

Social media information and hotel selection: Integration of TAM and IAM models

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Abstract

The use of social media as an avenue for marketing and promotion is an emerging phenomenon in the hospitality industry. Lately, an increasing number of consumers have been using social media to connect with others and to share information on their experiences using variety of services in the hospitality and tourism industry. It is argued that many of consumers are now relying on reviews and information found on social media to make informed decision on variety of vacation decisions. The aim of this paper is to identify how web-based social networking can turn into the primary instrument for achieving quick and detailed information for the choice of hotel and to what extent consumer's acceptance to use information technologies by giving issues to researchers and practitioners. The paper suggested integration of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Information Acceptance Model (IAM) models to understand the issue under study. The research method to be undertaken also highlighted in this paper.

Keywords:

Social media, Technology Acceptance Model, Information Acceptance Model, hotel

1 Introduction

Before the era of social media, individuals traditionally had restricted resources to gather information on products and services (Hu & Wei, 2013), with accommodation purchases

basically informed by leaflets and travel agents (Baruca & Civre, 2012). Recently, traditional sources of information have been supplanted by online networking (Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides, 2012), as individuals begun to counsel user generated content or electronic word of mouth (eWOM) via social media to plan on their choice of hotel stay (Browning & Sparks 2013). Advances in information technology have changed the way individuals and organizations impart especially the internet has brought on major structural changes in the hotel industry (Yoo, Lee, & Bai, 2009). Web 2.0 got an incredible change in the online user's behavior. Web 2.0 or social media platforms enable individuals to communicate insights, share information and viewpoints with each other (Lincoln, 2009). Electronic consumer opinion platforms (online communities, review sites) are the most broadly utilized eWOM formations (Chatterjee, 2001; Henning-Thurau et al., 2001) that enable consumers to peruse other consumers' opinions and experiences as well as write own contributions. Consumer look for information online similarly as they do offline, subsequently influencing the choice of numerous hotel products and services. Facebook is presently the greatest social networking service based on the worldwide reach and total active users. Facebook has 1.94 billion worldwide active users while in Malaysia specifically has 11.8 million active Facebook users (Kamei, 2016).

As technology progressed over the past decade and improved the availability of information, it became easier for internet users to explore and find information on the web. Moreover, as hospitality-related products and services are expensive and high-involvement, consumers for the most part gather and survey information with a specific end goal to limit the danger of settling on wrong choices (Fesenmaier & Jeng, 2000). However, when selecting accommodations online, it is difficult to make a choice on things that consumer has never seen, experienced or not familiar with. Hence, there exist uncertainties in accessing the services and facilities (Teare, Mazanec, Crawford-Welch & Calver, 1994). Manap and Adzharudin (2013) indicated that trends in Malaysia nowadays are deeply influenced by the information on social media and finds that social media are more trustworthy compared to the travel agencies. Referring to Text100 Digital Index, Manap and Adzharudin (2013) added they depend a lot on social media on peer experiences and virtual comments as their main source of information for their hotel selection. Nonetheless, one specific angle that has ascended to be a hotly debated issue on is the possibility of virtual trust in Facebook. How is a trust set up between individuals in a virtual field that consist of electronic word of mouth (eWOM)?

Therefore, the objective of this study proposed here is to understand Malaysian consumer's intention to select a hotel based on social media information. Furthermore, this study also intends to include a step up from previous research by which researcher intends to understand people's behavior by using the technology acceptance model (TAM) and information adoption model (IAM) to determine what are the most significant determinant of consumer's intention to use information on social media for hotel selection.

2 Literature Review

Hospitality is a part of tourism that is essential for the local and inbound leisure market. Robinson, Lück, Smith and Lackey (2013) declares that a high demand for the tourism enables

the hospitality industry to conjecture request and recognize chances to increase purchase behavior, and making an influx optional money related effects. The hospitality industry has two divisions which are the food and beverage segment and also the accommodation sector. As this research is focused towards the accentuation on hotel selection based on the information provided on Facebook, it is more towards the accommodation sector. The purpose for this decision is because the hotel sector has been expanding in recent years and has a measurable consideration from researchers with respect to its development and customer behavior.

The research rationale behind the current study is based on the technology acceptance model (TAM) which attempts to understand the user's technology usage and acceptance behavior. TAM was established upon the framework of the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). The theory of reasoned action is a predictive model for behavior, attitude, and behavioral intention (Fishben, 1979). Theory of reasoned action expected that the best indicator of a behavior theory of planned behavior is behavioral intention which is thus dictated by attitude and social normative perceptions (Ajzen & Fishben, 1980). Theory of planned behavior (TPB) is an augmentation of the theory of reasoned action. TPB recognizes three sorts of convictions; behavioral, normative, and control, and between the related constructed of attitude, subjective standard, and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). TAM was consequent from the theory of reasoned action (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980), to address the issue of how users acknowledge and utilize technology. This is to be accomplished by the comprehension of constructs beliefs particularly, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. Davis (1989) asserted technology acceptance model to be one of the models oftentimes used to clarify why a user utilizes information systems. Technology acceptance model offers an establishment with which researchers can trace how peripheral factors impact belief, attitude, and intention to use. The original technology acceptance model developed two fundamental factors as said before, perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness as key determinants in affecting a person's behavior to utilize a particular technology in an organizational context.

Presently, it is to a great extent used for foreseeing users' intention to acknowledge new technologies in several sectors, for example, for information technologies (Al-Somali et al., 2009; Kim, et al., 2010; Wu, Cheng, Yen, & Huang, 2011), partaking to online communities (Chung et al., 2010), for learning (Bourgonjon et al., 2010; Saade' & Bahli, 2005), for shopping (Baier & Stuber, 2010; Doong et al., 2011), and for hospitality and tourism (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008). This research paper also finds its foundation from previous studies that have been conducted by other researchers (such as Chiou, 2004; Gangadharbatla, 2009; Holtz, 2006; Sledgianowski & Kulviwat, 2009; Wattal, Racherla, & Mandviwalla, 2009; Yang & Lim, 2009; Wu, Chou, Weng, Huang, 2008), all of which investigates how the user's perceptions of the effectiveness of ease of use, usefulness, and trustworthiness would influence his or her decision to accept and adopt a social media.

Moreover, information adoption model (IAM) was developed by Sussman and Siegal (2003) and was created to better comprehend how individual form intentions toward tolerating knowledge about particular thoughts, behavior, or technology (Filiari, & McLeay, 2013; Sussman & Siegal, 2003). The theory practices the argument quality, the source credibility, and the

information usefulness as a mediator. Information technology and information system now create at a remarkable speed and become crucial parts throughout people's life. With the presence of online platforms, people start to share different sorts of information on the web, and in the meantime, look for fundamental and significant information online. Thus, the question about the information adoption process of consumers winds up one of the most popular topics in the research fields of consumer behavior. Hotel selection requires a broad information search. Subsequently, IAM is significant to comprehend complex decisions. Consumers carefully select among a few information sources in light of their hotel plans or their information prerequisite (Mayr & Zins 2009; Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998) thus, building up an idea that consumers favor different information sources and their trustworthiness differently. The summation of argument quality and source credibility is measured as perceived trustworthiness in this study. IAM can clarify how people adopt information and hence, change their intentions and behaviors within the computer intervened communication platforms. IAM was once in the past made with an effort to better comprehend how individuals form intentions toward accepting information about particular ideas, behavior, or technology (Filiari, & McLeay, 2013; Sussman & Siegal, 2003). Nonetheless, IAM can stretch itself to inspect the adoption of advice (Sussman & Siegal, 2003).

2.1 Trust towards perceived usefulness and ease of use

Trust is a fundamental element in an information sharing relationship. With the development of technologies, Benbasat and Wang (2005) confirmed that the concept of trust had extended to user–user and online recommendations. Another fascinating marvel is the advancement and sustainment of trust in an information relationship depends on the internet. It has been brought up that while using the internet, trust is all the more barely selected to the information provider. In particular, when the eWOM message was seen on a site that offers the products and services, the positive source credibility impact will be lessened (Godes & Mayzlin, 2004). Moreover, the absence of control and confirmation processes for eWOM makes it powerless against individuals who post false information that is positive or negative about a product or service as expressed in Torres and Singh (2015).

In previous TAM studies, researchers supported the strong effect of trust on perceived usefulness (Ha & Stoel, 2009). Conversely, in Ayeh et al. (2013) studies result shows that trust does not drive the perception of usefulness of social media – an outcome that contradicts path toward perceived usefulness was not supported. Nevertheless, Sussman and Siegal (2003) affirmed that there is a solid positive connection between information trustworthiness and information usefulness. Jin, Cheung, Lee and Chen (2009) supported the discoveries and stressed out that information usefulness is frankly identified with a user's level of trust in the information obtainable. Additionally, based on Pavlou (2003) study shows a positive impact of trust on perceived ease of use also. The higher the trust in a website, the less effort the consumer has to make to scrutinize the details of the site to assess the benevolence of the site. Based on the above argument, two hypotheses were developed as below:

H₁: Trust positively influences perceived usefulness.

H₂: Trust positively influences perceived ease of use.

2.2 Perceived usefulness and behavior intention

Perceived usefulness alludes to "the degree to which a person believes that using a particular technology will enhance his or her job performance", (Davis, 1989). In TAM, perceived usefulness is conjectured to be the predictor of behavioral intention to utilization of the technology of interest (Park & Allen, 2014). In other words, perceived usefulness indicates to consumers' perceptions in regards to the result of an experience (Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1992). This takes after from the meaning of "useful" that is, "capable of being used beneficially ". A system high in perceived usefulness is one for which a user has confidence within the presence of a positive utilize execution relationship. Individuals tend to utilize or not to utilize a system application to the degree they believe it will help them accomplish their employment better (Davis et al., 1989).

In TAM, perceived usefulness is conjectured to be the predictor of behavioral intention to utilization of the technology of interest (Park, Cho, Kim, & Lee, 2014). A few reviews have built up the criticalness of perceived usefulness as an essential segment in the utilization of technology among hospitality and tourism practitioners (Huh et al., 2009; Morosan, 2012). TAM also demonstrates the utilization of online social networks and perceived usefulness was found to positively influence social network usage (Kwon & Wen, 2010). Social media are rich with information produced by different users through eWOM. It is generally acknowledged that people would make use of information in the event that they think of it as useful to accomplish particular outcomes. Consequently, Sussman and Siegal (2003) coordinates TAM and uses the argument quality as the central route, the source credibility as the peripheral route, the information usefulness as a mediator. The reasoning is that the more the consumers tend to perceive Facebook to be useful in order to partake in a social media platform, the more they are likely to trust Facebook and consequently their intention to use it. Prior empirical evidence has also supported the linkages between perceived usefulness and intention to use technology association (Au & Kauffman, 2008; Dewan & Chen, 2005; Teo, Fraunholz, & Unnithan, 2005). Based on the above argument, a hypothesis was developed as below:

H₃: Perceived usefulness positively influences behaviour intention.

2.3 Perceived ease of use and behavior intention

Perceived ease of use is "how much an individual believes that utilizing a specific system would be free of exertion" (Davis 1989). The simpler a system is to utilize, the more useful it typically is (Venkatesh, Morris, & Davis, 2003; Davis et al., 1989). In addition, the elements of the system ought to be easy to comprehend; it ought to work without interference and speed of information processing (Castañeda et al., 2009). The enthusiasm to utilize information systems and the perceived ease of use of such systems enrich the information looking for process by aiding quicker information search and complex problem solving (Castañeda et al., 2009). With regards to this research, perceived ease of use denotes to the degree to which users think utilizing Facebook is free of exertion. On the off chance that a system is moderately easy to use, people will be more eager about its elements lastly plan to keep utilizing it.

An application perceived to be easier to use than another will probably be more accepted by users. Perceived ease of use clarifies the user's perception of the volume of exertion required to use the system or degree to which a user believes that utilizing a specific technology will be easy (Davis et al., 1989). Perceived ease of use has been built up from past research to be an imperative element impacting user acceptance and usage behavior of information technologies (Igbaire, Iyari, & Maragahh, 1995). Perceived ease of use comprises of the subsequent determinants: easy to use, easy to read, utilizing justifiable terms, able to link to search for related information and easy to return to previous page. This incorporates support, complexity and change management. Venkatesh (2000) revealed perceived ease of use 'portrays the person's perception of how easy the technology is to learn and to utilize'. Given that some portion of a user's aggregate occupation substance is dedicated to physically utilizing the system in essence, if the user turns out to be more productive in that part of his or her job by means of more noteworthy ease of use, then he or she ought to wind up more productive. In this way, it is safe to state that the ease of collecting information from social media about hotel selection enables customers to free up time can be utilized to further create other arrangements. This takes into consideration more to be done with a small amount of exertion and is impressively useful for the user (Davis, Bagozzi, & Warshaw, 1992).

However, user believes that the technology is too difficult to utilize and that the execution advantages of use are exceeded by the effort of application (Davis et al., 1989). In the current study perceived ease of use refers to the degree to which Facebook is perceived as easy to understand and operate when a user is partaking on a social media platform. Previous studies have supported a positive relationship between perceived ease of use and intention to use (Schierz, Schilke, & Wirtz, 2010; Zhang & Mao, 2008). Based on the above argument, a hypothesis was developed as below:

H₄: Perceived ease of use positively influences behavior intention.

2.4 Behavioral Intention

Behavioral intentions propose how an individual is probably going to behave in a certain way (McKnight et al., 2002). Intentions have been affirmed to fill in as a measure in linking to consumer behavior in technology (Venkatesh, 1999). Lin and Lu (2000) found that, information accessibility reached huge utilization of information and enhanced perception about the ease of use. Beliefs that something is valuable and easy to utilize normally prompt higher behavioral intentions to utilize such product or service (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975).

Behavior intention based theories of information technology adoption are a standout amongst the most compelling researches in the literature. Behavioral intention is the measure of the probability of an individual utilizing the application (Venkatesh, Morris, & Davis 2003; Thompson, Compeau, & Higgins, 2006). As per Fishbein and Ajzen (1975), behavioral intention can be demonstrated by the subjective likelihood of an individual to carry out that behavior. By definition, the construct of behavioral intention links the individual to his or her behavior. With regards to technology acceptance, the behavioral intention to utilize a specific technology has been appeared to be the strongest determinant for the actual utilization of that technology

(Venkatesh & Bala, 2008; Venkatesh, 2000; Davis, 1989). As per the theory of reasoned action, an individual's action is a component of behavioral intention of the person in question (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In addition, great amount of studies have demonstrated the predictive character of behavior so it ought to be conceivable to foresee certain behaviors in light of intentions with acceptable accuracy (Aizen, 2005).

Park (2009) mentioned behavioral intention to use information technology could be gathered into four classifications: individual context, system context, social context, and organizational setting. While social context implies social influence on individual acceptance of information technology use, organizational context underlines any organization's influence or support on one's information technology use. Thong, Hong, and Tam (2002) distinguished relevance, system visibility, and system accessibility as organizational context factors. Thong et al. (2002) stated that the organizational context influences both perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Lin and Lu (2000) also announced that higher information accessibility carries higher utilization of information and higher perception of ease of use.

In this study, a broad literature review was accomplished to surmise the determinants components impacting Facebook adoption, and to conceptualize the theoretical framework for the proposed model from the most important literature of variables affecting behavioral intention of information on Facebook for hotel selection.

3 Methodology

This proposal is to study and assess the determinants of consumer's behavioral intention to use information on social media for hotel selection; hence, a descriptive type using the quantitative approach is considered the most suitable method to be used for this study. An online survey is chosen because it allows researchers to approach a population within web involvement (Selm & Jankowski, 2006). As this study is based on online users, it will be conducted through social media. The survey is accessible for the online travel communities. The targeted group for this study is Kaki Travel Malaysia which consists of 33,580 members who shares common interest in Facebook group.

The information gathered will then be coded and keyed in for further investigation. Other than that, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is a statistical technique that increases the reliability of the scale by recognizing improper items that can then be evacuated. Furthermore, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is theory-driven that takes into account for testing hypotheses about a specific factor structure. Along these lines, structural equation modelling (SEM) is to determine whether a specific model is valid. What's more, it can be done utilizing analysis of moment structures (AMOS).

4 Conclusion

By using social media, consumers can simply connect, gather and offer valuable information about their hotel experiences. This information fundamentally aids in the hotel choice.

Consumers today can discover information about hotels from their trusted family, companions and associates on social media, sparing them time, money and undesirable anxiety. Therefore, the main purpose of this paper is to understand the impact of social media towards hotel selection by studying the example of Facebook. To achieve this, TAM by Davis (1989) and IAM by Sussman and Siegal (2003) is used as the theoretical foundation which contributes in extending the body of knowledge to get a better understanding of the determinants that affect consumer's intention to use information about hotels on social media.

5 About the authors

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