# SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR TOURISM PROMOTION POST PANDEMIC WORLD

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#### **Abstract**

Nowadays it's completely impossible to imagine the world without Social Media as it has inculcated as a daily routine of our lives. Apart from other forms of business, the Tourism sector has been greatly influenced. Due to Covid -19 the tourism sector had been worst affected. This paper attempts to establish how Social Media can be used a means of revival and uplift and regenerate the importance of travel back in the lives of travellers. Hotels, airlines, railways, and other tourist operators are all adopting various safety and hygiene regulations and practices, to revive the tourism spirit in human society. Social Media is one the prominent tools which have gained a lot of potentiality for reshaping the way human society and industry works and to revitalize the tourism sector as well. WOM, UGM, cross referencing, and social media together are proving to be a great help.

Sherry Thomas (September 2016) observed that human urge for communicating, and the advancements in digital media, have fueled emergence of social media. With driven by digital information sharing to virtual meeting places, retail platforms, and essential 21st-century marketing tools, social media has revolutionized in less than decade and hence, connecting individuals from different corners of the world.

**Keywords:** Information Technology, Pandemic, Social Media, Social Media Tools, Tourism.

#### 1. Growth or Expansion

# 1.1 Exquisite Images, Delectable Food Experiences, etc Can Attract a Tourist Like a Magnet.

The prominent tool for attracting tourist to any a destination lies in the image, the destination portrays. Any destination fulfilling all the desire of a traveler, from the start of their journey till

the end in its best possible way is how a place gains its prosperity. Havard Utheim (January 2021) mentions that everything depends on the willingness whether; a traveler wants to capture some memorable pictures and videos and posts them online or not. Hence, a traveler will only visit a destination if the image drawn by the destination is exquisite. Vippin Nadda (January 2015) mentions that and the power of inspiring travellers and the publicity of a place with the entire world lies in the hands of social media. Hossein Nezakati (January 2015) reveals which Social media, today, very significant contrivance for data, sharing and searching, for travellers. Zheng\_Xiang et al; (July 2008) says that different technology interfaces, like search engine, Tourism promotion organisations and online travelling agencies, web sites, endorse information interchange amongst multiple online media users as well as destination marketing organizations. Explorers do have the likelihood to search, share, comment to reflect or inspect on various travel stories, BLOGS, VLOGS and now the information regarding multiple destinations is at his fingertips. Megasari Noer Fatanti (September 2015) says that today, a varied assortment of webbased social networking tools exists, (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat) making connections simpler and better. Analyses (like Trip Advisor, Trivago, Holiday check), social news (eg. Twitter) as well as media sharing group (e.g. Flickr, You Tube). Upon such platforms, travellers share and comment on different travel stories from different people/travelers and search through countless sorts of online networking destinations and have a choice to share their conclusions and enquiries. Honoria\_Samson (October 2017) mentions that the most significant aspect affecting the tourism business is this both amount and quality of data shared on social network.

Youngsters or Young earning bachelors, to be more specific, from the different stages of family life cycle, travelling serves multiple purposes like adventure, exaltation, self expression and much more. Since youngsters love to explore and they are adaptive as well so they don't look for exclusiveness exploring and sharing their experience is one of the major enterprise for them. The second major enterprise for them is sharing their experiences and which fulfills another need from the hierarchy of need, that is social needs and esteem needs, if a youngster is able fulfill the social and esteem needs successfully then his progression towards the next level of "Family life cycle" becomes easier. And we get the perfect recipe or our concoction of social media for tourism promotion. An explorer (youngster), sharing the experiences on social media is helping in promotion of tourism.

David\_Glenn (August 2013) mentions that social media has simplified travelling and has build connectivity with those living miles away. In the past travel was on barefoot but once the word "Social Media" arrived and people understood its importance, there seemed to be a U-Turn in the lives of the people as the scenario for travel completely changed. It is with the help of media that enables one to fetch different stories, pictures as well as status updates on various locations which have been viral throughout the world and gathering information about exotic places is no more challenging job for the travellers. Shilpi\_Jain (October 2016) discovers that while travelling down the road the best way to get involved with the mesmerizing local culture and discovering

its relevance about the places worth visiting is not possible without social media. There are ample ways to fetch information with the help of this platform as it's an easy access to infinite travel web portals. Reena\_Lakha & Prof (Dr) A C Vaid (May 2021) says that with the modernization effect in the globalized world not only travel websites but also in terms of accommodation sector too provides enormous hotels information. One can get easy access to their desired place of staying. For safety and security purpose one can easily browse the profiles and reviews as well as comments to know the real taste of the travellers regarding the place before visiting the place in real life.

Sofia\_Reino & Brian Hay (June 2011) states that one of the prime reason and a main fascinator social media network is being use is to show off to the world. Every minute, every second people are posting pictures, videos, making reels to show others where one is traveling to. One way it is of great help for those who seek to visit and experience such places as the desire or the curiosity to visit the place increases tremendously. Javaid\_Iqbal (July 2019) says that travellers do post different scenic places, beautiful natural resources, exotic food spots, mesmerizing cuisines to introduce and share with their loved and dear ones to lesser known as well as to those who have never heard of it beforehand. It is a great source of inspiring as well as driving people crazy to visit the place.

#### 2. Vitality of Social Media in Personal & Business Life.

Nowadays, it's hard to envision a society without social networks as real-time source of knowledge about anything from business to current events to social life to travel and more. Buhalis\_and\_Law (2008) stated that with the usage of these tool, individuals can easily corroborate and share their thoughts, ideas, creations, and feelings to social media. In reality, social media can develop and support online communities where members work together and communicate with one other in real time and on consistent basis. Hays et al; (2013) observed that social media programmes such as Facebook enable users to upload their own experiences and shares to build far greater feeling of community During trip, social media is used mostly to remain in touch with friends, and after trip, it is used to share experiences with certain other tourists or friends who may have gone on same trip.

Gil\_Appel et al., (October 2019) mentions that with the introduction of social media, new directions evolved for reaching out towards the target consumers. It will give a new shape to the world of marketing in the later stage. Many social networking sites are available to consumers nowadays, and they may use them to share their findings and inquires. Customers and businesses in present day may communicate and connect in new ways thanks to this technology. ISEDSO34 (August 2018) states that For tourism firms, social media presents boundless opportunity to connect with their clients in networked innovation process. As a result, consumers have gone from passive recipients of company's messaging to active producers who can quickly share their

work on internet. Nian\_Yan(June 2021) mentions as when it comes to customer service, social media is redefining how businesses communicate and engage with their consumers. To put it another way, customer-oriented ethos of tourist sector necessitates that tourism suppliers make most of social media possibilities available to them.

#### 3. Tourism and Business: Before and After Pandemic

Prince (October 2020) mentions that universally, In terms of employment generation, economic growth, and cultural advancement, travel and tourism play significant role. Bastidas\_Manzano et al; (2020) asserted that prior to the recent pandemic, It was possible to predict that major growth in "smart cities," cities that apply beneficial measures for citizens' accessibility and well-being and clearly support environmentally, digitally, and e-governmental choices, would occur. A significant part of the gross domestic product (GDP) of several cities and areas is generated by tourist industry. Adam\_Behsudi (2020) says that prior to recent pandemic Covid 19 attack, travel and tourism were very prominent segments into global economy, generating roughly 10% of global GDP and employing and over 320 million people throughout the globe. The year 1950, witnessed only a small number of people resorting to foreign trips via aeroplanes, at the beginning of the jet age. But by 2019, travellers number swelled to 1.5 billion mark, and the travel and tourism sector almost became too-big-to-be handled by many other smaller economies globally.

Luis-Alberto Casado-Aranda et al (October 2021) asserted that COVID-19 pandemic during December 2019 affected many sectors including health, biomedical, environmental, and tourism segments. Tourism & hospitality are believed to be productive industries that have been severely impacted by this epidemic. Additionally, international travel restrictions and sectoral lockdowns due to COVID-19 pandemic impacted both international and domestic hospitality, along with day-to-day travellers and other related sectors including public and air transportation as well as restaurants, hotels, and accommodations. The pace of economic growth dropped dramatically across board. Stefan Gossling et al (April 2020) mentions that Catering, washing, and gasoline are just some of the ancillary industries that have been hard hit. Countries throughout world have taken strong precautions to prevent spread of illness, including border closures, prohibition on large-scale gatherings, and airport closures. As a consequence of these efforts, there has been an extraordinary decrease in demand for tourist services. When an event occurs, its possibility (probability) and repercussions (intensity) are often seen as combination. The spread of COVID-19 pandemic has also resulted in serious commercial interruptions, which have heightened governmental concerns. If consequences of COVID-19 pandemic can be reversed, appears highly controversial. According to Monika Wieczorek-Kosmala (February 2021) mentions that for tourism industry, There has been a precipitous drop in (and near-total absence of) consumers as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic. This resulted in an economy or region's incapacity to produce sales and other revenue-generating activities, as well as the associated operational cash

outflows out of a financial planning aspect. Organizations also have to take care of fixed expenses at the same time (like salary or constructing maintenance).

#### 4. Need to Revive Belief on Tourism

Holly\_Seale et al;(August 2020) states that in order to revive the traveling instinct amongst people, Non pharmaceutical Interventions (NPI's) are using strategies Reduce contact rates as means of thwarting spread of epidemic. Face masks, social isolation, washing, and sanitising hands often may reduce risk of illness while on road, as does frequent hand washing. In addition, several nations have committed large funds in the study of covid-19 as well as vaccine has indeed been created, making travel safe and convenient for general public. Health code applications, for example, allow tourists to electronically prove their health condition by responding to questions on their smartphones. In response to a user's responses to questions about previous travel routes, programme generates several colours, ranging from green (safe) to orange (low risk) to red (high danger). All those afflicted or suspected of being infected must be quarantined and treated at a single location.

#### 5. Social Media as a Potential Tool for Revival

Namho\_Chung & Chulmo Koo (September 2014) mentions that with the passage of time, Social Media is completely altering how visitors and travellers search and validate the information about destinations. Social media's effect, visitor feedback on places, and online material availability are all key variables that influence potential tourists' destination choices. For travel and tourism online marketing, video. Gil\_Appel et al; (October 2019) states that millions of potential tourists around the world utilize videos as an appealing and entertaining medium. Consumers use web videos to assist them in making selections. For personal travel, 63 percent view videos and 66 percent for professional travel. A large number of customers also write evaluations and upload their own travel videos. A thousand words are worth a thousand pictures, and internet destination or hotel movies can help attract more people and increase income. For the travel industry, visibility is crucial.

#### **5.1Videos Influence Travel Decisions**

Sanjoy\_Kumar\_Roy et al; (October 2020) says that, The number of people viewing travel-related material on YouTube has increased 118 percent year-over-year, according to YouTube statistics (YoY). According to the statistics, mobile devices accounted for almost 30 percent among all traveling youtube views in 2013, with mobile watching up 97 %. People of various age watch and subscribe to travel videos on YouTube. Among age between 18 and 24, 38 % of travel channel customers are in 25-64 age range. 11 Travel vlogs are preferred by younger viewers, showing preference for "authentic" material. Even if they're not travelling themselves, they're at least being urged to do so by their fellow YouTubers. Twerkers, laughing newborns, and animal

videos aren't the only things that go viral (for those "aww" moments). There is also vitality in the travel category. This is because, like every other YouTube user, travellers like sharing their favourite videos with their friends and family. "Social media, a transducer to conjunctions between tourists and locals Huerta-Álvarez et al; (2020) stated that in furtherance of the frequency and there's also lack of research on importance of social media communication in competitive business like tourism, and this is especially true in developing tourist destinations. It has been observed that user-generated material on social media platforms is becoming increasingly significant and is aptly supported by the advertising concept of AIDA (Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action) as the user-generated material is invariably, able to get the attention and germinate the interest. Understanding tourists' perceptions of tourism sites has led to a plethora of opportunities for tourism companies to have a better understanding of their customers. Using user-generated material to identify sentiments, determine themes of interest, and investigate loyalty behaviours might help managers make better decisions. . It is suggested that tourism companies maintain a high level of quality in order to allow more UGC, which will lead to increased confidence in social media material and expectations. Farshid Mirzaalian and Elizabeth Halpenny (2021) says that marketing businesses may now use social media to reach out to consumers and learn about what travellers think about their destination. . Marketers can now change and/or influence the experience, creating new experiences depending on usergenerated content. Astrid Dickinger & Lidija Lalicic (January 2016). Investigating how the image of a destination influences gratification and intention to suggest destination as well as its goods emerging destination picture components have distinct consequences on model evaluative and behavioral characteristics. Catarina Marques et al; (2021).

# 5.2 Brand Awareness is Boosted Through Travel Videos.

Jano\_Jimenez\_Barreto et al; (July 2019) found that usage of online search engines to search for information regarding tourist locations, along with the requirements of the destination marketing organizations. (DMOs), are essential for ensuring positive online destination brand (ODB) proficiencies. It was found that positive ODB experience included sensory, emotional, behavioural, intellectual, interactive and social components that were all measured using photoelicitation methodology and analysed with grounded theory and data triangulation methods. Studies show that DMOs should put heavy emphasis on providing visitors with variety of engaging experiences, including sensory, emotional, behavioural, and intellectual ones., rather than simply transmitting contents. Symbols can be used to symbolize tourist sites in branding and marketing. Focusing and examining the elements that influence the popularity of destination marketing businesses' social media content as well as Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) is essential. Its goal is to see how much the destination image qualities provided in DMO material (also known as firm generated content or FGC) improves popularity. Herrero Crespo Angel et al; (2020).

Destination management is always incomplete, without the participation of tourists and foreign tourists face a hard time due to lack of internet services as a result having a bad impact on the destination. Even while online identity and community limits have no effect on an individual's emotional perception of location; informational search restrictions have an influence. According to results of this study, there seems to be moderating influence of constrained information search skills on association between emotional state and affective picture. Higher-order constructs are identified in this research using reflective-formatively evaluated technique. The fact that this travel pressure (time, finances, family, overcrowding, social media etc.) are some of the severe elements stirring the travellers choice in decision making to various places Yi\_Fu & Dallen J. Timothy (January 2021).

Understanding tourists' perceptions of tourism sites has led to a plethora of opportunities for tourism companies to have a better understanding of their customers. Narangajavana et.al; (2017) The intensity of social media usage is determined by news updates and information searches. The motivations for accepting UGC on social media are affected by the intensity. The key study revealed that when users obtain UGC on tourism destinations, they will form expectations about the destination by trusting the materials. By merging semiotics, advertising, & data science in tourist environment, study found that destination's image is based on Instagram photographs. An entirely new methodological framework was established by comparing different machine learning models for classifying textual information based on graphical elements. The results indicated distinct clusters of destination images, such as wildness and spirituality of mountain encounters. Marketers may use this information to better understand tastes and movements of tourists. Veronika Arefieva et al; (2016). Consumers' perceptions of place are shaped by both content and non-content signals in social media. Conative images are formed by combination of content and non-content signals (e.g., the design of a web page). This research contributes to body of information on function of travel information integrity upon social media by providing empirical data on destination image development. It also aids tourism managers in developing social media marketing plans to attract more visitors. Sung-Eun Kim et.al; (2017). Picture of destination is crucial in bringing people and income to it. By rise of Web 2.0 & travelergenerated contents, destination managing organizations no longer have control over the information that influences destination image development on cognitive, emotional, and conative levels. Tourist opinions, as expressed in internet evaluations, can assist businesses in improving their provision of goods and services. Estela Marine-Roig and Assumpció Huertas (2020). Smart tourism application qualities are to be examined to see whether they have an impact on tourists' perceptions of a location, and hence their future behavior intentions towards it. Additionally, it examines the influence of information search on connection among (Smart Tourism Application) STA characteristics and image of the destination as well as link between image of destination and behavioural intention. Pimtong Tavitiyaman et al; (2021). Tourism destinations must better grasp technology trends and implement proactive strategies in order to obtain an edge over competition in the extremely competitive tourism business.

#### Research Paper

Covid 19 has had serious impact upon world's economy and culture. In the wake of Ebola outbreak, global economy has been badly impacted by travel bans, border closures, conference cancellations, and tight quarantine practices. To add salt to injury various social media inputs which were reliable and unreliable, at the same time, also contributed to the changing perceptions and mindset of tourists towards travel decisions and decision making to any or every destination. Fear arose in the mindset of people towards travelling. Although there were a few ones who wanted to make a move, but the government emphatically suggested people to stay indoors and not to go out to ensure ones safety as the safest option to stop the spread of virus and getting infected was by staying at home.

Corona brought dramatically negative effects to the world economies and severely harmful effects to the tours and travel industry. Safety measures like travel restrictions and social distancing has not only taken away the customers from the industry but has also taken away the sense of trust, enlightenment and enjoyment from the industry. Even the supporting systems to the tours and travel industry like local transport network, bistros and small moveable outlets selling local delicacies have been rendered as a dangerous adventure. People have become more health cautious and surprisingly more active on different social media platforms.

This increased activity on social media has actually heated up the market of rumors. This brought more restrictions from government on media platforms and has earned, more distrust and fear, amongst people and has brought down the reliability of media platforms as a reliable, open and cheap source of collecting and sharing the information. Prescribed disease prevention measures along with legal and self imposed restrictions compounded with distrust on one another and even social media has brought us to the current scenario where any and every means of reviving the tourism industry seems far-fetched approach.

The review article is going to demystify the establishment and growth of social media and how it helped in establishing or reviving various forms of businesses. The specific requirements of the tourism industry will also be identified and the review will help in understanding if those specific requirements can be addressed by the social media. Finally, the article, will attempt to establish that social network could still be utilised like revival tool for tourism industry and what examples can be drawn from history to re-establish the authenticity of the social media and how the authenticated social media information can help in reviving the tourism industry.

Recent pandemic attack on human society has made us revisit various survival tools and techniques adopted by humans in past and has forced us to create or re-strengthen the modes to revive the industry and other operations. This is an integrative cum argumentative review article. Papers are selected from various indexed journal sources. While reviewing various parameters were selected based upon analysis, findings and limitations of various scholars which would enable the identification of any persistent gap in the current knowledge bank. Social Media is one tool that has came up recently and has a lot of potential for reshaping the way human society

and industry works and it has a lot of potential to revitalize the tourism sector as well. This review article will rediscover the benefits of travelling and will try exploring that how social media can be used for a healthy and steady life and simultaneously inculcate a change in the travelers' mindset towards travelling with its implementation of strategies of these beneficial tools.

Author/Paper	Findings	Limitations
Rocío Huerta-	- social media to be considered as a transformer in	- Not a lot of
Álvarez et al	terms of communication	information is
;(2020)	- Tourism is highly competitive sector that relies	available about it as a
	heavily on social media to generate customer	developing tourist
	loyalty.	attraction.
YiFu & Dallen	- travel pressure ( time, finances, family,	- Lack of proper
J.Timothy(2021)	overcrowding, social media etc.) are some of the	information search
	severe elements stirring the travellers choice in	which needs to be
	decision making to various places.	emphasized
	- info searching limitations has considerable	_
	impact upon affective picture of place via	
	emotion	
Farshid	- in the tourism industry, user-generated material	- Lack of importance in
Mirzaalian and	on social media platforms is becoming	prioritising visitor
Elizabeth	increasingly significant.	experience
Halpenny(2021)	- Using user-generated material to identify	improvements related
	sentiments, determine themes of interest, and	to loyalty-inducing
	investigate loyalty behaviours might help	destination elements
	managers make better decisions in this sector.	
Yeamduan	- The intensity of social media usage is determined	- Poor quality and little
Narangajavana	by news updates and information searches	knowledge on UGC
et al; (2017)	- users while obtaining UGC on tourism	platforms
	destinations, will form expectations about the	
	destination by trusting the materials.	
Kassegn	- Among the most contested concerns among	- Reliablity issues, a
Berhanu and	academics is the credibility of social networking	constraint factor for
Sahil Raj (2020)	traveling info sources.	the travellers
	- Travelers among age of 18 to 35 are more likely	
	to believe in accuracy of information found on	
	social media.	
Jano Jiménez-	- Searching for info about tourist attractions on	- Lack of proper access
Barretoa et al;	internet is becoming more popular, as well as the	to online platforms and

(2019)	requirement for destination marketing	its usage.
	organizations (DMOs), both are essential for	-
	online destination branding (ODB) experiences.	
	Six characteristics of a pleasurable ODB	
	(destination brand experiences) encounter were	
	identified: sensory, emotional, behavioural,	
	intellectual, interaction, and sociological,	
	employing photo-elicitation method, ground	
	theories method, and data triangulation.	
Veronika	- Symbols can be used to symbolize tourist sites in	- Lack of understanding
Arefieva et al;	branding and marketing	the perceptions and
(2021)	- fresh methodological framework has been	movement of the
	developed to compare several machine learning	travellers.
	models for grouping textual material based on	
	graphical content	
Sung-Eun Kim	- When it comes to social media, role of content &	- Lack of proper content
et al;(2017)	non-content signals of tourism information	analysis
	quality in developing customers' destination	
	image A conative picture is formed when many	
	content signals, as well as a non-content cue like	
	web page design, are connected to cognitive and	
	emotional memories.	
Estela Marine-	- With the rise of Web 2.0 and traveler-generated	- Certain levels having
Roig and	content, destination management organizations	lack of control and
Assumpció	no longer have control over the information that	access towards the
Huertas(2020)	influences destination image development on	Web. 2.0
	cognitive, emotional, and conative levels.	.,,,,,,,
Pimtong	- More focus towards tourist views of smart	- Lack of advice towards
Tavitiyaman et	tourism application attributes, as it can influence	tourism authorities,
al;(2021)	impressions of a destination	destination local
u1,(2021)	- One should also look into the role of information	governments, and
	search in moderating the relationship between	tourism businesses
	(Smart Tourism Application) STA qualities and	15 WIBIT CUBITIONS
	perceived destination image, along with link	
	among observed destination picture and behavior	
	intended.	
Blanca	- focusing and examining the elements that	- Lack of focus and its
Hernández-	influence the popularity of destination marketing	examination on
Ortega et al;	businesses' social media content as well as	influencing elements
ortoga et al,	outilities boots interit as well as	mindenenia cicinenta

(2020)	Destination	Management	towards destination
	Organizations(DMOs)is essential		promotion.
Lidija Lalicic et	- helping marketers rethink hov	v they create	- Change of mindset
al; (2006)	destination experience and busine	ss strategies by	necessary for
	incorporating current developments in peer-to-		destination marketing.
	peer hospitality industry into	systems of	
	destination marketing is essential.		
	- The destination is distingui-	shed by the	
	designative feature of the image	, and temporal	
	image trends are noted		

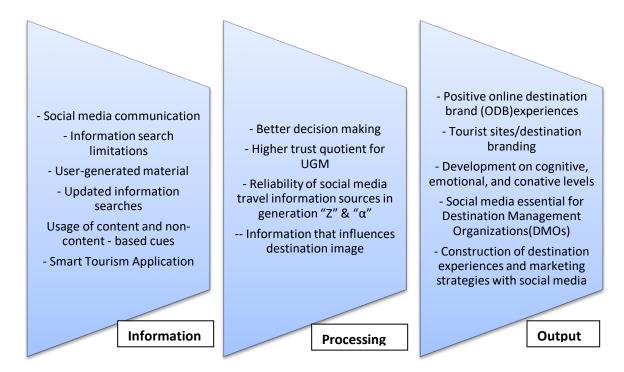


Fig.1 Information via Social Media leading to better decision making

The world has changed forever because of the corona pandemic and tourism business is the worst sufferer of the pandemic. Communication is one tool, which has been recognized as the buttress of human and industrial growth. Post pandemic world has highlighted the importance of communication to human survival and growth. Social media has facilitated the communication processes and even business processes. The only drawback of the communication via social media is found to be its uncontrollable nature. Just like publicity, the communication on social media is a non-paid form of communication and hence its intensity and integrity is uncontrollable. But social media, if utilized appropriately, then it can be utilized for destination image building to providing subtle and effective cues. And there'd be no limitation of time space

or place. That's the biggest strength of social media and the only cause to worry is integrity of information and hence the integrity of a destination. It can be used for Destination Management, Destination Brand (ODB) experience enhancement, destination image building, for establishing information availability, accessibility and integrity.

For marketers, social networking became a must along with its influence on marketing and other business activities has grown exponentially. Social media can be of highly significant to regain back its importance and boosting up their confidence towards travel. Because of social media we have seen the rise of influencer marketing which will continue to grow. The study would help in understanding how influential and significant social media is and with its latest strategies can be a turning point for travelling segment. Admiration of social networks itself is also subjected to changing popularity of social media channels and with the appearance of more Chat Bots the phenomena has become easily perceptible. But marketing via social media has a high ROI with less cost. This review article will enable the practitioners in selecting the optimal platforms for selecting a media tool for promotion of the tourism activity or aspects of tourism attractions; it'll also facilitate the creation of a pattern of social media platforms to optimize the results. The academia has also started accepting the credence of social media hence the review article will help in conceptualizing the concepts and trends in a formal demeanor.

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