Contemporary Issues Affecting Tourism Industry

World is changing and with it people have to learn how to adapt the way they live and behave accordingly. But it is not just about the people as individuals. Businesses and customers are also changing the way they plan, sell, target and make their decisions.

There are many contemporary issues affecting the Tourism Industry: social media, fake news, technology, Brexit, Coronavirus, globalisation etc., to name a few.

Social media is one of the biggest trends that had a major impact in all industries. Travel and Tourism sector was not left behind, and even more, social media played a great role in how the industry operates today.

The evolution of technology has had a great impact on social media. People can interact across the globe in seconds, by using their mobile phone or a computer. Research is extremely easy to access and the variety of tools that technology made available is playing an important part in the travellers' decision.

During the years social media has played an important role not only in the way customers behave but also in the way the businesses understand the needs of their customers and targeted market, the way they interact with them.

How hashtag has changed an industry

1. Travel research

According to (Lombardi, 1990) there are two key ways of [re]-creating a destination

image in the minds of visitors after an event has occurred. The first one is through communication in the mass media, while the second one is through a real experience.

With the rise of social media and technology, customers have started to share their thoughts about, and assessments of, satisfactory and unsatisfactory service experiences without being limited by temporal or spatial constraints (Al-Jabri and Sohail, 2012; Wilcox and Stephen, 2013).

It has been demonstrated in research that social media and mobile technology became crucial in the information exchanged prior to purchases (Kwon et al., 2011), and online interactions are a key aspect of the modern customer experience (Nusair et al., 2013).

TripAdvisor, in particular, has had a massive impact. With over 50 million unique users monthly the website has managed to change the way people make decisions when planning a holiday.

2. Social Sharing

People have started to share their photos and experiences about their holidays.

Consumer-generated content is communicated via increasingly popular social networking websites (SNSs), such as TripAdvisor and Facebook (Berezina et al., 2015). This particular communication channel has transformed the way in which customers evaluate information absorbed from consumer-centric communities by allowing them to share their experiences, therefore enhancing online interpersonal influences and WOM (Chu and Kim,2011; Zhang etal.,2015). Individuals have constantly shared photographs and recordings of their travel. Social media made it easier for people to share their experiences with a more extensive crowd than before. Over 97% of millennials share photographs and videos of their holidays and travels on social media platforms. (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, Pinterest etc.)

3. Customers service

Customer service and satisfaction had also suffered changes due to social media. Almost all big brands have an online presence to be able to interact with their customers whether they are looking for information, need professional advice, or complain about an unsatisfying experience, and show them they are valued. The online presence and the interaction with customers helped creating a strong reputation with existing and potential clients. It also helps the companies, by listening to the people's demands and concerns, to create a strong brand and unique experiences.

4. Reshaping travel agencies

Technology and social media had an impact on the way the travel agents are doing business. Nowadays the majority of people tend to book their holidays online, so the travel agencies (physical stores) became unnecessary and had to be closed. Also the packages that travel agents were creating and selling, can now be done by the customer itself, so people now have a variety of options. With the rise of social media trend, businesses had to improve/find new market elements and purchaser practices (Werthner & Klein, 1999). The travel industry has for some time been the one of most significant segments of the online business world, whose effect has significantly changed the structure of the business.

How social media changed the recruitment process

Almost all the people who are looking for a job will apply on a social media platform (Indeed, CV Library, Reed, JobServe, LinkedIn etc.) using their CV's and cover letter. Nowadays, LinkedIn has become one of the biggest platform in recruitment. Apart from the standard CV and cover letter, people have profiles and each profile will tell a story as recruiters can see recommendations from past employments.

Facebook and Instagram have also gone beyond just being social media platforms used by people to connect with family and friends. They have become important tools in the decision making process of hiring companies. Social media platforms are offering an incredible amount of information about the personality of and individual, the lifestyle, behaviour etc.

The recruitment process has also changed along with the evolution of the technology and social media. Recruiters can reach more candidates, faster and much cheaper as recruiting on social media is free. Through social media they can target an audience that is not active on the job portals, create pools of candidates, and build talent pipelines for future demands.

But social media has some downsides as well. With it the competiveness has increased and it makes it harder for some people to keep their jobs or to obtain some jobs as some of them might not have access to internet.

Another negative effect of social media is mental health issue. As people have now the possibility of being connected 24/7, addiction has also came into the picture. Research has shown that social approximately 5% of young people that are using the online platforms are addicted. Jenner, 2015; states that social media is even more addictive that cigarettes and alcohol. Other people feel left out, or that they are missing out, or not as good as others, as social media has created some imaginary standards, so anxiety is also growing fast amongst users.

The most recent contemporary issue that had a massive impact on the world is Coronavirus. The Covid19 has almost stopped people movement therefore tourism industry had a lot to suffer. Borders across the world have closed. Almost all the hotels around the world had to be closed. People had to isolate. They had to work from home or not work at all.

Conclusion

Online networking has adjusted the scene of showcasing in the travel and tourism industry. Most travellers decide their itinerary based on reviews and experiences shared on internet, making on the online client a pivotal piece of building a positive brand notoriety. The predominance of web-based social networking has upset conventional client care models - for lodgings and travel offices the same. By curating positive surveys and empowering social offers, friendliness brands can use web-based social networking to fabricate positive brand mindfulness, increment brand faithfulness, and show exactly how much they bring to the table.