether the hypotheses are supported or rejected and utilizes the two-step structural equations methodology (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). First of all, the reliability of the measurement scales will be studied, and then the research will estimate the causal model by using SEM and concentrating on the relationship between the use of Facebook for trip planning and the different variables effecting it.

**Results**

The descriptive statistics of the demographic variables and data regarding the use of Facebook for trip planning is included in table 1.

Table 1. Description of sample by demographic data.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variable |  | **N** | **%** |
| Gender | Male | **82** | **23.6** |
| Female | **265** | **76.4** |
| Marital status | Single | **62** | 17.9 |
| Married | **285** | 82.1 |
| Income | Below Average | **53** | **15.3** |
| Average | **75** | **22.3** |
| Above Average | **208** | **62.4** |
| Education | **12** years of school | **41** | **11.8** |
| Higher education | **306** | **88.2** |
| Number of trip planing Facebook groups | 1 | **51** | **14.7** |
| 2 | **166** | **48** |
| 3 | **83** | **24** |
| 4 and above | **46** | **13.3** |
| Trip planned with kids | Yes | **198** | **57.2** |
| No | **148** | **42.8** |

The above table shows that 75% of the respondence are women, however, checking the percentage of women in those Facebook groups reveal that this percentage is higher than 70 %. For the entire sample of 347 valid respondents, the average number of trips abroad is 2.43 and the average number of children is 2.34. About 60% of the respondence say that the use of Facebook helped them in their trip planning, over 80% are members of more than one Facebook group of the destination, usually they join the group at the initial planning stage before ordering the flight (76%). The respondence use Facebook instead of using personal trip planing (69.9%), They ask questions in the group (70.4%) and most of them (57.9%) share their personal experiences after the trip.

The data analysis included two steps. The outer model was assessed by examining the reliability (individual and composite) and the validity (convergent and discriminant) of each study construct (Hair et al., 2014). The outer loadings in the model indicated that two items of technical convenance, one item of perceived risk positive emotion, and one item of trust had to be deleted as their loadings were < 0.5. Two items in perceived risk were averaged together (\*). All remaining items had outer loadings of > 0.6. The latter is acceptable in social science studies when scales are not well established (Chin, 2010; Hulland, 1999) and when the loading does not affect composite reliabilities (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) (Rasoolimanesh, Ringle, Jaafar, & Ramayah, 2017).

Table 2 show that the alfa Cronbach was internally consistent with values over 0.67, the Composite reliability (CR) was above the recommended value of 0.7. The outer loadings were statistically significant, and the average variance extracted (AVE) for each contract was over 0.5, indicating convergent validity of the measures.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviations, skewness and results of the outer model.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Items | Mean | S.D | Skewness | Outer loadings | Cronbach’s alfa | AVE | CR |
| Technical convenience |  | | | | 0.68 | 0.83 | 0.80 |
| The desired and target information can be located easily on social media platforms for travel decisions | 3.77 | 1.17 | -0.69 | 0.26 |  |  |  |
| In general, technical convenience is required and useful in making travel decisions on social media platforms | 3.85 | 1.12 | -0.82 | 0.39 |  |  |  |
| Perceived risk |  | | | | 0.76 | 0.55 | 0.75 |
| Using social media violates personal privacy | 2.04 | 1.16 | -0.47 | 0.49 |  |  |  |
| Using social media negatively affects the way others think about you | 1.54 | 0.87 | 1.64 | 0.27\* |  |  |  |
| Using social media wastes my time | 2.11 | 1.16 | 0.69 | 0.72 |  |  |  |
| There is a risk of personal data being misused when using social media | 2.1 | 1.17 | 0.86 | 0.27\* |  |  |  |
| There is a risk of receiving unwanted messages when using social media | 2.09 | 1.31 | 0.95 | 0.68 |  |  |  |
| Media richness |  | | | | 0.91 | 0.95 | 0.87 |
| Social media allows exchanging feedback online | 3.85 | 1.29 | -0.92 | 0.66 |  |  |  |
| Social media allows me and other travelers online to adapt our discussions to our own personal requirements | 3.76 | 1.23 | -0.68 | 0.39 |  |  |  |
| Social media offers me a great range of travel opinion | 4.14 | 1.08 | -1.26 | 0.28 |  |  |  |
| The travel content i.e. pictures, videos, comments posted on social media is helpful in framing my opinion and travel decisions | 4.08 | 1.1 | -1.25 | 0.25 |  |  |  |
| Social media clarifies my doubts by asking other travelers about their opinion about a place, activity, or leisure | 3.8 | 1.2 | -0.8 | 0.39 |  |  |  |
| Trust |  | | | | 0.67 | 0.7 | 0.74 |
| I believe promises made on social media are fulfilled | 2.68 | 1.18 | 0.15 | 0.54 |  |  |  |
| Social media content is trustworthy | 3.15 | 1.03 | -0.28 | 0.3 |  |  |  |
| Social media content generators keep travelers’ interest in mind | 3.54 | 1.15 | -0.54 | 0.69 |  |  |  |
| I depend on social media for the purpose of acquiring travel advice I need | 2.22 | 1.22 | 0.75 |  |  |  |  |
| Perceived ease of use |  | | | | 0.91 | 0.92 | 0. 9 |
| It is easy to learn how to use social media | 4.17 | 1.04 | -1.28 | 0.44 |  |  |  |
| It is easy to use social media to find the information needed for my travel planning | 3.87 | 1.1 | -0.76 | 0.31 |  |  |  |
| It is easy to use the content of social media to plan my trips | 3.92 | 1.13 | -0.85 | 0.17 |  |  |  |
| It is easy for me to become skillful at using social media | 4.1 | 1.1 | -1.23 | 0.45 |  |  |  |
| Overall, I find social media easy to use | 4.19 | 1.05 | -1.37 | 0.26 |  |  |  |
| Perceived usefulness of content |  | | | | 0.94 | 1.03 | 0.94 |
| Using information on travel websites will make my travel planning faster | 3.66 | 1.18 | -0.54 | 0.29 |  |  |  |
| Using information on social media will facilitate in comparing different travel plan | 3.93 | 1.13 | -1.01 | 0.33 |  |  |  |
| Using information on travel websites will make my travel planning better | 3.93 | 1.1 | -0.98 | 0.16 |  |  |  |
| Using information on social media in travel planning will help me make better decisions | 3.91 | 1.08 | -0.86 | 0.25 |  |  |  |
| I find information on social media will be useful in my travel planning | 4.05 | 1.13 | -1.07 | 0.14 |  |  |  |

The second step was to test the hypothesis using SEM to test the casual relationship. The model fit was satisfactory CFI=0.919, TLI=0.908, RMSEA=0.073, X2/d.f=2.83. The result of the estimation is presented in table 3 and figure 2.

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Table 3: represent the results if the structural model:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | B | S.E | P value | Ci. lower | Ci. upper | Result |
| H1: PU🡪Trip planning | 0.66 | 0.31 | 0.04 | 0.03 | 1.28 | Supported |
| H2: PEOU🡪PU | 0.74 | 0.06 | 0.00 | 0.63 | 0.85 | Supported |
| H3: PEOU🡪Trip planning | -0.45 | 0.29 | 0.12 | -1.02 | 0.12 | Not Supported |
| H4:Technology convenience🡪PEOU | 0.5 | 0.14 | 0.00 | 0.22 | 0.78 | Supported |
| H5:Technology convenience🡪Trip planning | 0.03 | 0.18 | 0.87 | -0.32 | 0.38 | Not Supported |
| H6: Media🡪PU | 0.37 | 0.1 | 0.00 | 0.17 | 0.57 | Supported |
| H7: Trust 🡪Perceived risk | -0.18 | 0.08 | 0.01 | -0.33 | -0.04 | Supported |
| H8: Trust 🡪PEOU | 0.46 | 0.17 | 0.01 | 0.13 | 0.8 | Supported |
| H9: Trust 🡪PU | -0.08 | 0.1 | 0.4 | -0.27 | 0.11 | Not Supported |
| H10: Trust 🡪Trip planning | 0.07 | 0.2 | 0.71 | -0.32 | 0.47 | Not Supported |
| H11: Perceived risk 🡪Trip planning | -0.14 | 0.13 | 0.26 | -0.39 | 0.11 | Not Supported |

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Figure 2: The results of the SEM Model

Significant relationships are marked with full line; insignificant relationships are marked with dotted lines. The estimated values are noted on the lines.

The results shows that there is a negative significant correlation of trust on the perceived risk (-0.190(. In addition, the following significant positive correlation exist: Media on PU (0.37), Technology convenience on PEOU (0.5), Trust on PEOU (0.46), PEOU on PU (0.74), Technology convenience and PU on trip planning (0.03 and 0.66 respectively).

The result of this research shows that media and perceived ease of use positively effects the perceived utility, with the effect of perceived ease of use being much stronger than the media. This supports H6 and H2 and is in line with the results of Moslehpour et al (2018), Raza et al (2017) and Gretzel et al (2007). The research results confirm that trust has a negative effect on perceived risk (H7), in line with the results of Leung et al (2013). However, perceived risk or trust does not have a direct effect the use of Facebook for trip planning. Trust has a positive effect on perceived ease of use (H8) in line with the results of Jalilvand et al (2012). PU positively effects using Facebook for trip planning (H1) As was found by Mariani, (2019) Singh et al (2023), Kurniawan et al (2022), Shao (2020), Singh and Sinha (2019), Akbari et al. (2020), and Kurniawan et al (2022). Technology convenances has a significant positive effect PEOU and therefore support hypothesis H4, (Lee et al. 2018, Kansakar et al 2019) in addition, it has a significant positive effect on the use of Facebook for trip planning which support hypothesis H5. This proves the crucial effect of technology convenances of Facebook.

This research bridges the gap in the previous literature by focusing on the actual behavior and not the planned behavior. This expands the understanding of people’s behavior and shade more light on the motivation of potential travels to use Facebook to plan their trip. This model uses several theoretical frameworks and uses a holistic approach that includes a wide variety of variables which influence directly and indirectly the use of Facebook group for trip planning. In addition, unlike previous research that investigated social media in general or tourism specific platforms, this study focuses on Facebook that is widely used by people and offer them a way to share their experiences and photos in details, likewise, it allows people to ask questions and respond to other people questions.

The results of this study emphasis the importance of perceived usefulness in the decision to use Facebook for trip planning and support the results of previous studies that people will use the social media in general and specifically Facebook for trip planning if they think it is more useful than traditional sources (Mariani, Ek Styven, and Ayeh, J. 2019). The perceived usefulness is effected directly from the media richness, and the perceived ease of use (PEOU), this reflects the way travelers believe that using Facebook will be easy and require minimal effort (Moslehpour et al 2018, Raza et al 2017) . Similarly to what was found in previous research it does not have a direct effect on the use of Facebook for trip planning (Mariani, Ek Styven, and Ayeh, 2019). The PEOU is directly affected from trust as it was found that people have more trust in information found on social media than information provided by travel agents (Ip et al 2012, Jalilvand et al 2012), and the technology convenience that when is increases more users understand the ease of use and adopt the technology (Lee et al. 2018, Kansakar et al 2019). Although the hypothesis that perceived risk will effect the use of Facebook for trip planning (H11) was not supported it is a good sign for Facebook as it shows that people do not see risks in using Facebook for trip planning (Sakshi et al).

In future reserch it is recommended to include past experience with planning trips using Facebook as a predictor of future planning and if possible, to return to the same respondents after they have completed their trip and ask how successful the use of Facebook for the planning was. The results of this research shade more light on understanding the factors that determine the use of Facebook for trip planning, tourism managers and Facebook group managers should implement this information in order to increase their revenue. For example, the results indicate that a well-designed contact that is effective, reliable and easy to use enhance the use of Facebook for trip planning, therefore, Facebook managers should add more features to their Facebook group to increase the satisfaction of using. More specifically, managers ought to focus on enhancing user-friendliness, promoting media richness on Facebook and establish credibility in order to enhance utility. Managers should reinforce their credibility on Facebook by keeping promises and sharing reliable content. In addition, prioritizing technological convenience of the Facebook group can further facilitate ease of use. The study stresses the importance for tourism service providers to share only realistic information to mitigate risk, positively influencing tourists' behavioral. This approach can attract more tourists to engage with travel content on Facebook, incorporating it into their travel planning, and ultimately benefiting the reputations, market shares, and profitability of both travel destinations and Facebook group managers.

There are some limitations to this study. The data were collected only in Facebook group directed to Israelis as the managers of global Facebook groups were reluctant to help in distributing the quasstionaare. In addition, the survey only lasted two month and covered a relatively small number of participants. Further research should address more communities and collected data over a full year.

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