Evaluating The Challenges Of Electronic Word-Of-Mouth (Ewom) On Travel Destination Image: A Conceptual Study

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Abstract

With the emergence of the internet, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) has become an important factor affecting consumers' product evaluation, especially in a multidisciplinary field such as tourism whose intangible products are difficult to evaluate prior to their consumption. The power of eWOM has increased over the last few years and can be used in tourism marketing to shape customer's purchasing behaviour. While making decisions regarding travel and vacation planning, potential tourists search for information of tourism products and services to reduce uncertainty and perceived risks. The study identified the role of eWOM on travel destination image and it affects on the travel decisions. The eWOM have revolutionized communications and consequently the marketing of tourism destinations and businesses. The area is rapidly evolving and the challenges and opportunities arising from it for tourism industry are already apparent.

Keywords: eWOM, destination image, travel planning, tourism.

1. Introduction

In the dynamic and rapidly evolving landscape of the contemporary tourism industry, the profound impact of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) on shaping the image of travel destinations is undeniable. With the advent of the digital era, prospective travelers have shifted their reliance from traditional information sources to online platforms, social media, and various review sites. In this context, the significance of eWOM lies in its ability to influence and guide potential tourists in their decision-making processes, providing them with first hand experiences and recommendations shared by other travellers (sen & lerman 2007). This study acknowledges the transformative role of eWOM in shaping the narratives surrounding travel destinations and recognizes the challenges that arise in managing destination image within this digital paradigm.

As the title suggests, the research primarily focuses on exploring the challenges posed by eWOM in the context of travel destination image. With the proliferation of digital communication channels, understanding the complexities associated with eWOM becomes crucial for stakeholders in the tourism industry. The conceptual nature of the study implies a

deliberate exploration of theoretical frameworks and models to gain a deeper understanding of the intricacies involved in the digital dissemination of information.

In essence, this study aims to contribute valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on tourism marketing by unraveling the challenges that electronic word-of-mouth presents. By adopting a conceptual approach, the research seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of the nuances associated with eWOM and its effects on travel destination image. Furthermore, the study aspires to lay the groundwork for the development of strategic interventions that can be employed by industry practitioners to enhance destination image amidst the evolving dynamics of digital communication and information sharing.

1.1 Information technology in Business Paradigm

The development of information and communication technologies helped social media to emerge as a powerful medium for communication and connection between people thus creating a social interactive environment which has the ability to link content available on the web. As per the global records social media users have passed 2 billion mark which amounts to approximately 30% of world's population (kemp 2015). Social media has amplified the power of customer-to-customer conversation in the market place enabling one person to communicate with literally hundreds and thousands of other customers quickly and with little efforts (Mangold & Faulds 2009). This new way of easy communication led to dramatic changes in the consumer's behaviour from being passive to active and informed consumer. The consumers through social media gather information related to their interest, read other consumers opinions, comments, experiences and offer their own consumption related advices by engaging in electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM). EWOM also referred as online reviews, online recommendations or online opinions defined as "all informal communications directed at consumers through internet based technology related to the usage or characteristics of particular goods and services or their sellers" (litvin et al 2008). These are positive or negative statements intentionally made to be heard, seen or read by people through internet media (Hennig-Thurau et al 2004). EWOM plays a considerable role in influencing the attitude and behavioural intention (chavalier & Mayzlir 2006 ; sen & lerman 2007). It has become an important venue for customers to share their opinions and experiences and is assumed to be effective in influencing the perception and purchase intention due to its credibility, reach and accessibility (chatterjee 2001). With the growing use of EWOM among the internet users, marketers and businesses have fundamentally altered the marketing landscape. They have recently begun to device strategies to maintain online interpersonal influence for their own business interest.

1.2 Tourism Industry amid Information Era

Information and its diverse sources play a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of the tourism industry. At the outset, tourists heavily rely on various information channels during the trip planning and decision-making phase. Whether exploring destinations, seeking accommodation, or planning activities, travelers turn to online platforms, travel websites, and social media to gather comprehensive details. The abundance of information empowers individuals to make informed choices, aligning their preferences and expectations with the offerings of potential destinations.

A critical aspect influenced by information is the image and perception of a destination. Marketing campaigns, official tourism websites, and user-generated content collectively contribute to moulding the attractiveness of a location (chatterjee, 2001). Therefore, effective destination management entails curating and disseminating information that aligns with the desired image and appeals to the target audience.

Cultural and historical understanding is another facet where information plays a crucial role. Tourists seek details about the heritage and traditions of a place, relying on museums, historical sites, and cultural events to provide accurate and engaging information. This enriches the tourist experience by fostering a deeper connection with the destination's cultural tapestry (Chen & Tsai, 2007).

Information is integral to ensuring a seamless travel experience, particularly concerning accessibility and transportation. Real-time updates on flights, trains, buses, and other transportation modes are readily available through online booking platforms and travel apps. This facilitates travelers in making timely and efficient decisions, enhancing the overall convenience of their journeys.

Safety and security information form a fundamental consideration for travelers. Government travel advisories, safety ratings, and local regulations contribute to building confidence among tourists regarding their chosen destination. In an era where safety is paramount, transparent and readily accessible information in this realm is crucial for sustaining tourism.

Emerging trends and experiences are often sought after by modern travelers. Information sources highlight unique opportunities and hidden gems, influencing tourists to explore beyond conventional attractions. This demand for authenticity and exploration is met through information channels that showcase the diverse offerings of a destination.

User-generated content, such as customer reviews and testimonials, serves as a trusty guide for prospective travelers. The shared experiences and opinions of other tourists hold considerable weight in influencing decisions, be it the choice of a destination or the selection of specific services (Godes & Mayzlun 2004). This social proofing aspect is a testament to the significant impact information has on shaping consumer behavior.

Technology, with its constant evolution, has revolutionized the dissemination of information in the tourism industry. Mobile apps, virtual reality, augmented reality, and interactive websites provide immersive and engaging content, enhancing the overall travel experience (Gruen et al., 2005). These technological advancements contribute to the industry's dynamism and cater to the changing preferences of modern-day travelers.

The increasing awareness of environmental sustainability has prompted tourists to seek information about eco-friendly practices, responsible tourism, and green initiatives. Information channels that promote and highlight sustainable practices contribute to attracting environmentally conscious travelers and supporting destinations committed to conservation efforts (Bigné, et al, 2010).

Even post-trip, information continues to play a vital role through the sharing of experiences and memories on social media, blogs, and other online platforms. User-generated content becomes a valuable resource for future travelers, shaping their expectations and influencing their choices.

1.3 Role of eWOM In Information Driven Tourism Sector:

Tourism industry being information based and information intensive industry, eWOM plays an increasingly important role as an information resource. It facilitates tourists to gather information supporting the formation of destination image and choice of destination (Baloglu & McCleary 1999). TIA (2005) reported that 67% of American travellers use Internet to retrieve information regarding tourist destinations. The reports also indicate that each year hundreds of millions of potential visitors consult online reviews. Among these potential visitors, 84% were influenced by reviews when making travel decisions (Travelindustrywire.com, 2007). eWOM is considered as an information source to which individuals are exposed and influenced in forming destination perception prior to the visit and have considerable influence on the destination image and visit intentions (Um & Cromptom 1990). According to Kim & Perdue (2011) tourists often choose the destinations whose image is perceived to be most favourable thus marketers need to effectively use eWOM to influence the perception and image formation of tourists. Previous studies have investigated the relationship between WOM and destination image, however studies that specifically link between eWOM and the formation of destination image which leads to travel intentions to destination is still limited. Based on this fact this research seeks to analyse conceptually the role eWOM plays on destination image formation which leads to satisfaction and visit intention.

2. Literature review

The advent and widespread adoption of social media technologies have marked a transformative shift in the way consumers communicate, particularly in the realm of word-of-mouth (WOM) interactions. This evolution has given rise to what is now known as electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) communication—a process that enables consumers to share information and opinions, influencing the decisions of potential buyers concerning specific products, brands, and services (Godes & Mayzlun, 2004; Davis & Khazanchi, 2008). This shift from traditional WOM to eWOM is characterized by its less personal yet highly accessible nature, demonstrating the power of digital platforms in shaping consumer perceptions and behaviors.

In the realm of consumer behavior, the social learning paradigm is evident as individuals imitate each other, creating a dynamic network of influence (Hawkins et al., 2004). Additionally, consumers engage in conversations with one another, providing an outlet to express positive or negative sentiments associated with a product or service, as highlighted by Westbrook (1987). Such exchanges contribute to the collective pool of eWOM, forming a rich tapestry of consumer opinions that play a significant role in shaping market dynamics.

Research by Gruen, Osmonbekov, and Czaplewski (2005) underscores the significance of eWOM as a reliable source of information that directly impacts the perceived overall value of a firm's products and offerings. The credibility of eWOM is rooted in the trust consumers place in the opinions of their peers. This trust is further emphasized by Hansen et al. (2011), who describe consumers in the context of media and marketing messages as intelligent, organized, and inherently trusting of both their own opinions and the opinions of their social circles. The bottom-up marketing phenomenon emerges from the vast interconnectedness facilitated by

social media, where billions of people create trillions of connections each day, contributing to the amplification of eWOM's influence.

The pivotal role of social media in the consumer decision-making journey is evident in the work of Hudson et al. (2013), who conducted a case study involving 14 festivals and events. They identified four stages in the consumer decision journey—"consider," "evaluate," "buy," and "advocate." In the context of consumer-driven marketing, they emphasized that social media has a particularly pronounced impact during the "evaluate" and "advocate" stages. The implication here is that, in a landscape where consumers actively engage with brands and products on digital platforms, marketers must strategically navigate and participate in social media to ensure their survival in a highly competitive environment.

Furthermore, Murphy et al. (2010) explored online sharing attitudes, revealing that 40-50% of respondents frequently share text and pictures, while a smaller 3% share videos. Interestingly, individuals are more inclined to share content on their personal social media platforms rather than on media-sharing or review sites. This underscores the personalized and intimate nature of eWOM, emphasizing the role of social connections in disseminating information.

Dichter (1997) delved into the affective elements that drive consumers to share their experiences. Elements such as satisfaction, pleasure, and sadness were identified as motivators for individuals to actively share their thoughts and opinions with others. This emotional connection to the act of sharing further solidifies the personal and subjective nature of eWOM, illustrating that the motivations behind sharing extend beyond mere information dissemination—they are deeply rooted in personal experiences and emotions.

In conclusion, the landscape of electronic word-of-mouth communication in the tourism industry is marked by its transformative impact on consumer behavior. The shift from traditional WOM to eWOM, facilitated by social media technologies, has redefined how consumers seek, share, and trust information. As a powerful force influencing the perceived value of products and services, eWOM has become a cornerstone in the decision-making journey of modern consumers. The challenges and opportunities embedded in this digital paradigm necessitate a strategic approach by marketers to harness the potential of eWOM and actively engage with consumers through social media channels. Understanding the dynamics of eWOM is not just a prerequisite for survival in the competitive environment but a key driver for sustainable success in the evolving landscape of the tourism industry.

2.1 Tourism Destination Image and Ewom

Tourism industry being highly competitive, there is a need for adopting various techniques to create an image which focuses on destination uniqueness. Destination marketers need to convey positive massages to distinguish their destinations so as to motivate the tourists visit intention. Morgan, Pritchard, and Piggott (2003) stated that when dissatisfied tourists share unpleasant and belittling comments regarding their experiences, it has an intense impact on destination image. Tourism destination image being a key challenge in contemporary tourism research is considered to affect tourists' behavior, from their mental constructions about destination attributes to the decision-making process influenced by beliefs, attitudes, perception, and impression (Bigné, et al, 2010; Chen & Tsai, 2007; Kim & Perdue, 2011; O'Leary & Deegan, 2005; Prayag, 2007; Tapachai & Waryszak, 2000 Beerli & Martin, 2004).

Due to increasing global competition and changing tourist motivations and needs, communicating a positive destination image through eWOM has become the top priority in successful tourism management and destination marketing (Konecnik, 2002; Molina, Gómez). Positive eWOM generates a good impression of the perceived destination in the tourist's mind, predisposing their behavioural intentions and future activities. Shanka, and Dhayan (2010) found that tourists' eWOM information sources have a considerable influence on perceived destination image and destination choice intention. Gartner (1993) found that past visitation and WOM influences destination image thus considered to have high level of credibility and influences the perception regarding potential destinations and whether to visit or not. The destination marketing organizations (DMOs) need to invest their time and effort in managing eWOM so that it can evoke strong influence on their potential targets in forming positive destination image from pre to post travel stages.

Sparks & Browning (2011) illustrated that eWOM not only influences choice of destinations but also hotel choices within chosen destinations. Compete, (2006), claims that 51 % of their survey's online shopper participants claimed that with eWOM through social media helped them to narrow down their choices, 23% argued that it played a role in confirming their choice, while 15% used it to select the final choice. Furthermore, social media caused $1/4^{th}$ of travel purchasers to change their mind during the travel purchase. They claim that social media does not influence every single travel buyer but does have a measurable impact on purchase decisions, and even post-purchase as well, as majority of the people tell about the travel purchase to their friend. Even $1/4^{th}$ of the buyers posted a review after purchase. Gretzelet al.,(2007) conducted a comprehensive survey on 1480 users of tripadvisor.com to find out the role and impact of online travel reviews in trip planning behavior. The result reflects that other travelers' opinion on travel sites were the most frequently used source of information. Reports indicated that eWOM about travel destinations, hotels, and tourism services have become important sources of information for travelers (Pan, MacLaurin, & Crotts, 2007) as each year hundreds of millions of potential visitors consult reviews before planning trip (Tripadvisor.com., 2006). Among these potential visitors, 84 percent were affected by reviews when making their travel plans (Travelindustrywire.com., 2007). Vermeulen and Seegers (2009) conducted a study by examining 168 participants to determine the impact of eWOM on the attitudes of travellers towards hotels, and pointed out that exposure to e-reviews enhanced hotel awareness, and positive e-reviews improved the attitudes of travellers toward hotels. Petrevska (2012) investigated the attitudes of 502 young adult consumers and concluded that these young adults use internet and social media as a basic source for travel and tourism information and also share their travel experiences. His study showed that youngsters have high level of trust on social media and it influences their choice. Pietro et al., (2012) studied 1397 experimental users of social media to investigate how social networks are becoming main tool for information gathering for the choice of tourist destination. They observed that eWOM communication plays a key role on perception of usefulness and attitude towards use of social media networks. Furthermore suggested that social media is an important tool for promoting tourism destinations and tourism marketers need to develop monitor and manage their products and services in this virtual environment. Tham et al., (2013) reported that social media has a

major influence on destination choice. As social media disseminates eWOM, it contributes towards the evaluation of destination choice.

3. Challenges of eWOM

The evolution of the internet and the subsequent rise of social media platforms have significantly amplified the importance of electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) communications. eWOM serves as a channel through which consumers access valuable product information from seemingly credible sources within their social networks. However, a fundamental question emerges in this digital era: do consumers distinguish between more and less useful eWOM, or between more and less credible eWOM sources, given the absence of traditional gatekeepers in the realm of social media? This presents a unique challenge, placing the onus on consumers themselves to discern the utility of eWOM and evaluate the credibility of unfamiliar sources, as opposed to relying on traditional editorial or authoritative guidance.

One of the predominant challenges in navigating eWOM lies in its inherent diversity. The content spans a spectrum, ranging from straightforward recommendations to highly emotive statements with extreme positivity or negativity. These diverse expressions in eWOM messages significantly shape the perceptions of tourists, influencing their overall impressions of destinations and, ultimately, impacting their travel decisions. A crucial factor that consistently predicts consumers' likelihood to adopt eWOM messages is the valence of these recommendations, emphasizing the sway that positive or negative sentiments can have on consumer behavior.

Recognizing the pivotal role of eWOM in shaping consumer decisions, companies in the tourism industry actively seek to influence these digital conversations. Strategies such as viral marketing campaigns, the establishment of brand communities on social media platforms, and the introduction of referral programs are deployed with the explicit aim of fostering brand or product advocacy through eWOM (Chiou & Cheng, 2003; Mayzlin, 2006). By strategically engaging with consumers in the digital space, companies aim to position themselves favorably within the dynamic landscape of eWOM, understanding its potential to sway consumer opinions.

However, the nature of eWOM is inherently two-sided, as tourists may express positive sentiments about destinations and travel products or, conversely, share negative experiences. The circulation of negative eWOM poses a significant concern for tourism managers, as research suggests that negative eWOM holds greater impact on the perceptions and behaviors of travelers than its positive counterpart (Sen & Lerman, 2007). The asymmetry in the influence of positive and negative eWOM underscores the need for proactive strategies to mitigate the potential adverse effects of unfavorable digital narratives.

With limited control over the organic nature of eWOM, tourism managers find themselves compelled to respond strategically once such content is posted online. Viewing this response as a helpful means of countering negative eWOM and mitigating its undesirable effects on consumer behavior, tourism managers engage in active interventions (Breitsohl, Khammash, & Griffiths, 2010). This responsiveness to eWOM, whether positive or negative, represents a paradigm shift in the way tourism managers approach destination marketing, acknowledging the power dynamics at play in the digital realm.

The advent of the internet and social media has elevated eWOM to a critical influencer in the tourism industry. The challenges lie not only in consumers' ability to discern the utility and credibility of eWOM but also in the diversity of its content and the potential impact of negative narratives. Companies actively engage in shaping eWOM through strategic initiatives, recognizing its role in influencing consumer decisions. However, the asymmetrical influence of positive and negative eWOM necessitates agile responses from tourism managers, who seek to mitigate the repercussions of unfavorable digital discourse. In this dynamic landscape, the consumer becomes not only the recipient of information but an active participant in shaping the narrative of destinations and travel experiences through the channels of eWOM.

4. Conclusion, Suggestions and Limitations

In the contemporary era marked by widespread networking and digital interconnectedness, significant transformations have occurred in various aspects of social life. The internet's pervasive influence has not only made information readily accessible but has also given rise to a fundamental shift in how individuals engage with and contribute to information dissemination. This shift has manifested in the form of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) communications, a phenomenon that shares similarities with traditional Word-of-Mouth (WOM) but introduces distinctive opportunities for hospitality companies seeking a competitive edge (Chiou & Cheng, 2003; Mayzlin, 2006).

The burgeoning growth of eWOM is reshaping the landscape of consumer decision-making. Unlike the past, where information about destination products predominantly originated from marketers, the contemporary digital age empowers individuals to function as both consumers and producers of content. The democratization of information allows virtually anyone to share destination pictures on social media platforms and contribute reviews, fundamentally altering how travel experiences are narrated and influencing brand images and awareness (Sen & Lerman, 2007).

The literature review underscores the escalating importance of eWOM sources in shaping the consumer decision-making process. Faceless reviewers, who share comments and opinions on diverse web platforms, are rapidly emerging as influential travel opinion leaders. This transition from a centralized model of information control to a decentralized one empowers individuals to significantly impact the perceptions and decisions of potential tourists (Dichter, 1997).

Trust, a linchpin in consumer behavior, has undergone a transformative shift. Traditional trust in organizations and advertising has diminished, creating a void that eWOM adeptly fills. The reliance on authentic, user-generated content positions eWOM as a potent alternative, offering hospitality companies a substantial competitive advantage. The evolving role of eWOM as a powerful marketing tool is evident in its influential effect on travel decision-making. Positive eWOM not only enhances tourists' travel intentions but also contributes to the creation of a favorable destination image, potentially reducing promotional expenditures (Breitsohl, Khammash, & Griffiths, 2010).

To harness the power of eWOM effectively, the establishment of reliable communication channels is essential. These channels facilitate the exchange of opinions and experiences,

providing hospitality companies with invaluable insights into tourist satisfaction. This dynamic feedback loop becomes instrumental in evaluating and improving tourism products and services. Consequently, innovative methods for capturing, analyzing, interpreting, and managing the vast amount of information generated through eWOM are imperative (Gruen, Osmonbekov, & Czaplewski, 2005).

Another crucial aspect of this evolving landscape is the interconnectedness between consumers. Companies must closely monitor the ripple effect that one consumer's opinion may have on another through eWOM. Social networks amplify the impact of individual recommendations or critiques, emphasizing the need for companies to comprehend and navigate these webs of influence. It is not merely about managing an individual customer's experience but understanding the potential cascading effects that eWOM can have on the broader consumer base (Hudson et al., 2013).

In conclusion, the era of networking and the prevalence of eWOM have redefined the dynamics of information flow and consumer decision-making in the hospitality industry. The democratization of content creation has shifted influence from traditional sources to a diverse array of individual contributors. The emergence of eWOM as a powerful marketing tool necessitates a paradigm shift in how companies approach brand building, customer engagement, and the evaluation of marketing strategies. Through the establishment of reliable communication channels, embracing authenticity, and active participation in the eWOM ecosystem, hospitality companies can enhance their competitive edge and foster sustainable relationships with an increasingly empowered and discerning consumer base.

4.1. Suggestions and Recommendations

To effectively harness the potential of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) in the hospitality industry, companies should adopt a multifaceted approach that spans digital strategies, engagement initiatives, and proactive management of online conversations.

First and foremost, establishing and enhancing the online presence of hospitality companies is paramount. This involves maintaining active profiles on popular social media platforms, regularly updating content, and encouraging user participation. A robust online presence not only facilitates positive eWOM but also provides a direct channel for companies to engage with their customers in real-time.

Encouraging user-generated content should be a central component of a hospitality company's strategy. Actively prompt guests to share their experiences through reviews, photos, and social media posts. Offering incentives, such as discounts or exclusive access, can motivate guests to contribute, fostering an environment where positive eWOM can flourish.

Social listening strategies are crucial for companies to monitor online conversations and sentiments related to their brand. Employing social listening tools enables timely responses to customer feedback, demonstrating a commitment to customer satisfaction and effective reputation management. This approach helps companies stay attuned to the evolving perceptions of their brand in the digital space.

Creating and disseminating engaging content across digital platforms is essential for capturing the attention of potential customers. Visually appealing images, informative blog posts, and

interactive features not only attract customers but also encourage them to share their positive experiences, contributing to a positive eWOM environment.

Active participation in online communities related to travel and hospitality is another valuable strategy. By joining forums, groups, and discussions, companies can directly engage with potential customers, address queries, and contribute positively to the eWOM surrounding their brand. Building relationships within these communities fosters a sense of trust and brand advocacy.

Employee advocacy is a powerful tool that can amplify positive eWOM. Mobilizing staff members to be brand advocates on social media platforms adds authenticity to the digital presence. Encouraging employees to share their genuine experiences and positive stories can resonate strongly with online audiences.

Incorporating influencer marketing into the overall strategy can extend the reach of positive eWOM. Collaborating with influencers in the travel and hospitality space allows companies to leverage the influencers' significant following and authentic voice. These influencers can create impactful content that resonates with their audience, contributing positively to the overall eWOM.

Proactively addressing negative eWOM is crucial for maintaining a positive online reputation. Companies should acknowledge negative reviews promptly and respond professionally. Demonstrating empathy, offering solutions, and showcasing a commitment to improvement can mitigate the impact of negative eWOM and showcase a proactive approach to customer satisfaction.

Utilizing analytics tools to monitor the effectiveness of eWOM strategies is vital. Tracking metrics such as engagement rates, reach, and sentiment analysis provides valuable insights into the impact of digital efforts. This data-driven approach allows companies to refine their strategies based on what resonates most with their audience.

Investing in employee training is an often-overlooked aspect of eWOM strategies. Ensuring that staff members are well-versed in online etiquette and customer engagement contributes to positive interactions. Providing employees with the tools and knowledge to navigate digital platforms enhances their ability to contribute positively to eWOM.

In conclusion, a holistic and strategic approach to eWOM is essential for hospitality companies to navigate the digital landscape successfully. By embracing these suggestions, companies can not only capitalize on the power of positive eWOM but also build lasting relationships with a digitally empowered consumer base.

4.2 Limitations of the study

The conceptual study on "Evaluating the Challenges of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) on Travel Destination Image" faces inherent limitations that warrant consideration. Firstly, the absence of empirical validation raises concerns about the study's generalizability, as it relies on theoretical constructs without grounding findings in real-world data. This limitation impacts the study's credibility and practical applicability. Additionally, the conceptual nature leads to limited predictive power, hindering the ability to offer actionable insights for industry practitioners.

Theoretical abstraction is another challenge, distancing the study from real-world intricacies. This bias may result in oversights of critical factors influencing eWOM dynamics. The dynamic nature of eWOM poses a further constraint, with the study potentially struggling to keep pace with rapid technological and behavioral changes in the digital landscape. Causation attribution complexities, contextual variability oversights, and the practical limitations in providing concrete recommendations for practitioners contribute to the study's constraints. Lastly, the potential oversight of emerging trends could impact the study's relevance. Acknowledging these limitations is crucial, urging future research to integrate empirical approaches for a more comprehensive understanding of eWOM dynamics in travel destinations.

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