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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to investigate on the attitude for the consumer towards viral marketing on Facebook which in this case it is focusing on the tourist destination in Sabah. The objectives of this study are to determine and identify whether the informativeness, source credibility and irritation will influence the consumer attitudes towards viral marketing in Sabah. Overall, there are 121 total numbers of respondents that has been participated in this study and data has been collected from them. From the collected data most of the heavy Facebook users are from the early 20's which spent more than 4 hours per week. The findings also shows that there are some positive relationships achieve among the variables which influence the consumer attitudes towards viral marketing. In addition, there are some negative attitudes impose by the consumer towards viral marketing which involve the relationship of irritations and source credibility towards viral marketing on Facebook. The result shows that both source credibility and irritation has no significant relationship to the consumers' attitude towards viral marketing compare to informativeness.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The chapter will begins with the background of studies that will provide the overview of how the viral marketing strategies will influence the consumer attitude on tourist destination in Sabah. It measures on the factors that affecting the consumers' attitude and how it influences the consumer perception. Furthermore, this study also will discuss on the problem statement which consist of the various issues in viral marketing. Then, it will be follow by the research questions, research objectives, scope of study and significant of study.

1.1 Background of Study

The tourism industry in Malaysia has contributed an amount of 14.9% to Malaysian economy (New Straight Times, 2018), the chief Statistician Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Uzir Mahidin stated that the industry showed a growing trend since 2005 and it is still increasing rapidly with 11.2% of annual growth rate over the past twelve years. One of the most visited state is Sabah, and by taking advantage on the diversity and mesmerizing landscape, it is without a doubt that Sabah become one of the most attractive tourist destination in Malaysia. According to Kler B. (2013), Sabah has been endorsed as a nature and adventure destination which resulting to the development of more infrastructure to support the tourism activities. Aside from that, new products also has been developed in order to complement the key attractions such as the cultural villages, wildlife viewing and MICE market (Kler B., 2013).

One of the impact from the growing of tourism activities in Sabah is the rising of digital communication in order to promote and communicate the message which is aimed to the local visitor and foreign tourist. With the advanced technology, message can be easily delivered to the targeted market and achieve a mass audience in a short period of time. Hence, most marketers are relying on the word-of-mouth advertising technique whereas it is much cheaper than any other advertising tools that available. This creates a phenomenon of viral marketing among the marketers in order for them to attract the consumer's attention and at the same time reducing the advertising cost. According to Wilson (2000), viral marketing can be defined as "any strategy that encourages individuals to pass on a marketing messages to others, creating the potential for exponential growth