

The Role of Digital Content Marketing on Social Media in Shaping Intention to Visit: A Conceptual Study in the Context of Jordanian Domestic Tourism

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Abstract

This conceptual paper investigates the impact of digital content marketing on social media in shaping users' intention to visit domestic tourism destinations in Jordan. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the study explores how strategic content dissemination through social platforms influences the psychological and behavioral processes leading to travel intentions. The research highlights the significance of value-driven, relevant, and engaging digital content in enhancing destination appeal among local audiences. With social media increasingly becoming a dominant channel for tourism communication, this study synthesizes key literature on content marketing effectiveness, intention formation, and consumer behavior in the digital space. It also identifies critical research gaps in understanding how digital marketing strategies influence domestic tourists' decision-making, especially in emerging economies like Jordan. The framework presented offers both theoretical and practical implications, emphasizing the role of planned and persuasive content in fostering tourism growth. The paper concludes with recommendations for tourism stakeholders and marketers on optimizing social media strategies to drive intention and support sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Digital Content Marketing, Social Media, Intention to Visit, Domestic Tourism, Tourism Marketing.

Introduction

The digital transformation of marketing has redefined how organizations engage with their audiences, particularly through the use of digital content. In an age where consumers rely

heavily on online platforms for information, digital content marketing has become an essential tool for influencing decision-making (Rathore,ca 2019). This paper examines the role of digital content marketing on social media in shaping the intention to visit domestic tourism destinations in Jordan.

Technological advancements have accelerated the shift toward interactive, real-time marketing strategies that prioritize user engagement and tailored messaging (Rust, 2020). Digital marketing allows businesses to deliver relevant, value-driven content that resonates with specific audiences (Nair & Gupta, 2020). Among its many formats, content disseminated through social media stands out for its reach and influence, providing a platform where users actively seek and interact with tourism-related information (Chomiak-Orsa & Liszczyk, 2020). Social media has revolutionized how tourists discover, evaluate, and choose destinations. It enables two-way communication between tourism providers and prospective travelers, and empowers users to create and share content that influences others' travel choices (Hussain et al., 2024). Prior research shows that peer-generated content and official tourism promotions on platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube can significantly affect travelers' intentions (Buhalis et al., 2023;Yoo & Gretzel, 2009).

While the impact of digital marketing on international tourism has been well documented, its role in promoting domestic tourism, particularly in Jordan, remains underexplored. Jordan's tourism marketing strategies have traditionally focused on attracting foreign visitors, often overlooking the potential of its local population (Alzboun, 2019). Yet, with internet penetration and mobile usage rapidly growing, digital content marketing on social media presents a timely opportunity to promote local destinations to Jordanian residents.

There is an increased urgency to study this sector, given that domestic tourism has the potential to be a stabilizing factor for the tourism sector during periods of geopolitical tensions or global health pandemics that restrict cross-border travel. Studying digital content marketing in this regard is important for the purpose of making sense of how emerging communication technologies are leveraged to reorient local interest in national destinations, thereby increasing domestic tourism demand and decreasing over-reliance on international tourists (Mustafa Dr., 2012; Bader et al., 2016).

Despite its strategic importance, academic research on digital content marketing's effect on domestic tourists' intention to visit is still limited, especially in the Middle Eastern context (Lopes et al., 2022). As such, this study aims to fill this gap by investigating how digital content marketing efforts via social media platforms influence local residents' travel intentions in Jordan.

The significance of the research is that it can both benefit theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, it advances the existing knowledge regarding consumers' responses to digital content within the domestic tourism sector—a field that remains relatively under-researched in Jordan and the wider region (Madzík et al., 2023). From a practical perspective, the study provides actionable recommendations that can be employed to inform tourism marketing approaches tailored to the target market, supporting national goals for sustainable and inclusive tourism growth.

This study is motivated by the growing need to develop effective digital content strategies that support the promotion of domestic tourism in Jordan. Recognizing the limited research in this area, particularly within the local context, the researcher aims to contribute to both academic understanding and practical application. By offering data-driven insights into how digital content marketing on social media influences the intention to visit, the study aspires to support national tourism development and provide strategic guidance for tourism marketers and policymakers in Jordan.

Generally, this study's findings are anticipated to be useful to various stakeholders. The government and tourism authorities can utilize the knowledge to develop more effective digital marketing strategies. Domestic marketers and tourism providers will have a clearer understanding of how to target domestic tourists through social media messages. Moreover, researchers in tourism and digital marketing scholarship will have a contextualized model that can be replicated in other emerging markets that have similar tourist patterns.

Literature Review

Intention to Visit

In the digital age, technological advancements—particularly social media—have significantly reshaped how tourists gather information and make travel-related decisions. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube have transformed the tourism experience by enabling users to create, share, and consume content that influences destination awareness and appeal (Buhalis, 2020; Zhang, 2020). These platforms support the dissemination of vivid and engaging digital content that can foster emotional connections and enhance the cognitive evaluation of destinations (Kim et al., 2017; Leung et al., 2019).

The concept of intention to visit is widely defined as the degree to which a potential tourist is likely to choose a specific destination for a future trip (Kokkhangplu, 2024). It reflects a cognitive and affective predisposition influenced by various factors such as destination image, perceived value, prior knowledge, and digital interactions. Research has consistently shown that exposure to high-quality, relevant content on social media positively influences tourists' perceptions and encourages travel behavior (Chen et al., 2014; Tussyadiah et al., 2018).

Social media marketing facilitates this process by enhancing destination visibility, building trust, and creating value through interactive and personalized content (Leung, 2019; Alghamdi & Wahid, 2024). Moreover, emotionally engaging content and content that aligns with user preferences are more likely to elicit positive attitudes, increase brand attachment, and reinforce intention to visit (Chung & Koo, 2015; Prayag et al., 2017). Tourists who are better informed and emotionally connected through digital content are more inclined to prioritize the destination during the decision-making process (Zhang et al., 2014; Ferns & Walls, 2012).

In domestic tourism, strategic digital content is key to encouraging residents to explore local destinations. Emotionally engaging and accessible content on social media can raise awareness, shape perceptions, and boost travel intentions. This is especially relevant in markets like Jordan, where digital media offers valuable opportunities to strengthen local tourism and connect with domestic audiences.

Digital Content Marketing in Social Media

Digital content marketing has become a central strategy in modern marketing, especially through social media platforms, where businesses can interact with consumers in real time and deliver engaging content. Social media enables organizations to communicate efficiently with large audiences, foster two-way interactions, and establish long-term customer relationships (Parveen et al., 2024; Nuseir et al., 2023). This shift from traditional media to user-driven platforms has empowered consumers to generate and share content, reshaping how brands build trust and loyalty (Kartomo, 2024; Ahuja & Tabeck, 2024).

With the rapid expansion of internet access and mobile technology, companies increasingly rely on social media not only for branding but also for storytelling and consumer education. Strategic use of content marketing on social platforms enhances brand visibility, improves consumer perceptions, and drives purchasing decisions (Khanom, 2023; Kikelomo Fadilat Anjorin et al., 2024). High-quality content plays a vital role in this process, as it creates memorable brand experiences and encourages customer participation (Siti Juliaha, 2024).

Recent studies underscore the importance of tailored, interactive content in influencing consumer behavior. Engaging visuals, influencer marketing, and user-generated content are particularly effective in shaping customer preferences and encouraging purchase intentions (Benevento et al., 2025; Gundová & Cvoligová, 2019). Furthermore, social media offers valuable feedback loops, helping marketers optimize content strategies based on consumer responses (Yan, 2024; Andrie, 2024).

In light of these developments, digital content marketing in social media is especially relevant for emerging tourism sectors. It enables organizations to reach and influence local audiences, foster emotional connections, and promote domestic destinations through compelling, shareable content (Liang & Furkan, 2025; Lama, 2024). As such, it holds particular promise for markets like Jordan, where social media adoption is high but strategic digital marketing for domestic tourism is still evolving.

Digital Content Marketing in Social Media and Intention to Visit

Visiting intention reflects a person's behavioral response and plays a vital role in decision-making (Tan & Wu, 2016). Social media-based digital marketing helps shape this intention by offering easy access to destination information (Nasution & Hanum, 2023; Confos & Davis, 2016). Destinations now use platforms like blogs and social media to deliver engaging and credible content that influences tourists' perceptions (Hashimoto, 2022; Kim et al., 2017). High-quality, emotionally appealing content can shape consumer attitudes and increase interest in visiting (Dewi et al., 2022; Silalahi et al., 2022). Functional aspects of social media—such as enjoyment, interactivity, and awareness—further enhance this intention (Aluri et al., 2016; Chang et al., 2015; Koo et al., 2016). As travelers increasingly rely on digital platforms, social media marketing becomes essential in driving destination awareness and visitation intent (Mendes et al., 2019; Gaffar et al., 2020). Overall, effective digital content marketing significantly enhances consumers' intention to visit and supports tourism growth.

Theoretical Framework

This study applies the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) to explore how digital content marketing in social media influences users' intention to visit domestic tourism destinations.

TPB, proposed by Ajzen (1991), explains behavioral intention as the result of three main determinants: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Adolph, 2016). These components are critical for understanding how individuals process digital content and form tourism-related intentions.

Attitude toward visiting a destination is shaped by the user's evaluation of whether the experience would be favorable or beneficial. Digital content that provides aesthetically appealing visuals, emotionally engaging narratives, and informative material can foster positive evaluations and increase the likelihood of intention to visit. Effective content marketing strategies help potential visitors imagine the travel experience and assess it positively, thereby enhancing behavioral intentions (Liu et al., 2019).

Subjective norms capture the influence of perceived social pressure on an individual's decision. In a social media environment, user-generated content, peer interactions, likes, comments, and influencer endorsements function as persuasive cues that signal social approval. This external validation, widely visible across platforms, can significantly affect the perceived expectations of one's social circle, reinforcing the decision to visit a destination (Leung et al., 2013).

Perceived behavioral control reflects the individual's belief in their ability to perform the behavior. Social media content that offers clarity on logistics, costs, safety, or accessibility contributes to users' confidence in executing their travel plans. By reducing uncertainty and presenting practical information, such content enhances users' sense of autonomy and control, which is strongly associated with intention formation (Prayag et al., 2017).

TPB has been widely validated in tourism and digital marketing contexts, providing a robust foundation for examining how psychological, social, and contextual factors interact in shaping travel-related intentions (Adolph, 2016; Han et al., 2010). Its emphasis on intention as a predictor of behavior aligns well with the objectives of this study, which aims to assess how digital content influences the pre-travel decision-making process.

Given the increasing reliance on social media for travel planning, TPB offers a suitable lens to examine how digital content marketing informs attitudes, responds to social influence, and strengthens perceived control. This framework enables a focused and theory-driven analysis of intention to visit within the context of Jordan's domestic tourism.



Discussion of Results

This study underscores the pivotal role of digital content marketing in social media in shaping users' intention to visit domestic tourism destinations, particularly within the context of Jordan. As the tourism industry evolves alongside digital technologies, strategic content dissemination through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube becomes critical for capturing consumer interest and influencing travel-related decisions.

The findings of this conceptual exploration align with existing literature emphasizing the transformative influence of social media on tourism behavior. High-quality, emotionally appealing, and relevant digital content fosters favorable attitudes toward destinations and supports users in evaluating the benefits of travel (Buhalis, 2020; Leung, 2019). Consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior, digital content enhances behavioral intention by improving attitudes, reinforcing subjective norms through social interaction and peer influence, and increasing perceived behavioral control by offering accessible, practical information (Adolph, 2016; Prayag et al., 2017).

Additionally, this study addresses a significant research gap in the digital tourism literature, particularly in the Middle Eastern context. While international tourism has been extensively explored, domestic tourism in Jordan has not received sufficient attention. Jordanian tourism campaigns have historically prioritized international markets, often overlooking the potential of local travelers (Alzboun, 2019). This study contributes to the discourse by highlighting the importance of leveraging digital content marketing to encourage domestic travel, offering a timely and context-specific insight into local tourism promotion.

Moreover, this research adds value by focusing on the strategic role of content design. Engaging visuals, informative posts, and emotionally resonant storytelling are shown to strengthen intention to visit, particularly when they align with users' interests and needs. This suggests that tourism marketers should move beyond generic promotions and adopt targeted, user-centric content strategies to achieve greater impact.

Finally, the study holds practical implications for tourism stakeholders in Jordan and similar emerging markets. By emphasizing the role of digital content in shaping travel intentions, it provides a theoretical and practical foundation for developing more effective domestic tourism campaigns. It also encourages policymakers to support digital infrastructure and training initiatives that enhance the country's competitiveness in the digital tourism landscape.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study highlights the growing influence of digital content marketing in social media on shaping the intention to visit domestic tourism destinations, particularly in the context of Jordan. With the increasing penetration of internet and mobile technologies, social media platforms have emerged as essential tools for communicating destination value, engaging with prospective travelers, and influencing pre-travel decision-making. By integrating the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study provides a theoretical lens through which the role of digital content can be better understood in terms of attitudes, perceived norms, and behavioral control that influence users' travel intentions.

The findings affirm that emotionally engaging, informative, and visually compelling content disseminated through platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube significantly contributes to shaping favorable tourist perceptions. This reinforces the notion that digital content is not merely promotional but serves a strategic role in driving consumer engagement and influencing behavioral outcomes.

In light of these findings, several recommendations can be proposed. First, tourism marketers should prioritize content strategies that are audience-centered, incorporating visual storytelling, local narratives, and emotionally resonant themes that appeal to domestic travelers. Second, destination marketing organizations should invest in enhancing digital infrastructure and training tourism professionals to develop high-quality content that addresses logistical concerns, enhances destination image, and increases user confidence in travel planning. Third, policymakers are encouraged to support national campaigns that leverage social media as a cost-effective and far-reaching tool for promoting domestic tourism, particularly in underserved or less-promoted regions.

Overall, this study contributes to both academic literature and practical tourism development by offering actionable insights into how digital content marketing can be effectively used to promote domestic tourism in Jordan and similar emerging markets. Future research may benefit from empirical investigations that validate these findings using quantitative or qualitative methods across diverse tourism contexts.

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