

# The Influence of Social Media Engagement and Customer Satisfaction on Booking Intention in Five-Star Hotels in Jordan: The Mediating Role of Information Trust

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**To Link this Article:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i7/25960> DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i7/25960

**Published Date:** 20 July 2025

## Abstract

This study investigates the influence of social media engagement and customer satisfaction on booking intention in the context of five-star hotels in Jordan, with a particular focus on the mediating role of information trust. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the study conceptualizes social media engagement and satisfaction as key antecedents shaping customer attitudes and behavioral intentions, while information trust functions as a psychological mechanism that reinforces these effects. A quantitative research design was employed, and data will be collected through a structured questionnaire from a sample of 300 individuals who had previously booked or stayed in five-star hotels in Jordan. Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via Smart-PLS, the study tested both direct and mediating relationships. The results will be expected to reveal that social media engagement and customer satisfaction significantly predict booking intention, and that information trust plays a mediating role in strengthening these associations. The study contributes to the literature by extending TPB in a digital hospitality context and provides practical insights for hotel managers seeking to enhance customer engagement, trust, and conversion through targeted social media strategies and service excellence.

**Keywords:** Social Media Engagement, Customer Satisfaction, Information Trust, Booking Intention, Five-Star Hotels, Jordan, Theory of Planned Behavior

## Introduction

The global hospitality industry is undergoing a profound transformation driven by rapid digitalization, with social media platforms playing an increasingly central role in shaping customer experiences and influencing decision-making (Buhalis et al., 2019; Zeqiri, 2024). In particular, social media has evolved beyond traditional advertising to become an interactive

ecosystem where hotel brands and consumers engage, co-create content, and shape perceptions of service quality and brand trust (Cheung et al., 2021; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). This transformation is especially significant in the luxury hospitality segment, such as five-star hotels, where customer expectations are higher, brand image is critical, and online impressions often determine booking decisions (Vo et al., 2022).

The urgency of studying this topic has been amplified in the post-COVID-19 era, where digital interaction frequently replaces in-person hotel visits during the pre-booking phase (Gretzel et al., 2020; Witarsana et al., 2024). Consequently, understanding how online engagement and customer satisfaction translate into actual booking intentions is not only timely but also strategically essential for hotel marketers navigating an increasingly competitive and digital-first landscape.

Although a growing body of literature has examined the effects of online reviews, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), and digital advertising on consumer behavior, relatively few studies have investigated the joint influence of social media engagement and customer satisfaction on booking intentions particularly within the high-end hotel context (Amayreh et al., 2025). This represents a significant gap, as luxury hotel consumers are more discerning and heavily influenced by intangible cues such as brand trust and online authenticity. Moreover, with the rise of misinformation and content manipulation online, trust in the information encountered on social media has emerged as a critical factor influencing consumer decisions (Al Bqaeen & Md. Saad, 2025; Amayreh & Arshad, 2024). Even when customers report high levels of engagement and satisfaction, their booking intention may falter if the content they consume is not perceived as credible or trustworthy (Jabeen et al., 2024; Williams & Baláž, 2021).

This study is both timely and necessary in the context of Jordan's tourism industry. The five-star hotel sector in Jordan is a cornerstone of national tourism, contributing significantly to GDP, employment, and international reputation (Amayreh & Arshad, 2024, 2025). However, despite this strategic importance, empirical research on the digital determinants of customer behavior, especially in the luxury segment remains scarce. Existing studies often generalize findings across hospitality categories or focus on budget and mid-range hotels, offering limited insight into the unique dynamics of digitally mediated customer behavior in the premium segment (Hasouneh & Alzeat, 2020; Yousef, 2024).

Therefore, this study aims to fill a critical theoretical and practical gap by examining the combined effects of social media engagement and customer satisfaction on booking intentions, with information trust as a key mediating variable. By applying the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), the study develops a comprehensive framework that integrates digital engagement, emotional response, and cognitive trust into the prediction of booking behavior (Al Ziadat, 2015; Raad Mahmoud Al-Tal, 2025; Shahateet & Partale, 2019).

The significance of this study lies in three key contributions. Theoretically, it extends the TPB by incorporating contemporary constructs relevant to the digital hospitality era. Methodologically, it addresses a region and hotel segment that are underrepresented in current academic discourse. Practically, it offers actionable insights for hotel marketers, digital strategists, and tourism policymakers seeking to boost booking rates by enhancing customer engagement and building information trust online (Al Bqaeen & Md. Saad, 2025;

Alghizzawi et al., 2019; Alzoubi & Jaaffar, 2021). These findings will be especially valuable in helping Jordan's luxury hotel sector adapt to evolving consumer expectations and digital trends, ultimately strengthening its competitiveness in the global tourism market.

#### *Literature Review and Hypotheses Development*

Customer behavior in the digital hospitality landscape is becoming increasingly complex and influenced by multiple interrelated psychological and technological factors. In this context, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), introduced by Ajzen (1991), offers a robust framework for understanding how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control predict individuals' intentions to perform specific actions such as booking a hotel. TPB has been widely applied in tourism and hospitality research to explain consumers' decision-making processes (Bano & Siddiqui, 2024b; Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). Within this study, social media engagement and customer satisfaction are conceptualized as antecedents influencing attitudes toward booking, while information trust is proposed as a mediating mechanism that facilitates the translation of these attitudes into booking intentions.

#### *Social Media Engagement and Booking Intention*

Social media engagement refers to the degree of interaction between consumers and brands on digital platforms. This includes behavioral actions such as likes, shares, and comments, as well as deeper cognitive and emotional involvement (Brodie et al., 2013). In the luxury hospitality sector, especially among five-star hotels, visually appealing and interactive content on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube serves not only as promotional material but also as a mechanism to create emotional connections and stimulate favorable attitudes (Al Bqeen & Md. Saad, 2025; Tatar & Eren-Erdogmus, 2016).

According to TPB, attitudes formed through positive interactions (such as social media engagement) are likely to enhance behavioral intentions (Akhtar et al., 2022; Barreda et al., 2015). Several empirical studies (Chetioui et al., 2021; Ladhari & Michaud, 2015) have demonstrated that higher engagement with hotel-related content is positively linked to intention to book. These findings suggest that social media acts as an indirect influencer of behavioral intention by shaping attitudes and social norms.

**H1:** Social media engagement positively influences customers' booking intentions in five-star hotels in Jordan.

#### *Customer Satisfaction and Booking Intention*

Customer satisfaction is a key determinant of repeated behavioral intentions in the hospitality field (Amayreh & Arshad, 2025). It is commonly defined as the overall evaluation of a guest's experience and the degree to which it meets or surpasses expectations (Oliver et al., 1997). In the context of luxury hotels, satisfaction is shaped by high service quality, ambiance, exclusivity, and personalized services (Hao & Chon, 2022).

From a TPB perspective, satisfaction enhances positive attitudes and perceived behavioral control by reducing the uncertainty surrounding the booking process (Aluri et al., 2016; Saru Thapa, 2025). Satisfied customers are also more likely to develop trust in the service provider, which reinforces their future booking decisions (Han & Hyun, 2018). Therefore, the emotional and cognitive outcomes of satisfaction serve to strengthen the intention to book, particularly when customers recall favorable past experiences.

**H2:** Customer satisfaction positively influences customers' booking intentions in five-star hotels in Jordan.

### *The Mediating Role of Information Trust*

Information trust refers to the perceived reliability, accuracy, and credibility of online content encountered by potential customers (Majerczak & Strzelecki, 2022). In digital contexts, particularly where customers cannot physically experience the product prior to purchase, trust in the information provided becomes a pivotal influence on decision-making (Filiari & McLeay, 2014).

Based on TPB, trust can be seen as a factor enhancing both attitude and perceived behavioral control. For example, customers who trust social media content from a five-star hotel are more likely to feel confident and informed when making a booking decision (Chouykaew et al., 2024). Additionally, trust helps mitigate perceived risks, which are often a barrier to online transactions (Zahidah & Rostiani, 2021). Prior research Casaló et al. (2011) has demonstrated that trust in online information significantly affects purchase and booking intentions in tourism (Ladhari & Michaud, 2015; Vrontis et al., 2022).

Moreover, social media engagement and satisfaction both contribute to the formation of trust (Tseng et al., 2022). Engaging, transparent content and consistent satisfaction over time build the hotel's online credibility (Vo et al., 2022). Thus, information trust can be considered a mediating mechanism that links digital experiences with consumer behavioral intentions.

**H3:** Information trust mediates the relationship between social media engagement and booking intention.

**H4:** Information trust mediates the relationship between customer satisfaction and booking intention.

In summary, guided by the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study posits that social media engagement and customer satisfaction enhance customers' attitudes and perceived control over booking decisions (Azad et al., 2023). However, for these relationships to materialize into actual booking intentions, information trust is necessary as a mediating variable (Caverlee et al., 2010). By testing this model in the context of five-star hotels in Jordan, the study provides both theoretical and practical insights into consumer behavior in the digital hospitality domain.

### Framework

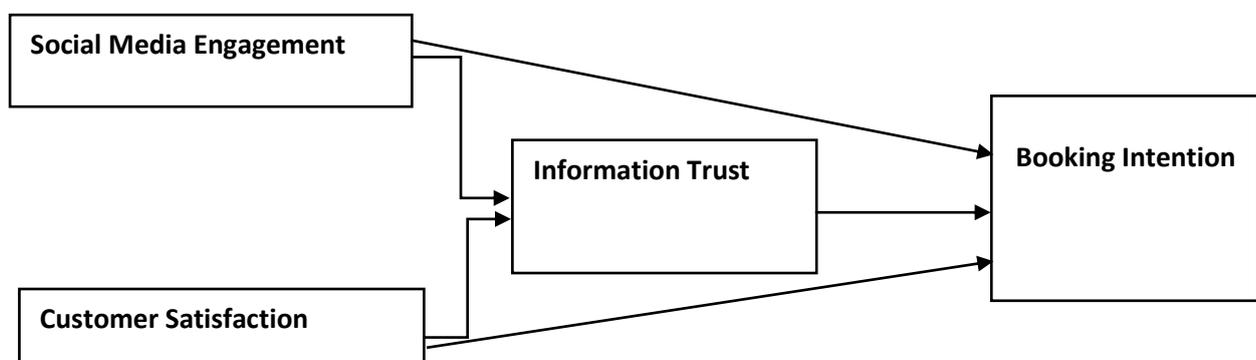


Figure.1 Theoretical Framework

**Methodology**

This study adopts a quantitative research design using a structured survey questionnaire to investigate the influence of social media engagement and customer satisfaction on booking intention, with information trust as a mediating variable, among customers of five-star hotels in Jordan. The target population includes domestic and international tourists who have previously booked or stayed at five-star hotels in major tourist destinations such as Amman, Aqaba, and the Dead Sea (Kortelainen, 2018; Shahateet & Partale, 2019). A purposive sampling technique is employed to ensure the inclusion of participants with relevant experience in social media use and luxury hotel bookings (tom Dieck et al., 2017). Data will be collected through an online and on-site questionnaire consisting of five sections: demographic information, social media engagement adapted from Verma et al. (2019), customer satisfaction based on Oliver et al. (1997), information trust adapted from McKnight et al. (2002), and booking intention based on Lim et al. (2022), using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) (Armstrong, 1987). A total of 300 complete questionnaires will be collected to ensure sufficient statistical power for analysis. The data will be analyzed using SPSS for descriptive statistics and data screening (e.g., missing values, normality), followed by Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Smart-PLS to assess the measurement model, structural relationships, and the mediating effect of information trust (George & Mallery, 2010; Hair Jr et al., 2017).

**Contributions***Theoretical Contributions*

This study offers several theoretical contributions to literature on hospitality marketing and consumer behavior. First, it extends the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) by integrating social media engagement and customer satisfaction as antecedents of booking intention, which enhances the theory's applicability in digital service environments. Second, by introducing information trust as a mediating variable, the research addresses a critical gap in understanding the mechanisms through which online interactions influence behavioral intention, particularly in high-involvement service settings such as five-star hotels. Third, the study contributes to the emerging body of research that emphasizes the intersection of digital marketing, psychological trust, and consumer decision-making, offering a more nuanced understanding of the factors driving booking behavior in the luxury hospitality sector.

*Practical Contributions*

From a managerial perspective, the study provides actionable insights for hotel marketers, brand managers, and digital strategy teams. The results underscore the importance of fostering active social media engagement through high-quality, interactive, and trustworthy content to attract and influence potential guests. Additionally, the findings highlight that enhancing customer satisfaction not only encourages loyalty but also strengthens trust in the hotel's online presence, thereby increasing the likelihood of future bookings. Five-star hotel operators in Jordan can leverage these insights to improve customer experience strategies and design.

**Conclusion**

In an increasingly digitalized hospitality landscape, understanding the factors that drive customer booking intentions has become crucial for five-star hotels seeking to maintain a competitive advantage. This study explored the influence of social media engagement and

customer satisfaction on customers' intention to book luxury hotels in Jordan, with a particular focus on the mediating role of information trust. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, the findings are expected to provide empirical support for the notion that customers' online interactions and prior satisfaction significantly shape their attitudes, trust levels, and ultimately their behavioral intentions.

By demonstrating the importance of information trust as a mediating mechanism, this research adds depth to existing theoretical models and highlights the central role of digital credibility in the customer decision-making process. Moreover, the study offers strategic guidance to hotel managers and marketers, emphasizing the need to enhance both digital engagement and service quality to strengthen trust and increase direct bookings.

The research underscores the evolving dynamics of consumer behavior in luxury hospitality and calls for further investigation into platform-specific effects, cultural influences, and the role of emerging digital trends such as influencer marketing and user-generated content. Future studies may also extend this model to other hospitality segments or geographic regions to test its generalizability and practical relevance.

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