Tourism Digital Marketing Tools and Views on Future Trends: A Systematic Review of Literature

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Abstract

Owing to the unprecedented advancements in digital technologies adopted for use in marketing tourism, their use in tourism is expected only to gain momentum. The purpose of this paper is to systematically review literature published in tourism-related journals on digital marketing tools in tourism from 2016-2020, and to discuss future trends. The analysis reveals that the increased adoption of digital marketing tools has disrupted the status quo of the tourism industry. Findings also highlight a growing and broad digital marketing tools terrain that is thematically diverse. Tourism marketers have to ensure that they understand the trends in the digital marketing domain and be able to adapt to the changes in order to remain competitive. Based on literature synthesis, the study provides insights into practical managerial implications and provides the groundwork for future studies.

Keywords: Africa Tourism, digital marketing, social media, websites

Introduction

For tourism, the most exciting and rapidly growing form of marketing in a globalised world is that of digital marketing (Chen & Lin, 2019), where the growing possession of indispensable technological devices among tourists has increased their access to e-marketing channels (Kotoua & Ilkan, 2017). Digitalisation has caused the business ecosystem to change the way businesses compete in the marketplace (Kannan & Li, 2017) as well as the way that tourism services are perceived, consumed and accessed (Mariani, Di Felice & Mura, 2016; Ukpabi & Karjaluoto, 2017). For marketers, the old way of doing business is no longer sustainable and the notion that business is, 'as usual', no longer exists (Ryan, 2019). For destinations to thrive and compete in today's marketplace, they need to have an effective and efficient e-marketing channel. Thus, digital marketing has become one of the key focus areas for tourism businesses and destinations all over the world. Comprehensive destination marketing models advocating the use of digital marketing techniques have been suggested by several different scholars who acknowledge the importance of digital marketing in improving destination competitiveness (see Kannan & Li, 2017; Kuflik, Wecker, Lanir & Stock, 2015; Wu, Liu, Zhuang & Zhu, 2014). Previous studies have emphasised the importance of using digital marketing platforms (Matikiti, Mpinganjira & Roberts-Lombard, 2017). This is because the way tourists search and purchase tourism products and services is changing (Li, Robinson & Oriade, 2017). Therefore,

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for destinations, using the most effective digital marketing tools is crucial as it provides them with a significant advantage. It would be valuable for academics and the industry to have an insight into the kinds of tourism digital marketing tools that are influencing tourism marketing. The main aim of this review is thus to critically review literature on digital marketing within the tourism context. To achieve this aim, the three objectives of this review are as follows: to explore the different digital marketing tools in the tourism industry; to analyse the digital marketing trends affecting tourism, and to provide views on future trends.

Methodology review
Knowledge production in research is accelerating, such that existing knowledge acts as a building block of academic research activities (Snyder, 2019). Thus, to achieve the objectives of this study, a systematic literature review method was adopted. A systematic literature review uses systematic and transparent methods to identify, select and evaluate relevant literature published during a specific period and on a specific topic (Opute, Irene & Iwu, 2020). Because of its ability to provide evidence of effectiveness, the systematic review method can inform policy and practice (Snyder, 2019). A review protocol was formulated as a guide for the literature search (Pickering & Byrne, 2014), using 'digital marketing and 'e-marketing' as search terms. The term "tourism" was also used in the search, from the title, abstract, keywords or within the text, in order to present the extant state of digital marketing-related discussion within tourism. Using the aforementioned search terms, a literature search was then conducted from the seven most visited journal databases of scientific papers related to tourism. The databases were Science Direct (Elsevier), Emerald Insight, EBSCO Host (Hospitality and Tourism Complete), Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest and Sage publications. All seven databases were utilized to ensure comprehensiveness and to avoid omission of relevant research articles. The databases allow local studies to be included since they encompass global articles. Only peer-reviewed articles published in English that contained original research were considered to enable effective synthesis and to safeguard quality. In order to identify research trends, the review covered a period of five years: 2016 to 2020. Searches in Science Direct, Scopus and Sage publications were limited to the social sciences discipline. From the databases, only journals which aim to promote dissemination of research related to tourism were selected.

In terms of applying the exclusion criteria, the review excluded the following: articles that were not full papers, work in progress, papers that were not peer-reviewed, editor notes, prefaces, research notes, industry articles, internet publications, conference proceedings, books and chapters. Literature that was outside the cover period (2016-2020) was also excluded. Additionally, literature that was not written in English and duplicate studies using footnotes were eliminated. In January 2021, a literature search identified sixty-three journals focusing on disseminating tourism-related research. Of the 842 peer-reviewed articles that were found within this journal search, 594 articles met the established criteria and 247 duplicate articles were eliminated. For paper selection, a four-staged filter process was applied (identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion). Searching across databases resulted in a comprehensive list of articles being identified. Seven additional records identified from other sources (like the reference list of the identified articles) which met the requirements of the search query string were also added. The papers' abstracts, the authors' keywords and the titles were then screened and the duplicates were removed. Fifty-four articles eligible for full paper assessment were consequently found. The papers were then coded to identify the digital marketing tools discussed.

Results

The review shows that from the articles that were found eligible for full paper assessment, 19% were published in 2016, 15% in 2017, 11% in 2018, 20% in 2019 and 35% in 2020. The top five publishing journals were found to be Tourism Management (22%), Journal of Destination Marketing and Management (20%) Annals of Tourism Research (11%) Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management (7%) and Tourism Management Perspectives (7%). Key findings such as varying definitions for digital marketing and popular tourism digital marketing tools (websites, social media, chatbots, Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR) a mobile travel applications) emerged. Additionally, differences were also found in the digital marketing trends affecting tourism discussed as well as the views on the future . These findings are discussed in the next section.

Discussion

Tourism marketing is shifting from the use of traditional marketing tools to the adoption and incorporation of digital technologies. Findings show an increasing interest in research in digital marketing in tourism. Research interest in tourism digital marketing has significantly increased over the review period from 19% in 2016 to 35% in 2020. Although research output slightly decreased in the years between (in 2017 and 2018), there was a significant increase in 2020. The greatest interest in tourism digital marketing research was registered in Tourism Management (22%) and Journal of Destination Marketing and Management (20%), with the interest falling to as low as 2% in other journals. This result highlights the need for other tourism journals to disseminate more research related to digital marketing. The use of digital media in marketing is no longer a new phenomenon, yet researchers lack consensus on a single definition of digital marketing. Academics and scholars make use of a range of terms, such as e-marketing, online marketing, web marketing and internet marketing, to offer an explanation for the concept of digital marketing (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019; Haneef, 2017). The following key definitions for digital marketing have been extracted and deduced (Table 1).

Table 1: Definitions of digital marketing

Author (s)	Meaning
(Kotoua & Ilkan, 2017)	The use of the internet (websites, social media and electronic word of mouth) in providing different types of tools and marketing channels to facilitate communication and engagement with and of potential tourists and their information needs. The internet is used to market tourism products and services to online destination markets.
(Haneef, 2017:30)	"Digital Marketing is defined as describing the process of using digital media, as well as information and communications technologies, to deliver marketing messages."
(Lagiewski & Kesgin, 2017)	The use of digital technologies such as the internet, mobile devices and global positioning systems as a key instrument in marketing visitor attractions.
(Li et al., 2017)	Use of technology in marketing
(Abou-Shouk, 2018)	The use of online portals in destination marketing and marketing tourist services and products, to improve marketing efforts and increase sales and profits.
(Cranmer, tom Dieck, & Fountoulaki, 2020)	Embedding of technologies into marketing activities
(Labanauskaitė, Fiore and Stašys, 2020:3)	"An integrated process by which an enterprise sends a marketing message to a target segment by using the Internet and other digital-based marketing tools."
(Srinivaasan & Kabia, 2020)	Using mobile technology (smartphones) for destination promotion in travel and tourism industry by changing conventional methods of seeking information, selecting and exploring destinations and post-tour management to transform travel experiences.

Although scholars differ in their specific understanding and use of the term digital marketing, illustrated by Table 1, the authors agree that digital marketing relies on internet technology. In addition, in defining digital marketing, authors consistently emphasized the use of digital technologies as the key characteristic of digital marketing.

Having highlighted the meanings of digital marketing from the perspectives of different scholars, this study considers a definition for digital marketing as a strategy that uses internet technologies to connect with potential and existing customers to inform, create awareness, increase sales and to make profits. The terms "customers", "tourists" and "travellers" are used interchangeably in this paper.

Digital marketing tools for the tourism industry

Digital technologies have revolutionised the rules of marketing (Magano & Cunha, 2020) and transformed how tourist destinations are promoted online (Jiménez-Barreto, Rubio, Campo & Molinillo, 2020). Careful selection of digital marketing tools enhance the organisations' marketing efforts and reduce marketing costs (Angeloni & Rossi, 2020; Cranmer et al., 2020). With the tourism industry being characterised by a different range of online channels, the challenge lies with tourism marketers to be cognizant of how tourists access information (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2017) and to find effective marketing tools and strategies that contribute to the maximisation of profits (Angeloni & Rossi, 2020). Traditionally, the digital marketing landscape was simple: platforms were maintained by businesses with an exclusive focus on commercial interest whereas now, new sites have evolved with different functions (Bronner & de Hoog, 2016) such that the effective use of digital marketing tools hinges on understanding the digital marketing tools within the tourism context. Magano and Cunha (2020) support the notion that understanding digital marketing and harnessing the power of digital marketing tools is crucial to achieving success in the tourism industry. Based on this, the following section will discuss digital marketing tools that are effecting the tourism industry.

Websites

Websites are considered an organisation's place of business and the cornerstone of the organisation's marketing actions occur on the internet (Digiorgio, 2016). Websites are perceived as trustworthy and credible digital sources of information when they have a high degree of institutional control over the content posted (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020). Website content should be target-oriented, relevant, comprehensive and should be updated regularly (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020). Websites aim to engage directly with customers by maintaining communicative exchanges, thereby eliminating the middlemen (de Rosa, Bocci & Dryjanska, 2019), and creating customer loyalty towards the brand. Tourists use search engines in the early phase of the search in order to obtain travel related information about destinations (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020). Afterwards, tourists turn to the destinations' websites (Angeloni & Rossi, 2020). Using search engine optimisation - the use of search techniques (such as using keywords) to increase traffic - websites can gain better visibility and boosts their sales (Digiorgio, 2016; Haneef, 2017; Labanauskaitė et al., 2020).

Social media

Social media is a digital marketing tool that is frequently used by tourists as a source of information as well as engagement (Barcelos, Dantas & Sénécal, 2019; Villamediana, Küster & Vila, 2019; Molina, Gómez, Lyon, Aranda & Loibl, 2020). Social media allows users to form virtual communities (Mariani et al., 2016; Molina et al., 2020) and plays an important role in influencing decision making when people publicly share their travel experiences (Magano & Cunha, 2020; Perakakis, Trihas, Venitourakis, Mastorakis & Kopanakis, 2016). Social media is an active social platform with many potential customers (Leung, Sun & Bai, 2019). The growth of social media has been triggered by people's need for social connections and for interpersonal interactions (Mkono, 2016). The ability for tourists to instantly share,

follow, like, rate and discuss various types of content helps to keep friends and family up to date about ongoing (travel) experiences (Jansson, 2018; Srinivaasan & Kabia, 2020; Vassiliadis & Belenioti, 2017). In addition, social media postings appeal to the emotional needs of potential customers (Molina et al., 2020). Social activities (such as real-time texting and video sharing) facilitate online social contact among people and peer-to-peer communication (Molina et al., 2020). Social media also allows tourists to post online reviews of destinations. Online reviews have gained popularity as an important source of information and an influencer of consumer decision-making (An, Ma, Du, Xiang & Fan, 2020; Tran, 2020). The use of emoticons (graphic demonstrations of facial expressions) when reviewing destinations has become a common and convenient tool for online customers to better express their ideas or feelings (Huang, Chang, Bilgihan & Okumus, 2020). More than eighty-five percent of travellers read online reviews during their pre-trip stage (Huang et al., 2020). This means that the majority of customers rely on the opinions of others to make their travel decisions (Tran, 2020). From a marketers' perspective, social media is an important communication and engagement platform (Mariani et al., 2016; Mariani, Mura & Di Felice, 2018). For example, Facebook enables businesses to create pages which potential customers can "like" in order for them to access and stay up to date with new content as well as to directly interact with the business (Perakakis et al., 2016). This interaction feature allows administrators to understand how customers engage with the business page (Perakakis et al., 2016). Furthermore, administrators can host events, competitions and post stories, photos and videos (Dolan & Goodman, 2017) in order to promote discussions for the followers of the business page (Vassiliadis & Belenioti, 2017).

Chatbots
Technology has fuelled tourists' demand for instant gratification (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019), such that tourists need to interact with businesses that respond immediately and around the clock. Traditional face-to-face service agents have been successful because of their ability to solve customer problems with honesty and friendliness and to foster an authentic customer relationships. However, their roles have evolved as organisations move to the online domain in order to better connect with customers in the digital age. Destinations have integrated technology into customers' frontline experiences by using chatbots (Park, 2020). Chatbots are machine conversation systems developed to evoke humanlike interactions (Leung & Wen, 2020) and can be considered virtual service agents or "e-service agents" (Tussyadiah, 2020). The infusion of chatbots into the service experiences by tourism organisations is an essential attribute that enhances customer satisfaction (Park, 2020; Tussyadiah, 2020). Chatbots are programmed with selected skills to help customers find restaurants, make hotel reservations and purchase goods (Leung & Wen, 2020). Chatbots provide reliable information and real-time interaction (Tussyadiah, 2020). Since tourism involves the movement of people, with some travelling to regions that make use of different languages from their home region, Tussyadiah (2020) points out that the use of chatbots substantially alleviates language barriers. The integration of chatbots into pre-existing digital marketing tools like websites provides a promising area of growth for businesses (Leung & Wen, 2020).

Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR)
Despite considerable research devotion, AR and VR are still in their embryonic stage in tourism (Cranmer et al., 2020; Wei, Qi & Zhang, 2019). That said, their popularity within the tourism industry, and the academic spheres, are rapidly on the rise (He, Wu & Li, 2018). AR denotes the adding of digital information to the real environment (Park & Stangl, 2020) thereby enabling consumers to view the real world in front of them, with the addition of a superimposed

layer of information, including text and or images which enhances their experience. VR is the use of digital technologies to create a simulated environment that customers can experience and explore through their various senses (Park & Stangl, 2020). While both AR and VR involve interactive experiences, VR goes beyond AR in creating a more immersive interaction.

AR and VR can be considered as radical changers in the tourism industry because of their ability to substitute actual tourism for virtual tourism (Li et al., 2017). VR is no longer a niche technology enjoyed primarily within gaming communities but has rather grown into the realm of everyday experiences and is increasingly being adopted for entertainment, education, marketing and tourism (Park & Stangl, 2020; Wei et al., 2019). The plethora of tourism-related VR content and low priced VR headsets facilitates anyone to virtually engage and interact with destinations and attractions from anywhere in the world - tourists can experience environments (such as the wilderness) whilst they are in the city, sitting at their desks at home (Tussyadiah, Wang, Jung & tom Dieck, 2018; Wei et al., 2019). From the perspective of destinations and tourism businesses, adopting VR provides opportunities for marketing, additional revenue generation, sustainability and the preservation of heritage (Tussyadiah et al., 2018). From the perspective of tourists, AR and VR is beneficial as it enhances tourism experiences through the simulation of a real physical environment interaction (Li et al., 2017; Tussyadiah et al., 2018; Wei et al., 2019).

Mobile travel applications

The days of using paper maps and guidebooks are slowly becoming a thing of the past and being replaced by interactive mobile applications (Zillinger, 2020). Although the potential of travel applications are yet to be fully exploited (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020), trends show an increase in the use and downloading of mobile applications for travel and tourism related reasons (Srinivaasan & Kabia, 2020). Travel applications provide travellers with convenient, low-cost options and can come with many functions such as travel itinerary generator, geo-tracking services, weather or climate forecasting, language translator, currency converter, world clock time converter, location-based emergency services and service integration. Mobile travel applications allow travellers to be spontaneous in their planning since they always have their smartphones with them and tourists are finding it easier to plan holidays using the functions of travel apps. Current usage trends show that mobile travel applications are an expanding niche developed with new and improved features (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020). Trends show that current travel applications often have in-application (in-app) messages and push notifications. This in-app message allows marketers to reach out to the user when they are physically using the application while the push notifications allow marketers to reach out to the user when they are not physically using the app in order to attract them in.

Digital marketing trends affecting tourism and views for the future

By providing tourists with the means to buy several tourist products and services on their own, the internet now functions as the intermediary role that was traditionally played by tourism operators and travel agencies. As such, tourists have the ability to meaningfully participate in the digital world. The level of digitalisation of tourism products differs in different countries. Tourism destinations and businesses in first world countries, for example, have the ability to capitalize on the new technological wave of innovations for destination marketing at a rate that many tourism destinations and businesses in third world countries would struggle to cope with (Li et al., 2017). Marketers should, therefore, constantly seek to improve and optimise their online marketing efforts in order to stay relevant and competitive. To achieve this, the next section discusses the digital marketing trends affecting tourism and offers views on future trends.

Digital content marketing

The advancement in technology allows for the creation and rapid exchange of content (Chen & Law, 2016). Content creation can be considered the process whereby written or visual content is created around ideas and topics that appeal to targeted audiences, ie. tourists. Digital information is disseminated in many forms such as a blog, video, infographic or audio via digital marketing tools such as websites and social media. The use of websites in content marketing evokes a positive online destination brand experience because, when properly designed, online content on websites is well-categorized, and thus, navigating the content to follow the tourism destination's attractions is efficient (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020). The quality of the information available on official tourism websites has improved over the years, such that tourists perceive content marketed on websites to be more credible relative to content on social media platforms. This is because most content provided on tourism websites is official destination information (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020). Content created for consumers should have a purpose and the purpose of content marketing is to attract and retain customers by consistently creating relevant and valuable content that can change or enhance consumer behaviour (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020). Allowing customers to create and post their own content is a trend that is likely to continuously gain in popularity. With the rise of User Generated Content (UGC) platforms, customers are likely to take a much more active role in the creation of digital content which can be used for marketing (An et al., 2020). This is because, through UGC, relationships are built and developed, travel-related decisions are made and travel experiences are shared daily by use of photos, videos, blogs and reviews (An et al., 2020; Mariani et al., 2018).

Social media marketing

Social media marketing is now a well-established part of the marketing vocabulary in universities, government agencies, non-profit organisations, and private profit-making organisations. The subject has also received increasing scholarly attention (Jansson, 2018; Matikiti, Roberts-Lombard & Mpinganjira, 2016; Mkono, 2016). Titles such as blogger, social media content manager, digital communications manager and manager of social marketing can now be found in consulting companies and it is likely that new job titles will emerge in the near future. The number of social media sites and users keeps growing (Uşaklı, Koç & Sönmez, 2017) such that digital marketing anchors around social media (Bilgihan, Barreda, Okumus & Nusair, 2016). The adoption of social media sites by society has been growing tremendously, with Facebook Inc. (which comprise Facebook, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger and Instagram) dominating the social media landscape (Matikiti et al., 2016). The use of social media in the tourism industry has affected both the demand and supply sides of tourism marketing.

Marketers consider social media an effective marketing strategy with a global reach that is cheap, easy to use and easy to create and update information on (Chen & Law, 2016; Uşaklı et al.,2017). Many destinations have created social media accounts (see Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020; Mariani et al., 2016, 2018; Molinillo, Liébana-Cabanillas, Anaya-Sánchez & Buhalis, 2018), in order to promote and market their tourism destinations (Trunfio & Della Lucia, 2019) and to achieve a sustained competitive advantage (Mariani et al., 2018). The posting and sharing of pictures and videos by customers, provides marketers with an insight into what kinds of activities customers are taking part in. The younger generations have a notable presence on social media, in terms of photo and video content sharing (Almeida-Santana & Moreno-Gil, 2017) such that there is a growing trend in providing photo opportunity spots at destinations which is benefitting destinations (Singh & Srivastava, 2019).

Social media provides a platform for customer feedback (Leung et al., 2019) and allows for the elimination of barriers (like time, location and media) that might affect communications between tourism destinations and customers. As alluded to earlier, social media promotes two-way communication in marketing and provides tourism marketers an avenue through which to engage with tourists in real-time (Vlachvei & Kyparissis, 2017). The majority of Destination Management Organisations (DMO)s in Europe have official representation on social media with accounts on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and Instagram (Uşaklı et al., 2017), supporting the notion that social media marketing can be performed through different platforms. In employing social media strategies, a destination's brand must be perceived as credible (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020). When social media pages are linked to tourism destinations' official platforms (like websites), customers tend to view social media as a credible source of information (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020).

For customers, social media is a crucial source of information that affects consumers' decision-making processes (Leung et al., 2019). With the growing trend of travellers now using social media for accommodation- and itinerary-related decisions (Singh & Srivastava, 2019), it has been found that tourists prefer to find more focused travel-related information when searching for travel information (Önder, Gunter & Gindl, 2020). In as much as social media is a popular source of information, tourists are often faced with the problem of navigating through piles of information and not being able to locate desired information (Labanauskaitė et al., 2020; Önder et al., 2020). The future is likely to see the increasing usage of hashtags (#) since the use of hashtags makes social media a better source of information, over other digital marketing tools, as it enables the effective filtering of content. This makes information searching easier because of high content visibility. Hashtags are used to identify a discussion topic or a point of interest and to track the conversation about it (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). A literature review shows that the use of social media in marketing is likely to continue increasing, with the next decade likely to witness a considerable rise in specific social media marketing trends such as messenger marketing, travel blogging and digital storytelling as discussed below.

Messenger marketing

The increasing popularity of Facebook and WhatsApp has resulted in a tremendous usage of the messenger – a communication function for both Facebook and WhatsApp. Facebook and WhatsApp have evolved from merely communication tools to persuasive business marketing tools. With WhatsApp and Facebook virtually always in the customers' pockets, messenger marketing is likely to be appreciated by tourists. Facebook, as the largest community and interactive social media platform (Trunfio & Della Lucia, 2019), provides organisations with a strong media presence hence Facebook's popularity makes it an attractive marketing platform (Önder et al., 2020; Trunfio & Della Lucia, 2019). Through Facebook, businesses can send private messages directly to their customers and marketers can create and send content links of videos, texts and audio.

Travel blogging

Within the next few years, travel blogging is likely to play a more influential role in customers' travel decision making. This is because travel blogging covers all the stages of tourists' travel decision making: pre-trip, information search, purchase or consumption and post-consumption or evaluation of experiences. During pre-purchase, travellers search for travel-related information (Díaz-Meneses, 2019) such as which destinations to go to, attractions to visit, activities to do, access to travel tips, weather reports, exchange rates and up to date prices. As

travellers seek travel advice and special offers, travel bloggers post messages such as travel news, last-minute deals and/or special offers. Hence blogging assists travellers with preparing for their journeys (Díaz-Meneses, 2019). Travellers are likely to continue viewing and making use of travel blogs because the availability of travel information makes tourists more informed about travelling. Potential travellers are increasingly placing their faith in travel bloggers for recommendations as they rely on the personal experience of bloggers to help guide their own decision making (Díaz-Meneses, 2019). Marketers therefore invest in online personalities (commonly referred to as influencers) with large numbers of followers across one or more social media platforms in order to influence their followers through content sharing/blogging. These influencers promote tourism destinations and businesses to their followers and the organisation's target consumers through the content they share on their personal social media platforms. An example of this is the Tuscany DMO, which held a blog tour where bloggers, photographers, and video professionals were invited to participate in themed itineraries and to then blog about their travel experiences to share it with their followers (Mariani et al., 2016).

Digital storytelling
The addition of digital storytelling in travel blogs (telling of personal stories using digital forms through audio and graphic visualization), attracts and encourages travellers to visit tourism destinations (Kim & Hall, 2020). Digital storytelling allows for the visualization of tourism experiences through audio clips, photos and videos and in so doing, provides concrete evidence of the experiences (An et al., 2020). Digital storytelling stimulates a desire to travel by engaging with the imagination, anticipation and prolonging the experience for tourists. It is almost a certainty that using influencers as travel bloggers combined with digital storytelling, will only gain more popularity as tourism digital marketers evolve to become modern digital storytellers that can capture the attention of future travellers.

Mobile marketing
Smartphones have evolved from being a means of communicating to increased sophistication and functionalities (Dickinson, Hibbert & Filimonau, 2016). With smartphones, customers can decide when, where and what to view (Chen, Murphy & Knecht, 2016). Smartphones have transformed customers from being passive receivers of information to active retrievers. Smartphones allow users to purchase products, obtain travel itineraries, share their experiences and access mobile banking from anywhere in the world and at any time. Travellers use travel applications to enhance their travel experiences. A growing trend has been the development of travel applications that are compatible with smartphones and that have features and functions that enhance customers' experiences (Chen et al., 2016). Travel applications can thus assist tourism marketers to better position their tourism companies and destinations. As the use of smartphones is continuously increasing (Srinivaasan & Kabia, 2020), mobile marketing will only gain importance in the years to come. This is because mobile marketing takes advantage of customers' most prolific touchpoints: the internet and smartphones. An emerging mobile marketing trend has been the use of emails and email signatures to market and promote services. More people are viewing their emails on mobile phones and this increases the probability of any marketing information sent reaching its intended targets. E-mails are used to create a "buzz" around a product and/or service. Tourism marketers send emails or newsletters to customers in their database about the organisation's latest offers, special deals, holiday packages, membership clubs and room availability.

Communication via emails is a simple, economic and fast way to build loyal relationships with tourists (Digiorgio, 2016), such that emails remain an effective way of engaging and communicating with customers from the early stages of the consumer decision-

making journey to after the conclusion of the journey . Transactional emails can also be sent to tourists whilst they are waiting for their trip in order to keep them updated about the status of their bookings. Moreover, after a journey has been concluded, emails can be used to sustain a relationship with a customer (Digiorgio, 2016). The marketing strategy provides customers with an option to "opt-in" or "opt-out" from the mailing list should they feel the emails are too much or of no use to them. The last decade has seen renewed emphasis placed upon protecting the environment. As consumers are increasingly being made aware of sustainable practices, the prospects of sending emails can easily attract environmentally conscious customers since no paper is wasted in the process. Moreover, marketers are providing consumers with options for optimizing their viewing experience to mobile viewing or desktop viewing. Consequently, tourists can access travel marketing information on the go and from the palm of their hand (Chen et al., 2016).

Managerial implications

Findings from the review of literature have managerial implications for tourism organisations and marketing personnel that are considering applying digital marketing strategies into practice in their marketing campaigns. Understanding how digital marketing tools operate and influence operations is a crucial starting point for managing marketing strategies since it assists local, provincial and national policymakers in designing policy intervention strategies. Firstly, due to the significant marketing opportunities offered by digital technologies, tourism marketers should seek to rise to the challenge of establishing maturity in their online activities (Stokłosa, Marchiori & Cantoni, 2019), in order to increase their brand stature (Stokłosa et al., 2019) and satisfy customers by formulating effective marketing strategies. Tourism experts and organisations may need to consider how they can control message content, frequency and timing and who is able to release content as this will help create and maintain corporate brand awareness.

Secondly, tourism marketers can use big data in content creation. Most content created by marketers and consumed online by travellers will have been made with the purpose of either creating awareness or encouraging the customers to purchase, sign up or learn more about the product. Big data provides organisations with crucial information to better understand their current and potential customers (Haneef, 2017) therefore making use of big data would enable the creation of relevant and valuable content that can attract and retain customers. Additionally, tourism marketers can focus on aligning their marketing strategies with their tourists' aspirations by developing, optimising and customising their digital platforms according to the needs of the tourists in line with the objectives of the organisation.

Thirdly, since destination marketers intend to attract tourists to their destinations, information dissemination is an important part of tourism development. Marketers can adapt and expand on the use of digital marketing tools that provide on-the-go connections, video conferencing and instant messaging, in order to disseminate information to tourists quickly. For example, Facebook has gained popularity because of its creative communication and its ability to incorporate images, texts, videos, games, and live videos, while Instagram is popular for its photographic content (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020). Digital marketing tools are considered an effective facilitator that can be used for better communication between tourists, tourism stakeholders and destination marketers. The effective and innovative use of digital marketing tools within the tourism sector can aid in destination development, awareness and revitalisation.

Fourthly, the purpose of promoting tourism products and services is for customers to be informed about what is offered by tourism organisations so that customers can make appropriate decisions when purchasing the tourism products. Tourism marketers can use digital

marketing tools to increase customer engagement. Since, providing information about all services and products offered by tourism businesses on their Facebook page can overpopulate the profile page and make it clumsy, marketers can provide a website hyperlink on their Facebook page. In addition, websites of organisations can have links to their social networking sites as this would allow tourists to easily navigate across different platforms. Some digital marketing tools (like chatbots) can also work with other digital marketing tools (like websites and social media) in order to fulfil customer needs for instant communication responses.

Fifth, the constant changes in technology within the marketing arena has provided strategic and tactical tools for tourism businesses to improve their competitiveness and efficiency (Molina et al., 2020). The implication is that marketers should develop travel applications around the organisation and or destination's value proposition. The travel applications can also be developed with social media links to allow for reviews, feedback and the option of commenting as a strategy to boost the organisations' ratings.

Sixth, the availability of the internet has greatly impacted the way marketers reach today's tourists. Social media has a significant influence on customers' social identification and the way customers perceive service excellence, customer satisfaction and purchase intentions. Social media has fostered the creation of online brand communities where people prefer to "follow" or "be friends" with "people like them". This implies that tourism marketers should ensure that their social media marketing strategies allow customers to interact. A literature review thus suggests that the use of social media in tourism goes beyond social networking and communication and can significantly benefit tourism businesses and destinations to improve their competitiveness.

Lastly, AR and VR offer untapped potential for mass tourism consumption through virtual visitations to actual tourism destinations which provides the opportunity to access tourism for all, remotely. AR and VR show great promise to help in the protection of the environment by easing the pressure from vulnerable destinations as a result of mass tourism (Li et al., 2017). Policies can be developed in order to allow endangered tourist attractions to still be marketed and enjoyed as virtual destinations.

The contribution of this paper is fourfold. Firstly, this paper makes a theoretical contribution to academic scholarship as it reviews existing literature on digital marketing in tourism and therefore acts as a useful guide for academics and professionals navigating the area of digital marketing in tourism. The paper also contributes to the definition of tourism digital marketing. Secondly, this paper has managerial implications as highlighted above. Thirdly, the paper contributes towards achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by promoting sustainable economic growth, since an understanding of digital marketing tools and trends are likely to give tourism destinations a competitive advantage therefby creating long-term economic growth, and by addressing the use of AR and VR as a means to curb mass tourism for endangered attractions. Finally, this paper also provides the theoretical groundwork for future studies. Through a systematic review of literature, this study collected and analysed only full papers published in peer-reviewed journals from 2016-2020. This study provides preliminary information for future studies which may consider a longer review period, book chapters and/or conference proceedings. Further work can also use in-depth interviews with tourism marketers and surveys with tourists.

Conclusion

This paper reviewed literature on digital marketing in tourism. The first section provided a brief introduction followed by an explanation of the methodology review process. An in-depth review of the literature was undertaken which uncovered several insights on the overview of tourism research related to digital marketing. The review provided a discussion of the varied

meanings of digital marketing and an analysis of digital marketing tools affecting tourism. This paper identified and discussed digital marketing trends affecting tourism and offered several views on future trends. Managerial implications were also discussed, and suggestions were made for future studies.

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