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Redes sociales en el sector turístico : éxito en su implantación e influencia en el comportamiento de los consumidores

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REDES SOCIALES EN EL SECTOR TURÍSTICO: ÉXITO EN SU IMPLANTACIÓN E INFLUENCIA EN EL COMPORTAMIENTO DE LOS CONSUMIDORES

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Resumen

El desarrollo de las nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC) que ha tenido lugar en las últimas décadas, ha ejercido un cambio muy importante en nuestra sociedad, contribuyendo a su creciente evolución económica, así como a la transformación del entorno competitivo al surgir nuevas maneras de comunicar, compartir información y realizar transacciones. Esto ha dado lugar a grandes transformaciones en las empresas que abarcan desde su sistema productivo hasta la comercialización de sus productos y relaciones con los clientes, generándose nuevas oportunidades de innovación casi permanentes e intercambios en canales de negocio que antes eran casi inexistentes (Kotler, 1987; Quelch y Klein, 1996).

El sector turístico es uno de los sectores más afectados por esta nueva realidad desde hace años, como indican los datos de diferentes estudios (Devis, 2010; Mariani y Felice, 2016).

Las TIC han cambiado la forma de reparto del turismo, de la información y la manera de cómo la gente planifica sus viajes (Buhalis & Law, 2008, Mack, Blose, & Pan, 2008; Mamaghani, 2009). Más concretamente, las redes sociales están transformando las estrategias de comunicación de las empresas vinculadas al sector turístico con sus principales stakeholders (clientes, inversores, empleados, proveedores, ...) (Lai y Li, 2005; Mangold y Fauds, 2009; Men y Tsai, 2013).

Numerosos investigadores señalan que son escasos los estudios que se han publicado sobre redes sociales en el sector turístico, y plantean la necesidad de llevar a cabo más investigaciones sobre esta temática (Leung et al., 2013; Line y Runyan, 2012). Concretamente, indican la necesidad de analizar cómo el sector turístico está implantando estas nuevas tecnologías, principalmente en las redes sociales y las repercusiones que estas redes pueden tener en el sector turístico (Williams et al., 2011; Dwivedi et al., 2012; Line y Runyan, 2012; Leung y Bai, 2013).

Así, este estudio pretende analizar el éxito de los procesos de implantación de las redes sociales en el sector turístico así como los factores que condicionan su influencia en la intención de compra de productos turísticos. Para conseguir este objetivo general, esta tesis plantea tres objetivos específicos que se corresponden con los capítulos de esta investigación. El primero de ellos es evaluar los factores críticos para conseguir una implantación exitosa de las redes sociales en las empresas turísticas. El segundo objetivo específico es desarrollar un modelo que permita identificar las relaciones existentes entre los constructos vinculados a la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico a partir de la información obtenida de Facebook para evidenciar las diferencias existentes entre distintos perfiles de la población. El tercer objetivo es examinar cómo influye el grado de innovación de los adoptantes de estas nuevas tecnologías en un mismo conjunto de variables vinculadas con la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico con el fin de conseguir un mayor entendimiento de la decisión de compra final.

La metodología adoptada pretende dar respuesta a nuestra investigación y se basa globalmente en tres procedimientos: el método del caso, la técnica de optimización de *Partial Least Squares* y el uso de mapas cognitivos difusos. Es decir, se combinan técnicas cualitativas y cuantitativas por la tipología de los datos de estudio.

Los resultados obtenidos a través de las diversas técnicas utilizadas, han permitido ampliar nuestro conocimiento acerca del fenómeno global de las redes sociales. Concretamente, hemos podido identificar las principales dificultades de su adopción, comprendiendo sobre cuáles es necesario incidir. Al mismo tiempo, nuestra investigación ha analizado cómo influyen las redes sociales en la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico en función de las características de los potenciales segmentos de usuarios que intervienen en ellas. Los resultados señalan la importancia que las redes sociales tienen para los destinos turísticos y sugieren implicaciones prácticas que podrían ser relevantes para los profesionales y los gerentes de empresas

turísticas que diseñan herramientas y planes para mejorar sus estrategias de marketing a través de las redes sociales.

Abstract

The development of new information and communication technologies (ICT) that has taken place in the last decades, has made a very important change in our society, contributing to its increasing economic evolution, as well as the transformation of the competitive environment to the new ways of communicating, sharing information and conducting transactions. This has led to major transformations in companies ranging from their production system to the marketing of their products and relations with customers, generating new opportunities for almost permanent innovation and exchanges in business channels that were previously almost non-existent (Kotler, 1987 , Quelch and Klein, 1996).

The tourism sector is one of the sectors most affected by this new reality for years, as indicated by data from different studies (Devis, 2010; Mariani and Felice, 2016).

ICT has changed the distribution of tourism, information and the way people plan their travel (Buhalis & Law, 2008, Mack, Blose, & Pan, 2008; Mamaghani, 2009). More specifically, social networks are transforming the communication strategies of companies linked to the tourism sector with their main stakeholders (clients, investors, employees, suppliers, etc.) (Lai and Li, 2005; Mangold and Fauds 2009; , 2013).

Many researchers point out that there are few studies published on social media in the tourism sector, and suggest the need to carry out more researches on this topic (Leung et al., 2013, Line and Runyan, 2012). In particular, they indicate the need to analyze how the tourism sector is implementing these new technologies such as social media and the repercussions that social media can have on the tourism sector (Williams et al., 2011; Dwivedi et al., 2012; Runyan, 2012; Leung and Bai, 2013).

Thus, this thesis aims to analyze the success of the processes of implementation of social media in the tourism sector as well as the factors that influence its influence on the intention to purchase touristic products. To achieve this general objective, this study proposes three specific objectives that

correspond to the chapters of this research. The first is to evaluate the critical factors to achieve a successful implementation of social media in tourism companies. The second specific objective is to develop a model to identify the relationships between the constructs linked to the intention to purchase a tourism product or service from the information obtained from Facebook to show the differences between different profiles of the population. The third objective is to examine how the degree of innovation of adopters of these new technologies influences the same set of variables related to the intention to purchase a tourism product or service in order to gain a better understanding of the final purchase decision .

The methodology adopted is intended to give an answer to our research and is based globally on three procedures: the case method, Partial Least Squares optimization technique and the use of fuzzy cognitive maps. That is, qualitative and quantitative techniques are combined by the typology of the study data.

The results obtained through the various techniques used have allowed us to broaden our knowledge about the global phenomenon of social media. Particularly, we have been able to identify the main difficulties of adopting it and understanding what needs to be done. At the same time, our research has analyzed how social media influence the intention of purchasing touristic services or products according to the characteristics of the potential segments of users involved in them. The results point out the importance that social media have for tourist destinations and suggest practical implications that could be relevant to professionals and managers of tourism companies who design tools and plans to improve their marketing strategies through social media.

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PREFACIO

PREFACIO

1. Nuevas tecnologías y sector turístico

El desarrollo de las nuevas tecnologías de la información y la comunicación (TIC) que ha tenido lugar en las últimas décadas, ha ejercido un cambio muy importante en nuestra sociedad, contribuyendo a su creciente evolución económica, así como a la transformación del entorno competitivo. Esto ha provocado grandes transformaciones en las empresas que abarcan desde su sistema productivo hasta la comercialización de sus productos y relaciones con los clientes, generándose nuevas oportunidades de innovación casi permanentes e intercambios en canales de negocio que antes eran casi inexistentes (Kotler, 1987; Quelch y Klein, 1996).

Aunque son muchos los sectores y empresas que se han visto inmersas en el crecimiento de sus negocios gracias al desarrollo de las TIC, hay ciertos productos y servicios que, por sus características intrínsecas o por el perfil de sus clientes, son más propicios para que se desarrolle su expansión en la red. Una buena muestra de ello son los servicios turísticos. Por ello, podríamos decir que el sector turístico es uno de los sectores más afectados por esta nueva realidad desde hace años, como indican los datos de diferentes estudios (Devis, 2010; Mariani y Felice, 2016). Su impacto es tan elevado que los viajeros que deciden consultar estos medios antes de decidir el destino de sus vacaciones, incluso, los que contratan un hotel a través de este medio, se han convertido ahora en la gran mayoría frente a los que todavía no lo hacen. Por ello, esta creciente demanda turística está exigiendo una evolución progresiva de los servicios turísticos ofrecidos a través de estos medios, de modo que las empresas turísticas no sólo gestionen y comercialicen sus destinos turísticos, sino que también utilicen las TIC para ello.

Teniendo en cuenta todo lo anterior, es obvio pensar que las empresas del sector turístico se están viendo obligadas a realizar cambios en sus estrategias de comunicación ya que precisan transformar sus estructuras tecnológicas con el fin de establecer una relación más directa y personalizada

con los clientes actuales y potenciales, involucrarlos con el lugar y promover conversaciones en línea con el fin de mejorar la imagen del destino (Ketter and Avraham, 2012). En otras palabras, el sector turístico no ha permanecido ajeno a este fenómeno de modernización tecnológica debido a su continua y creciente necesidad de proporcionar información a los diferentes usuarios (Sheldon, 1997; Werthner y Klein, 1999). Por ello, las empresas turísticas han ido beneficiándose paulatinamente de las herramientas que las nuevas tecnologías proporcionan.

En la actualidad, una de las principales motivaciones de utilizar internet son las redes sociales (Sun et al., 2008). Mediante el uso de este tipo de redes, se genera la posibilidad de co-crear contenidos, lo que puede incidir tanto en el proceso de compra de los clientes como en la reputación online de la empresa (De Moya y Jain, 2013; O'Connor et al., 2008; Owyand y Toll, 2007). Entre las plataformas de redes sociales, Facebook puede ser considerada actualmente como la más empleada, seguida de Twitter, incrementando ambas su número de usuarios (ComScore, 2016). En este sentido, según afirman Leung y Bai (2013), el 75% de los hoteles a nivel mundial emplean redes sociales para propósitos de marketing, estimando en un 65% el uso de Facebook y en un 20% el de Twitter.

La mayor parte de la literatura sobre las redes sociales coincide al señalar que este tipo de herramientas facilita entre otras, una comunicación dinámica e interactiva entre la compañía y los stakeholders (Mangold y Fauds, 2009; Bonsón y Flores, 2011; Mangold y Fauds, 2009; Bonsón y Flores, 2011).

Desde el punto de vista de la gestión, disponer de una cuenta de Facebook puede ser para una empresa de este sector un método de conseguir compromiso o fidelización de los stakeholders por su activa comunicación en el proceso de comunicación (Avery et al., 2010; Leung y Bai, 2013).

En resumen, la implementación de las TIC y, concretamente de Facebook es un hecho clave en la evolución de las empresas turísticas en los últimos años. Por ello, las compañías deben estar preparadas para gestionar este nuevo

recurso de modo adecuado, afrontando convenientemente el reto que supone su adopción.

2. Las redes sociales en el sector turístico

La adopción de las redes sociales puede tener numerosos beneficios para las organizaciones. En concreto, las redes sociales pueden crear actitudes de marca e intenciones de compra más altas que los medios digitales tradicionales (Akrimi & Khemakhem, 2012; Colliander & Dahlen, 2011; Ketter & Avraham, 2012).

Algunas de las principales ventajas que las redes sociales pueden proporcionar son las siguientes:

- Generan nuevas formas de comunicación entre la empresa y el cliente (Fraser and Dutta, 2008)
- Influyen favorablemente en la actitud de compra de los clientes (Krishnamurthy y Singh, 2005)
- Mejoran las operaciones internas de la empresa (Solis and Kutcher, 2010)
- Crean una relación interactiva con los clientes actuales, clientes potenciales, empleados y proveedores (Solis and Kutcher, 2010)

Debido a sus numerosas ventajas, miles de empresas están abriéndose una cuenta de negocio en las redes sociales como Facebook (Ruthledge, 2008). Además, la importancia de esta herramienta se incrementa en el caso de las empresas turísticas, debido a la importancia que tiene la información en el proceso de distribución de un viaje (O'Connor, 1999). Para los hoteles es necesario tener presencia en las redes sociales siempre que sus usuarios muestren cierta predisposición a interactuar con sus establecimientos.

El interés por la adopción de las nuevas tecnologías, y en particular de las TIC no es algo nuevo. La adopción de estos medios así, ha sido ampliamente analizada por distintos trabajos a lo largo de los años. Por ejemplo, Escobar-Rodríguez y Carvajal-Trujillo (2013) analizaron en qué medida las cadenas hoteleras españolas incorporan herramientas de Web 2.0 y redes sociales en

sus páginas web, examinando si sus páginas web corporativas incluían estos elementos. Centrándose en las redes sociales, por ser una tecnología más interactiva, Bonsón y Flores (2011) determinaron que los iconos de redes sociales que aparecían en la páginas web corporativas de las cadenas hoteleras españolas con más frecuencia eran, por orden de importancia, Facebook con un 74,55%, Twitter con un 62,73% y YouTube o Flickr con un 59,09%. Sin embargo, puede suceder que los hoteles incluyan en su página web un icono de red social media, pero que no estén utilizando efectivamente estas plataformas para conseguir una verdadera relación interactiva con sus stakeholders, sino que, por ejemplo, simplemente dispongan de una página Facebook corporativa sin que hayan transmitido información a través de ella, no lo hagan con la suficiente frecuencia o bien hayan usado esta red solamente para proporcionar una comunicación unidireccional. Por tanto, en estos casos, no hay una verdadera participación de los usuarios, y no se alcanza una verdadera interacción con ellos o comunicación bidireccional, sin conseguir tampoco el stakeholders' engagement.

En definitiva, es necesario conocer la manera en que las empresas vinculadas al sector turístico han implementado estas plataformas en sus estrategias de comunicación y marketing y cómo están utilizando las mismas para establecer una comunicación bidireccional. Por última, también es interesante conocer si efectivamente este adecuado uso está derivando en la modificación de los comportamientos de compra de sus clientes.

Numerosos investigadores señalan que son escasos los estudios que se han publicado sobre redes sociales en el sector turístico, y plantean la necesidad de llevar a cabo más estudios sobre esta temática (Leung et al., 2013; Line y Runyan, 2012). Concretamente, indican la necesidad de analizar cómo el sector turístico está aplicando las nuevas tecnologías tales como las redes sociales (Williams et al., 2011; Dwivedi et al., 2012; Line y Runyan, 2012). Así, Kwok y Yu (2013) destacan la ausencia de estudios que analicen cómo las empresas turísticas se comunican a través de sus páginas Facebook. En concreto, señalan que a pesar de ser Facebook una plataforma con una gran capacidad interactiva (Ellison et al., 2007), son pocos los estudios que

analizan los contenidos que efectivamente los hoteles difunden a través de ella (Kwok y Yu, 2013). Por otra parte, De Moya y Jain (2013) indican la necesidad de analizar el tipo de comunicación que el sector turístico está llevando a través de las redes sociales para determinar si la comunicación a la que da lugar es unidireccional o bidireccional. Leung y Bai (2013) también indican la necesidad que tienen las empresas turísticas de conocer cómo utilizar las redes sociales como herramientas de comunicación directa con los clientes e implantar éstas en sus estrategias de marketing. Estos mismos autores señalan que conocer el proceso de engagement del usuario a través de redes sociales es de gran relevancia para conocer la efectividad que tiene la comunicación a través de estos medios sociales.

Además, la mayoría de los estudios relacionados con las TIC se han centrado en el desarrollo de modelos contrastados empíricamente que han tratado de explicar, o bien la intención del sujeto, o bien la intensidad del uso efectuado de los diversos aspectos de la tecnología. Dichos modelos parten, en la mayoría de los casos, del papel esencial que juega el componente subjetivo en las decisiones del individuo, e introducen factores tales como la utilidad percibida o la facilidad de uso. Sin embargo, ninguno de ellos investiga el comportamiento de la empresa turística como usuaria en este nuevo contexto.

En este trabajo de investigación se trata de analizar el éxito del proceso de implantar las redes sociales en el sector turístico así como los factores que condicionan su influencia en la compra de productos o servicios turístico. Para ello, hemos utilizado como variable explicativa uno de los factores ya desarrollado en investigaciones anteriores como es la intención de compra del usuario, y lo hemos adaptado a las características específicas del sector turístico y las redes sociales, concretamente Facebook.

3. Objetivos y estructura

En un entorno global y altamente competitivo como es el actual para las empresas turísticas, las redes sociales pueden desempeñar un papel fundamental, no solamente a través la estrategia de marketing de más éxito sino también por las consecuencias favorables que puede tener en el proceso de toma de decisión de compra del consumidor.

El objetivo general de esta tesis es analizar el éxito de los procesos de implantación de las redes sociales en el sector turístico así como los factores que condicionan su influencia en la intención de compra de productos turísticos.

De manera más concreta, se han marcado los siguientes objetivos específicos:

- Evaluar los factores críticos para conseguir una implantación exitosa de las redes sociales en las empresas turísticas.
- Desarrollar un modelo que permita identificar las relaciones existentes entre los constructos vinculados a la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico a partir de la información obtenida de Facebook para evidenciar las diferencias existentes entre distintos perfiles de la población.
- Examinar cómo influye el grado de innovación de los adoptantes de estas nuevas tecnologías en un mismo conjunto de variables vinculadas con la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico con el fin de conseguir un mayor entendimiento de la decisión de compra final.

Para conseguir estos objetivos, esta investigación está estructurada en un compendio de cuatro capítulos.

En el Capítulo 1, se lleva a cabo un análisis de los diferentes factores que conllevan a una adopción exitosa de Facebook en las empresas turísticas. Para ello, la investigación utiliza el método del caso, centrándose en una conocida

cadena hotelera. Los resultados obtenidos mediante este método muestran que factores como la motivación y recompensa, tener los empleados adecuados y el continuo aprendizaje y mejora pueden ser factores cruciales para una implantación favorable de Facebook. Sin embargo, existen otra serie de factores como el pragmatismo, las estrategias formales, la comunicación y la cooperación que deben de ser gestionados de forma correcta para mejorar la adopción de estos sistemas en las empresas turísticas.

En el Capítulo 2, se lleva a cabo un análisis de la actitud que los usuarios de Facebook mantienen hacia el uso de este medio para programar su viaje, junto con la previa identificación de los factores que influyen sobre la intención de compra a través de esta red social. La investigación está basada en un cuestionario. Este cuestionario ha sido analizado a través de un análisis de regresión de las variables latentes, y utiliza la técnica de optimización de *Partial Least Squares*, para desarrollar un modelo de investigación basado en las relaciones entre los diferentes constructos relacionados con la intención de compra. Los resultados del trabajo muestran la importancia de las características personales de los usuarios de las redes sociales a la hora de explicar su actitud hacia el uso de Facebook para comprar un producto o servicio turístico.

En el Capítulo 3, se analiza el impacto de las características personales de los usuarios relacionados con la innovación en su actitud hacia el uso de Facebook para obtener información antes de adquirir un producto o servicio turístico, diferenciando entre dos tipos de usuarios, usuarios tempranos y usuarios tardíos. El marco técnico de este trabajo se fundamenta en el uso de mapas cognitivos difusos que permite obtener un único modelo fruto de los proporcionados por los expertos en social commerce. El modelo propuesto tiene un total de 19 constructos relacionados con las características de la red social y con las características personales de los usuarios. Los resultados obtenidos mediante esta técnica muestran la influencia que pueden tener las características de los usuarios relacionadas con la innovación que hacen que algunos usuarios sean más innovadores y otros menos, en su percepción de

los diferentes constructos vinculados con la intención de compra. De este modo, los hoteles deben gestionar sus estrategias en estos medios teniendo en cuenta ambos tipos de usuarios.

Por último, en el Capítulo 4, se presentan las conclusiones del trabajo junto con las posibles limitaciones del estudio así como la definición de las futuras líneas de investigación derivadas.

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CAPÍTULO 1

EVALUATING THE SUCCESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA ADOPTION IN THE HOTEL SECTOR: A CASE STUDY

Evaluating the success of social media adoption in the hotel sector: a case study

Abstract

This research analyses, through a case study, the success of implementing social media in the hotel sector. The adoption of social media in hotel firms involves an organizational change in companies. Semi-structured interviews with different members of a company were conducted to explore the topic from multiple perspectives. The findings suggest that, in general, motivation and reward, the right people and continuous learning and improvement favour a better social media adoption for hotel firms. However, pragmatism, formal strategies, communication and cooperation are improvement factors that need to be taken more into account in the implementation of social media.

Keywords: organizational change management, social media, capacity for change

1. Introduction

Innovation is considered imperative for tourism firms either to enhance their competitiveness by adapting themselves constantly to stay ahead of their competitors or simply to survive in an interconnected world (Thomas and Wood, 2015). Technological innovation is identified as a major driver of competitive advantage for tourism destinations (Hoarau and Kline, 2014). Social media has introduced important technical innovations (Arnaboldi and Coget, 2016) because they make easy to obtain information from and disseminate to a wider audience, and the ability to integrate different channels as part of their marketing programs are critical in developing successful social media branding strategies (Kim and Ko, 2012).

As the environment changes, business strategies must also be modified. The most striking improvement in competitive position will be seen in the destination firms that are able to take advantage of the opportunities to develop and acquire their own resources and capabilities (Camisón and Monfort, 2012). Technological developments create opportunities and challenges for the tourism and travel industry (Buhalis and Law, 2008). The decision of implementing social media involves management innovation. It implies changes in the way management work is done, involving a departure from traditional processes, in practices, in structure and in techniques (Theodosiou and Katsikea, 2012) and this leads into organizational changes. The management of the changed provoked by implementing social media is essential, regardless the size or the purpose of the company.

Although there is a growing generic literature on innovation, social media and tourism industry, very little has been written on the evaluation of the success of implementing social media in the tourism industry (Vasile, 2014). This paper responds to a call for revealing the major factors that affect the ability in the tourism industry to cope with this kind of changes that can affect the successful implementation of social media. The specific objective of this paper is to evaluate the success of the implementation of social media in the tourism sector, through a case study. To this end, we have used the framework

for management of organisational change proposed by Todnem and Dale (2008), which considers eight critical success factors of organization`s ability to cope with change: (1) adaptability and flexibility; (2) commitment and support; (3) communication and co-operation; (4) continuous learning and improvement; (5) formal strategies; (6) motivation and reward; (7) pragmatism, and (8) the right people.

2. Literature review

Change is a pervasive characteristic of organizational life (Burnes, 2004) that affects every company in every sector. The need for change is highlighted by the historical perspective of the evolution of tourism as a business activity through the ages, which reveals moments of continuity and change. Continuity means that tourism remained influential in people`s leisure lifestyles, while change characterizes the evolution of tourism, as a dynamic and ever-changing phenomenon (Page, 2007).

According to Senior (2002) and By (2005), there are three categories of organisational changes into which theories and approaches can be divided (Table 1). These are changes characterised by how it comes about, by rate of occurrence, and by scale. Referring to, how it comes about, the adoption of social media is a planned change because its implementation is something planned by companies. Regarding rate of occurrence, social media need continuous change to meet the different needs of customers. In respect of the scale, this adoption is a corporate transformation since social media involves changes in the whole organization.

Table 1. The three categories of organisational change

How change comes about (Burnes, 1996; Senior, 2002)

- Planned change
- Emergent change

Rate of occurrence (By, 2005)

- Incremental change
- Bumpy incremental change
- Continuous change
- Bumpy continuous change

Scale (Dunphy and Stace, 1993)

- Incremental adjustment
 - Modular transformation
 - Corporate transformation
-

While the strategic importance of social media has prompted many researchers to investigate various aspects of social media, most attention has been paid to consumer-oriented social media research (Jackson and Wang, 2013). Although there is some literature on usage levels, barriers and metrics of social media marketing in organizations, little is known regarding the factors to evaluate the social media adoption. Therefore, managers face the challenge of managing the process of implementing and using social networks (Moreno et al., 2016).

For example, Okumus and Hemmington (1998) investigated the barriers and sources of resistance to change in hotel firms, and evaluate the change in strategies adopted in seeking how to overcome these barriers. This study suggests that there are important similarities between hotel firms and manufacturing firms when it comes to facing and overcoming barriers and

potential resistance to change. On the other hand, Okumus and Hemmington (1998) recommend hotels to provide development in organisational change management for their managerial staff in order to teach them how to cope with complex change situations. Besides, despite there is a growing generic literature that place the accent on the importance of the successful management of the organizational change and its possible consequences in the company, there are no studies on this topic from the approach of the adoption of Facebook in touristic companies that explain how firms should adapt their internal organizational activities to the dynamic social media environment (Choi and Thoeni, 2016).

The model proposed by Todnem and Dale (2008) will be used to evaluate success in the management of change social media involve. This model identifies eight critical factors of success for the management of change in touristic companies. These factors are: adaptability and flexibility; commitment and support; communication and co-operation; continuous learning and improvement; formal strategies; motivation and reward; pragmatism and the right people.

“Adaptability and flexibility” refers to the capacity of the company to continuously adapt to new situations and environments. Besides, it makes reference not only to reacting to internal and external changes, but also to becoming proactive towards future changes. In order to get this, the “commitment and support” of the personnel in the company is necessary. Commitment should materialise through management and employees’ support of each other and of the organisation’s agreed vision, aims and objectives. This factor must be supported by “communication and co-operation”, which makes reference to the regular contact between management and staff in order to build a sense of shared responsibility and commitment.

Another essential factor is “continuous learning and improvement” which refers to the extent in which the company encourages and supports organisational learning. It is imperative that organisations encourage and promote continuous learning for the individual. For this purpose, it is necessary

to establish “formal strategies” first. Formal strategies identifying agreed overarching values and goals in order to create shared vision, aims and objectives. It can potentially be a driver of change as long as the organisation allows some individual and departmental freedom in identifying, planning, implementing and managing the required change effort.

In order to make these strategies successful, the company must put into practice “motivation and reward”. It is necessary to develop some sense of ownership of change efforts. The reward for success should be shared among all stakeholders involved in the change initiative.

This factor must be combined with “pragmatism”. It refers to have a sense of being able to achieve stated aims and objectives in order to successfully change. It's important to be realistic with regard to the allocation of time and resources for the change efforts required. Finally, to be successful in these factors the company needs to have the “right people”. They have to be adaptable, flexible and non-complacent, who strive for continuous learning and improvement, who are pragmatic and willing not only to undergo changes, but also to identify, initiate, plan, implement and manage it at all levels of the organisation. In order to retain these individuals, the organisation must value and acknowledge from the outset their contribution through continuous motivation, challenges, rewards and the opportunity for personal development.

3. Methodology

This study is focused on a hotel located in the South of Spain because Spain is considered to be the paradigm of economic development supported by a strong tourism expansion (Mérida and Golpe, 2016).

This hotel is located on the seafront and has been recognised with the most prestigious international awards in the touristic sector, making it a reference of familial tourism in Spain. The company has more than 100 hotels and more than 38.000 rooms distributed along 18 countries. This chain allows its hotels to have a great autonomy. Each hotel can develop a number of its activities independently, although some others are centralized.

Regarding Facebook, the studied company has an official profile independent from the chain. It was created in March 2010, and it was necessary to contact the Marketing department of the central office before implementing it. Moreover, a common style manual designed by the central office for all the hotels has been used from the beginning. This manual establishes the guidelines to operate in Facebook: Do's and Don'ts, tips, contents and posts. The person in charge of the community management in the studied hotel is the deputy director. However, currently an outsourcing company performs most of the management of the social media in a daily basis. This outsourcing company started in 2013 due to the potential and the capacity of the hotel and also to the lack of resources and time of its management members.

The Marketing department of the central office contacted directly this outsourcing company of community management and established the guidelines to answer clients, the format, style and contact of publications. Regarding the actual operation of Facebook, monthly this company issues a report proposing some posts and they are changed by the hotel itself, depending on the aspects to highlight, the offers to launch etcetera and then it is send to the Marketing department in the central office for its approval. Concretely, it is send to the Assistant Director for Marketing and the Communication agent of the hotel because they are the administrators of the Facebook page, together with the Assistant General Manager of the hotel. In addition to monthly posts, the community management outsourcing company issues a complete report of the metrics that is analysed in the hotel to evaluate the success of the company in Facebook.

The process of data collection started with the direct observation of the operation of the hotel and the primary method of data collection for this study was semi-structured interviews conducted with the assistant general manager (currently the person in charge of the social media management), the financial manager and with the other managers of the departments involved, that is, those departments that have undergone greater changes after adopting this tool in the hotel (the Commercial department, the Entertainment department and Reception). We also had phone conversations and exchanged emails with the

community management outsourcing company which is managing Facebook and the Marketing department of the central office of this hotel chain, concretely with those people the assistant general manager gets in contact with for any doubt or explanation (Marketing assistant manager of the central office and the communication agent of this hotel). Even we were able to analyse internal documentation of the hotel, concretely the monthly report issued by the social media management company for the hotel and the Marketing department of the central office. This reports detail the published posts, the impact of these posts, the increase of followers and their nationalities...and the style manual to follow in social media elaborated by the central office for all the hotels in the chain. Evidence was obtained from October 2015 to March 2016. Interviews were audio recorded and in order to evaluate the information provided, the interviews were transcribed word for word, to enable interpreting the meaning of each of the replies in Spanish. Data collection was performed taking into account the eight critical factors for change management of the model proposed by Todnem and Dale (2008).

Table 2. Interviewed

Central	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marketing director ▪ Hotel Communication agent
Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deputy manager ▪ Financial director ▪ Commercial director ▪ Entertainment director ▪ Desk manager
Social Media management company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Deputy manager

4. Results

4.1 Adaptability and flexibility

The adaptation and continuous flexibility factor is essential for touristic companies due to the special characteristics of this sector which constantly provoke new situations and environments to face. Therefore, hotel managers

have to cope with a variety of approaches, not only to react to internal and external changes, but also to be proactive towards changes in the future.

In our case, we can state that the company has been flexible and has known how to adapt to the changes that the implementation of social media involves.

The different changes which the company has introduced because of the adoption of Facebook, are the following:

- Changes in the communication strategy: Since the incorporation of social networks, the communication strategy of the Company has suffered important improvements. Currently, Facebook is one of the main communication means of the company with clients, because it enables a direct relationship with them, without professionals or commercial agents.

Marketing assistant manager of the central: *“We use Facebook as a new way to communicate with clients. It is certainly true that we are a brand and we want to have sales, but this is not the only purpose to be in social networks. Above all, we want to communicate and establish a link with the audience. Social networks are bidirectional communication channels, in which in many times user relates with the brand with the only purpose of obtaining an efficient and faster answer than with other conventional means. One of the main purposes of the company with social media is to interact with current and potential clients and finally engaging them”.*

- Changes in the marketing strategy: The adoption of Facebook has influenced the marketing strategy of the company. Now Facebook is one of the main sales channels. More and more clients use Facebook before choosing the tourist destination and the accommodation hotel. The hotel has this into account and tries to attract current and potential clients through Facebook with all kinds of promotional posts. Even these politics have been changing during the adoption of Facebook, because initially they were more generic and, relatively recently this approach has been changed to offer posts as close as possible, trying to reflect the experiences that clients can have during their stay, because these posts really impact clients in an exponential way. Everything, bearing in mind

that one of the main objectives of the hotel is to sell and therefore if there is a publication interesting to offer it will be posted on this channel.

Assistant General Manager of the hotel: *“For me the best advertisement is to show the happiness you can achieve being a guest in this hotel. So if I show a happy family enjoying the hotel facilities you are going to put in the shoes of this family and say I want to be that family...One of the main purposes for adopting Facebook is to sell the appropriate product for each person and consolidate the company at the top of mind of all them”.*

- Process re-engineering: The implementation of social media in the company has not involved the setting up of new organizational forms since no department or job have been created because since Facebook was adopted, the company decided to hire the support from an outsourcing company for social media management. The intervention of computer experts, the hiring of external or internal professionals, expert in these matters can be recommendable if we opt for having a significant presence in social media.

However, this adoption has influenced the tasks of each department, causing a restructuration of these tasks. This restructuration is stressed the departments of management and animation. Regarding management, the most affected person has been the hotel assistant general manager who has more functions now that he has to administer the Facebook page. Although in other hotels of the chain the position of community manager has been created, this has not happened in this hotel and the assistant general manager is in charge of the social media with the support of both the central office marketing department and a media management company. In respect of animation, most of the content published in Facebook comes from this department, mainly activities and games recorded or photographed.

- Organizational changes:

- Cultural changes: The adoption of Facebook has provoked a change in the organizational culture because social media bring an empowered culture. At the beginning of the adoption of Facebook, their company culture was not supportive to get a successful adoption of social media.

However, thanks to the effort of the company, they have got a culture that endorses social media and communications with customers

Because of this, everyone is increasingly aware even at the junior management level of the relevance and the opportunities that social media can offer the hotel.

Assistant general manager: *"Facebook has changed the culture of the company. Thanks to that, the participation of the personnel, who at the beginning were reticent, has increased significantly in the last year"*.

- Changes in the structure of the company: Social media adoption involves a redefinition of the functions and responsibilities of the destinations communications manager and their structures; apart from a reorganization of human resources for the development, monitoring and control of the communications through this means with the appropriate training. Therefore, although using this kind of media does not require a significant economical investment, we cannot forget the investment in human capital necessary to ensure the contact communication of a destination with the different target audiences.
- Changes in the information systems: Small technological investments have been carried out in the technical services of the company, although not significant because social media are managed by an outsourcing company.

Financial manager: *"We have made minimum technological investments because most of the management of Facebook is performed by an outsourcing company"*.

However, despite all these changes, and if we have into account that change is a continuous and frequently small-scale process, from the hotel of study freedom to identify, plan, execute and manage change cannot be given to each worker or department manager, since all the actions taken are measured by the company management area and, in turn, by the central offices of the hotel chain.

Assistant general manager of the hotel: *"Despite all the actions taken are agreed with the central office, we could say that the hotel has great autonomy to perform the measures considered as necessary by the organization. So that, the hotel manager is in charge of taking every necessary action".*

4.2 Commitment and support

The person in charge of the social media in the hotel feel commitment and support as key factors in the success off social media management. Commitment must be materialized through the management and the support of the whole company and the vision, goals and objectives agreed in the organization by the personnel. The company has the commitment of the whole organization in social media, being increasingly aware of the importance of social media and supporting the organization all the time.

Animation manager: "When we decided to adopt Facebook, this commitment was not extended through the organization as it is now, because many staff members thought that it wouldn't be useful and that it would mean to change many of the things that were carried out until that moment. With time some staff members have even become users".

Commercial manager: "At the beginning staff members were reticent to use it. However, with time and thanks to the efforts made by the management area, they became aware of the importance these tools have for the company".

Hotel assistant manager: "Currently all of our staff members feel part of the social media and give us all the necessary support. In fact, a huge percentage of the comments and likers of our Facebook page are thanks to them. So that, the organization believes that social media will be in the future one of the few communication tools reaching customers successfully"

4.3 Communication and cooperation

Communication must be a part of every company's plan for organizational change (Newman, 2016). The successfulness of change efforts requires a focus of the managers on creating readiness for change by minimizing resistance and transforming organizational members into agents of change (Neves, 2009) and

good communication is an essential means of creating this state. According to Armenakis and Harris (2002), communicating clear and consistent change messages provides the most powerful framework for creating readiness for change.

Continuous communication through the whole organization was confirmed as relevant to ensure an understanding of the current environment and the importance of the change in the company.

Furthermore, communication in the whole organization must be constant and daily with all the departments in the company. Personnel like to be reported on changes and to take part in the projects from at an early stage, above all when they are directly affected. Therefore, all the changes necessary in the past and in the future are communicated to the managers of every affected department for them to be aware. There is also a daily meeting in the company where all the managers tell the management all the problems that arise day after day to propose solutions and take steps together. Besides, when the monthly publications are prepared every department is consulted for them to propose ideas and multimedia content.

Furthermore, the current culture of the company promotes a regular contact between the management and the personnel with the aim of building a shared sense of responsibility and commitment. In this way, the awareness of the importance of social media for the company and of the opportunity they can offer the hotel is bigger and bigger even for the middle-level management. This culture is based in the efforts made from the management department to give certain representability to staff members in order for them to feel part of the organization.

Reception manager: "We have made staff members to be more involved, sharing posts, getting more likes in the Facebook page etcetera, achieving an important grow and improving the edgerank".

Regarding external communication, this plays a very important role. Managers' external social ties have an important role to play in connecting the internal environment with the external one (Vasile, 2014). Their usage to

acquire information strengthens the organizational ability of communicating with the external environment, because information and knowledge about the environment can be timely delivered to firms by these means. (Guo and Cao, 2014)

Social media management company: *“The company tries to offers their customers a constant and bidirectional communication answering all the comments made in social networks as soon as possible, providing clear and unequivocal information easy to understand. Besides, there is a style specially designed to answer customers so that they always feel the same hospitable, polite and attentive attention they would expect to receive in any hotel. The aim is to create a solid link and create a comfort area for users so that they feel confident enough to express themselves”.*

4.4 Continuous learning and improvement

Organizations in tourism sector must have the ability to change not just once, but, given the constant flux in the business environment, as a normal response to changes in their environment (Meyer and Stensaker, 2006; Buono and Kerber, 2010).

Companies must have a proactive and reactive change capacity that enables them to achieve improvements and adapt to changes.

Soparnot (2011) considered the change capacity as “the ability of the company to produce matching outcomes (content) for environmental (external context) and/or organizational (internal context) evolution, either by reacting to the changes (adaptation) or by instituting them (pro-action) and implementing the transition brought about by these changes (process) in the heart of the company”

One of the main barriers for change is competence. This provokes the constant search for improvement. The company stated that they boost and promote the continuous learning within the whole organization in order for customers to choose this hotel instead of another one of the competence and tries to engage them to come back again. Besides, Facebook is more and more

important in this company and this is reflected in their communication policy. Despite, it isn't enough.

Regarding the person in charge of social media in the company, according to Casado et al. (2013), communications managers have to adapt to new market demands by learning the management of intangibles and its corporate reputation. In this way, the hotel deputy director states that the rules and guidelines to follow in communication through the media are not totally established and this involves a constant learning and a continuous adaptation to new communication trends and tools that appear.

Hotel deputy director: *“The importance given to social media in the company is increasing more and more but it is not enough because of the lack of time because this hotel has a great daily activity”*.

Desk manager: *“The hotel is always trying to learn day by day and improve the communication with customers”*.

4.5 Formal strategies

Cheek et al. (2013) suggested a number of metrics that can be evaluated to determine the success of the social media strategy. These include website traffic, number of fans, followers or members, number of positive comments, page views, number of contributors, number of 'mentions' or 'posts', conversion of interest into sales, revenue, average value of orders, number of product returns, number of service calls and specific channel sales.

Although according to Luecke (2003), the formal strategies are essential for successful change management, the company of the study has not established formal strategies or objectives to follow. The hotel assistant manager that they evaluate their impact in Facebook with a certain periodicity (monthly in general) and above all to analyse certain actions and specific campaigns. Besides, the information they must pay more attention in this analysis is decided by the Marketing department of the central office. In general, the most relevant features are the number of fans and their demography, engagement (number of people who has visited the posts of the page), participation (comments and likes in posts) and visits (number of visits and the

countries of origin...) However, performance indicators have not been defined to evaluate these features, formal objectives or strategies have not been set because they have not been quantified. Indicators on the performance activity of the company are essential to inform the management area and facilitate decision-making, and in this way set the objectives.

Hotel deputy director: *“Once a month, with the help of the assistant manager and the hotel communication agent of the central office marketing department, we analyse the monthly reports issued by the outsourcing company. Furthermore, since Facebook is the network with the most complete, intuitive and detailed statistical system, we use its tools to check the number of views, the date and the time of these views, the view by country, etcetera. In this way, we have made proposals to increase the number of fans, views, positive comments...but these objectives have not been quantified. Even, the management area carries out a real daily evaluation to check the post engagement”.*

4.6 Motivation and reward

Motivation and reward are necessary to achieve success in the company. One way of motivating staff members is to allow them to participate in the social media adoption process. Staff participation in formulation and implementation of change can contribute to a greater understanding for and commitment to the change (Meyer and Stenaker, 2006). It can contribute to making qualitatively better decisions, to a more powerful commitment to change thanks to organizational members` perception that their input through participation has an effect, or to facilitating change (Vasile, 2014).

The management area tries every day that all the staff members are satisfied with their work and to make them feel part of all the achievements. Thus, efforts have been made to give staff members representativeness so that they see themselves reflected in the social network and they feel as part of the company.

“It is true that some of the staff members still don’t know the importance of this social network for the organization because some of the middle-level

managers in the company are not normal users yet, but they take it into account. However, the core staff members are normal users and is more and more aware of the relevance of this social network, and thanks to that it has keep on growing. Besides, whenever we have requested different departments to help in social media, they have stood ready”.

4.7 Pragmatism

Pragmatism is an important success factor in the organizational change management in a Company. The person in charge of social media in the hotel noted that the managers of each department must be able to achieve established goals and aims in order to change successfully, and therefore it is important to be realistic with the time and resources assignation for the required change efforts. Besides, they are the people responsible for training the staff members to fulfil these aims. To such extent that one of the proposed models for change management by Armenakis and Harris (2002) is focused on the human dimension, pointing out that during the first stage the members of an organization must be ready to achieve a cognitive state of positive attitudes, beliefs and intentions towards change. The execution of these change processes requires a significant amount of resources, but the capacity of tourism companies to face changes is limited.

Some managers of different departments in the hotel do not see Facebook as a tool to measure results yet. Although it is true they are becoming Facebook users and are participating more and more, they still do not consider that it is a work tool. Therefore, they do not focus on train and educate their staff to achieve the objectives set by the central offices. Besides, in most cases Facebook objectives are not measured and no deadline is set to achieve them. This causes a complete lack of knowledge on whether the objective has been achieved or not and the time needed.

4.8 The right people

The right people are an essential success factor in the adoption of social media and also for the organization and the change management. Companies need adaptable, flexible and not complacent individuals, who strive to learn and

to be constantly improving, pragmatic and ready not only to overcome changes but also to identify, initiate, plan, perform and manage them in every level of the organization. It is true that is not easy to find this kind of individuals and much less taking into account the kind of contracts made in the tourist sector in which most of them are temporary. Once these individuals are found and with the purpose of keeping them, the organization must value and recognize their contribution through constant motivation, challenges, rewards and the opportunity of personal development.

Hotel deputy director: *“The company has the appropriate staff for the adoption of Facebook. At the beginning some departments were less collaborative with the new tool, mainly the commercial and the reception departments. The animation department was the most interested one from the beginning...However, in general, none of the departments put great barriers. Almost all the initiatives of the hotel were accepted by the staff members and over time, the acceptance of Facebook among them was even greater, because there was an awareness of the importance this tool has for the company. In fact, the staff members have the possibility of proposing initiatives to the management area that evaluates to see if they can be carried out. So much so that many of the actions performed on Facebook has been ideas of the staff members”.*

5. Discussion

The first, and the most important factor is adaptability and flexibility. This factor has been indispensable because the adoption of Facebook has involved organizational changes in the company: changes in the communication strategy; changes in the marketing strategy; processes re-engineering; organizational changes. This factor is a success factor because thanks to it we face the threat of the constant change in the tourism demand. However, there are some aspects related to this factor that can be improved because, despite changes have been developed, they have not been planned. Changes have been made when they have been considered necessary. Performing a planned process involves the execution of activities linked to the different

stages of transition, as well as an important amount of resources and the appropriate leadership the company has not been able to face.

The commitment and support of the whole organization could be considered as a success factor in the company. Most of the employees, mainly the management area of the company and the core staff, are committed with Facebook and are more and more aware of its importance nowadays and its increase in the near future. However, this factor is considered as well as an improvement aspect because many of the middle-level managers are not yet aware of the relevance of Facebook and therefore they are not enough committed.

Regarding communication and cooperation, although the Company considers it an essential factor, we could say that it is a factor that can be improved. It is true that the company tries to develop a continuous communication with the whole organization, this communication has not been carried out since the adoption of Facebook and this means that this adoption has not been performed taking into account all the staff members. Communication is also associated to readiness to change, the role of beliefs, attitudes and intentions for change of the staff members. We need clear and coherent messages providing a more efficient framework in order to create awareness within the organization in that transition from the current status to the wished one.

Another critical factor is continuous learning and improvement. For the company continuous learning and improvement is important, and therefore tries to improve constantly, adapting to the requirements of potential and current customers. Thus, trying to face the threat posed by the rapid change of the tourism sector needs and the fierce competition in this market, the company try to learn and to adapt to these changes as soon as possible.

Motivation and reward and the right people are two other factors that can be considered success factors for companies. The management area tries to have the right personnel in all the hotel departments. This staff has to be able to manage efficiently the changes needed to face the threat of temporary contracts

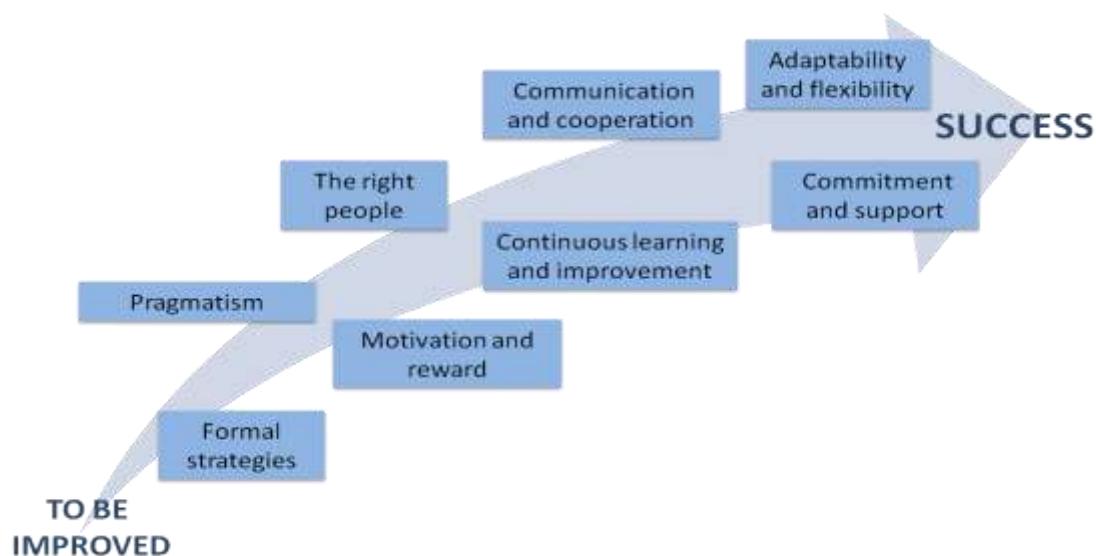
in this kind of sector. In order to maintain this people, they try to motivate them, although this motivation is related to the organization in general, it requires also an effort on the part of the management area. The company management considers these factors as important and, although they point out that at the beginning they were difficult to implement, they are currently working on it and they are improving progressively.

On the other hand, there is a series of factors proposed by the model that can be improved, since they have not been taking into account in the politics of the company of study. These factors are pragmatism and formal strategies.

In short, we can say that nowadays, the successful adoption of social media in the company of study is a fact. This success does not correspond only to the high number of likers, engagement (growth of 5 and 11%, respectively, in the first quarter of 2016) but also to the change that social networks have provoked in the company. However, there are still some factors that have been qualified as improvable, because the company must focus its energies on them to make the most of the opportunities offered by the environment and face the threats in the best possible way.

In turn, companies expect to obtain a competitive advantage with social media and positioning in a high level with respect to its competitors.

Figure 1. Summary of results



6. Conclusion

This study shows that the company of study is aware of the importance of social media adoption and how attractive this can be for tourists. Indeed, the management area of the company is aware of the importance social media currently have and of the need to implement them in hotel chains. So the company uses Facebook as a social commerce strategy to communicate and create a link with customers. However, although they recognize the relevance of the web 2.0 transformation, there is also a lack of focus on the strategic value of social media in an upper management level. It is necessary for the management area to carry out awareness campaigns to educate those departments that still have different points of view on the importance of this tool for hotel companies.

Regarding the Facebook adoption, the company has opted for a reactive approach, that is, they have implemented this social network creating profile and, lately, as the company's presence has become more and more relevant (increasing the number of likers, daily comments, post engagement...) and different needs have arisen, the company has adapted to these needs and provoking some changes. Besides, it can be argued that some management efforts seem to have arisen by chance and coincidence rather than by choice and decision. The study found that the approach for the change of the organizational change the social media adoption involves in tourism companies, probably not by conscious choice. Developing a planned process involves to carry out a series of activities associated to the different stages of the transition, as well as investing a significant amount of resources, all with the appropriate leadership. Therefore, the company should integrate social media within its commercial politics, since one of the purposes of the Facebook adoption is to increase the sales.

On the other hand, it can be argued that the company defended an approach focused on facilitate the necessary changes that social media adoption requires, but this approach is not always put into practice. Besides, it would be good to highlight the importance of the organizational culture change

required by social media and the need to change that culture for the mentioned adoption. The lack of formalization and the synergy between organizational cultures and social media initiatives can jeopardize its own success.

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CAPÍTULO 2

FACEBOOK AND THE INTENTION OF PURCHASING TOURISM PRODUCTS: MODERATING EFFECTS OF GENDER, AGE AND MARITAL STATUS

Facebook and the intention of purchasing tourism products: Moderating effects of gender, age and marital status

Abstract

This article proposes a theoretical model of factors that influence the intention to purchase touristic products or services in the context of social media. It contributes to tourism literature by identifying the relationships among disposition to trust, trustworthiness, perceived trust, perceived value and purchase intention of touristic products in this context. We also analyse the moderating effects of age, gender and marital status in the formation of that intention and the potential application of these moderating variables in order to identify more homogeneous groups of users. The model and its hypotheses was tested using structural equation modeling applying the PLS technique. A multi-group analysis was used to identify different relationships depending on population profile. The sample consisted of 848 individuals who normally use Facebook to meet peers, share ideas, and collaborate. The results showed that trust in Facebook context affected positively purchase intention and perceived value. Besides, perceived value influenced directly on purchase intention. Moderating effects of age, gender and marital status in the formation of purchase intention were also discussed

Keywords: social media, internet, e-commerce, internet marketing, tourism, partial squares

1. Introduction

One of the main motivations for using Internet is online social media (Munar, 2012). Social media do not only include popular sites such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, but also wikis, blogs, forums and podcasts (Thévenot, 2007). Among them, Facebook can be considered the most widely used, with 1.4 billion active users in December 2014 (ComScore, 2014).

Technological and touristic progress have gone hand in hand for some years (Sheldon, 1997). Social media allow users to create, share or exchange information, videos, pictures, etc. People also use social media to search information about travels and also to share their own experiences with other users (Parra-López, Bulchand-Gidumal, Gutiérrez-Taño & Díaz-Armas, 2011; Ip, Leung & Law, 2011). Social media allow users to create contents that can influence both the purchasing process of other clients and the online reputation of companies (De Moya & Jain, 2013; Mariussen, Ibenfeldt & Vespestad, 2013). Thus, many travellers trust the opinions and recommendations of other travellers when designing their routes and taking purchasing decisions.

Trust is one of the factors that has most influence in the purchasing decision in the context of tourism (Kim, Chung & Lee, 2011), especially the use of the online travel community (Ayeh, Au & Law, 2013; Casaló, Flavián & Guinalú, 2011; Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014). Previous studies have analysed the relationship between trust and other factors of the social commerce environment. For example, Parra-López et al. (2011) analysed trust as one of the factors that influenced the intention of using social media to organize and take vacation trips. Casaló et al. (2011) found that trust and perceived usefulness influenced the intention to use the host firm product. Bonsón-Ponte, Carvajal-Trujillo and Escobar-Rodríguez (2015) examined the perceived privacy, security and quality of information as precedents of trust in the purchase of touristic products and services.

However, some authors have noted that there are still few works about the role of social media in the tourist sector (Munar & Steen-Jacobsen, 2013).

These smaller markets can be distinguished by different consumer needs, characteristics, or behaviour (Shoemaker, 1989). Understanding customers' behaviour demands an understanding of segment-level differences or heterogeneity. One traditional approach for understanding heterogeneity is to use separate market research (interviews, focus groups and surveys) to identify a priori segments upon which subsequent research and analysis is based. A more recent trend in market research is to determine the segments when analysing customer data using moderating variables and multi-group analyses (Hahn, Johnson, Herrmann & Huber, 2002).

Most of the studies carried out in the tourism field that take into account the existence of a heterogeneous population are focused on the factors that influence the choice of a journey, the image of a destination, etc. However, there are no studies using market segmentation to analyse the relations among trust, perceived value and purchase intention of touristic products in the context of social media.

The basis of segmentation is to identify a set of variables or characteristics used to assign potential customers to homogeneous groups (Wedel & Kamakura, 2000). The segments resulting from that process can sometimes be easily defined by reference to such readily observable consumer characteristics as demographic profile (Taehyun & Lee, 2011). Although there is no unique way to segment the market (Beane & Ennis, 1987), variables such as age, gender and marital status are often considered relevant variables (Callan & Bowman, 2000; Ramkissoon & Nunkoo, 2012).

Therefore, this research is focused on the analysis of the influence of the information obtained from social media, specifically from Facebook, in the purchase intention of touristic services or products. This study is focused on Facebook because it is, as stated above, the most widely used social media platform.

In the context of social media, this research goes deeper into the relations among perceived trust, perceived value and purchase intention of touristic

products and examines the role of the disposition to trust and trustworthiness as precedents of perceived trust in this environment. A multi-group analysis is used to identify different relationships depending on population profile. In conclusion, this study contributes to tourism literature in the following aspects:

1) To identify the relationships among disposition to trust, trustworthiness, perceived trust, perceived value and purchase intention of touristic products in the context of social media.

2) To analyse the moderating effects of age, gender and marital status in the formation of that intention and the potential application of these moderating variables in order to identify more homogeneous groups of users.

These findings will help managers develop social media strategies that reinforce the users' intention to purchase tourism products.

2. Literature review

2.1 Perceived trust, disposition to trust, trustworthiness and their relations

Several authors justify including the trust construct in the context of new technologies (Gefen, Karahanna & Straub, 2003b). The main problem with the online environment is that communications and transactions are not face to face and such a lack of social presence can lead to distrust of the medium (Pavlou, 2003). To reflect the uncertainty involved in accepting social media, trust construct can be incorporated as an important factor in mitigating such feelings (Mayer, Davis & Shoorman, 1995).

The concept of trust has been analysed in some fields and contexts (Gefen, Karahanna & Straub, 2003a; Mayer et al., 1995). In the field of social commerce, trust is examined from different approaches. For example, Metzger (2004) defines it as the perception an individual has of a social media platform in order freely expose private information. Regarding our study, trust deals with users perceiving the information coming from social media as trustworthy, upright and reliable (Kim et al., 2011).

Some studies have analysed the precedents of trust and their effects on intention to purchase a touristic product or service (Bonsón-Ponte et al., 2015). However, in the context of social media there are some variables that require special attention taking into account the personal relations they establish. In this study, the consumers' disposition to trust and the trust they have in their Facebook friends – trustworthiness (Gefen, 2000; Ayeh et al., 2013) – have been considered.

Disposition to trust is the general willingness to trust other people and a measure of an individual's tendency to trust or distrust (Jari & Heikki, 2007), and it is influenced by cultural background, personality type and previous experiences (Chag & Chen, 2008). A consumer's disposition to trust is a general inclination to display faith in humanity and to adopt a trusting stance toward others (Gefen, 2000).

It has been shown that this variable has a positive influence on perceived trust (Chen & Barnes, 2007; Gefen et al., 2003a). Therefore, if a consumer has a high tendency to trust others in general, this disposition is likely to positively affect his/her trust in a specific social media, whereas a consumer with a low tendency to trust others in general is likely to develop a relatively lower trust in a specific social media (McKnight, Cummings & Chervany, 1998).

Therefore, the following hypothesis is established:

H01. In Facebook, users' disposition to trust has a positive influence on perceived trust.

People make important buying decisions based, in part, on their level of trust in the person who is providing the information that has been used to make the decision. Trustworthiness considers that the essence of trust includes perceptions about the moral integrity, benevolence, knowledge and competence of others in a specific community (Yousafzai, Pallister & Foxall, 2003).

In the field of social commerce, trustworthiness depends on the perception we have about our friends on Facebook, so that if a user thinks they have travel

experience and they are qualified and prepared to make a recommendation, they can have influence during the process of purchasing touristic services or products. Although online communities intend to connect people sharing similar interests (Hong, Gu, Chung & Konana, 2014), not all the contacts in social media share the same interest. Perception about people depends on the so-called homophily. Brown, Broderick and Lee (2007) define homophily in the context of online social networks as thinking and having a common interest. People usually consider those similar to them as reliable sources (Ayeh et al., 2013).

Trustworthiness has already been analysed by other authors in the field of tourism, specifically in the communities of online travel. Ayeh et al. (2013) studied the trust of people in other people who take part in travel-related user-generated content to plan their travels, finding that the perceived trustworthiness of users taking part in these communities is an influential factor in the credibility of travellers' perception. Parra-López et al. (2011) found significant relations between the trust in the community that gives the advice and when this advice is followed. In the environment of online purchase of touristic products, Chiam, Soutar and Yeo (2009) proved that trustworthiness has influence on the purchase intention with retailers. Hence, trustworthiness in Facebook can be considered as the belief or expectation that the content generated by other users (so-called 'Facebook friends') is reliable. Then, a user who reads Facebook comments can place his/her trust in the users who post them.

Therefore, the following hypothesis is established:

H02. In Facebook, trustworthiness has a positive effect on perceived trust.

2.2 Perceived trust, perceived value, behavioural intention and their relations

Behavioural intentions can be considered as indicators that signal whether customers will remain with, or defect from, the company (Zeithaml, Berry & Parasuraman, 1996). The behavioural intentions construct is very important in

the context of tourism companies because it is generally associated with customer retention and loyalty (Caruana, 2002).

The relations between perceived trust and purchase intention have already been analysed by some authors in the touristic and the e-commerce sectors (Bonsón-Ponte et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2011). These studies have shown a direct relationship between trust and willingness to buy products (McKnight et al., 1998). This relationship has also proved the influence of perceived trust in purchase intention in the field of social commerce, particularly in the online content created by users (Casaló et al., 2011). Therefore, we can expect that increases in trust will directly and positively affect purchase intentions; we therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H03. In Facebook, perceived trust positively affects purchase intention of touristic products.

Obviously, consumers wish to shop for products with those vendors who offer maximum value (Kim, Xu & Gupta, 2012; Zeithaml, 1988). Perceived value shows the difference between the ensemble of costs and benefits identified by consumers (Lovelock, 2000), and it is recognised as an important precedent of purchase intention (Chen & Chen, 2010; Jin, Lee & Lee, 2015). If a product is perceived as a great value product, the purchase intention increases (Chang & Wildt, 1994). Zeithaml (1988) conceptualizes perceived value as the notions of 'giving' and 'getting'. The concept of perceived value varies according to context. Whereas in the field of electronic commerce perceived value is considered as a net benefit (Seddon, 1997), in the field of social commerce, perceived value can be varied, including the obtaining of valuable information for the purchase of a suitable touristic product (Kim et al., 2012).

Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H04. The perceived value of the information obtained via Facebook positively affects the purchase intention of touristic products.

Finally, perceived trust has been considered as one of the precedents of perceived value (Gefen et al., 2003a). According to Kim et al. (2012), if consumers have trust in an online seller, they expend less effort on searching for information about the online seller and on executing the online transaction. Perceived trust can decrease the transaction's non-monetary cost; this cost incorporates variables such as the time and effort required to choose an online seller (Chiles & McMackin, 1996) and the perceived risk of online shopping (Jarvenpaa, Tractinsky & Vitale, 2000). As perceived trust reduces the non-monetary cost, it raises the perceived value when shopping online on a seller's website (Kim et al., 2012).

This relation can be especially significant in the field of social commerce. If a user perceives trust in the information they have obtained on Facebook from a group they belong to or from a fan page, this can be a guarantee for them when taking purchasing decisions. This fact increases the expected benefits of the relation (Gefen et al., 2003a). Therefore, we can expect that Facebook users who tend to trust the information they get from their friends on Facebook, fan pages they like or groups will get information or valuable advice that would be very useful (Kim et al., 2012).

Taking into account these considerations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H05. Perceived trust positively affects the perceived value of the information obtained via Facebook to purchase touristic products.

2.3 The effect of moderating variables on the research model

Previous researchers suggest that tourism companies should pay particular attention to different demographic factors, such as gender, age, and marital status, as they affect behavioural intentions (Skogland & Siguaw, 2004). Individual differences play an important role in the relationships among different constructs and, therefore, in users' behavioural intentions when they are using technologies.

The utilization of models with moderating variables has found increasing dissemination in both tourism research theory and practice. Applications of these models usually rest on the assumption that the analysed data are derived from a single population. However, this assumption of homogeneity is often unrealistic, as individuals are likely to be heterogeneous in their perceptions and behavioural intentions (Sarstedt, 2008).

Different ways to segment the market and develop profiles of the resulting market segments can be identified. One of the most frequently used methods for segmenting a market has been demographic segmentation based on variables such as age, gender, or marital status. It is expected that the previous hypothesised relationships will be moderated by these demographic variables. How these three variables moderate the proposed relationships would provide a good lens for examining the different decision-making mechanisms among users in the content of social commerce. Taking into account that the purpose of this work is not only to confirm the relations among constructs, but also to segment the market, 15 sub-hypotheses have also been generated (Figure 1).

H01 (a/b/c). In Facebook, the influence of disposition to trust in perceived trust by users is different according to (a) gender, (b) marital status, (c) age.

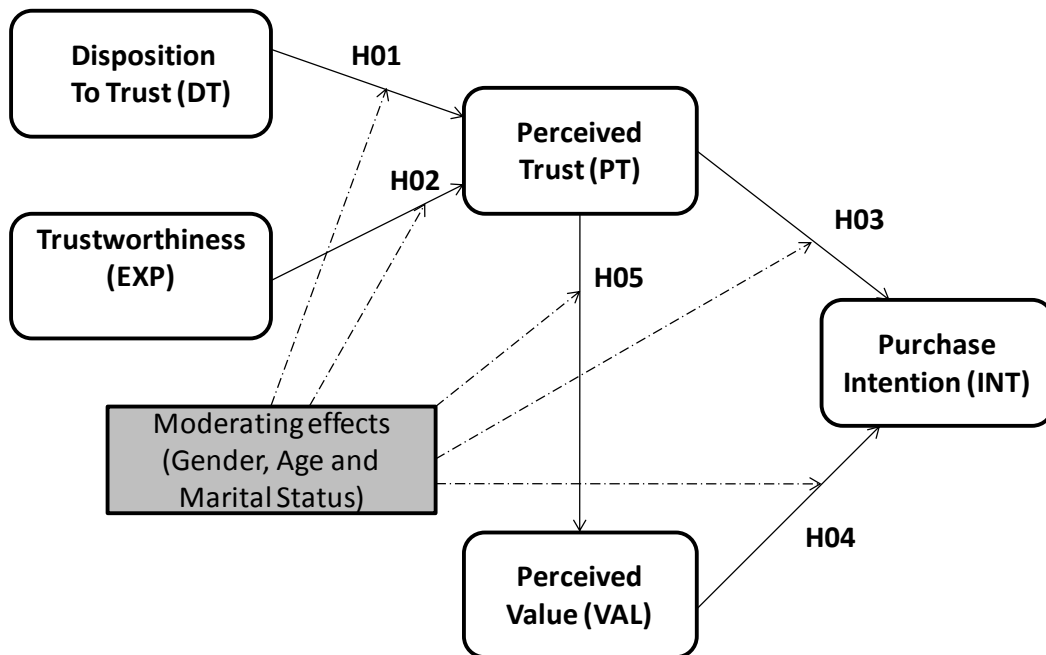
H02 (a/b/c). In Facebook, the influence of trustworthiness on perceived trust is different according to user's (a) gender, (b) marital status, (c) age.

H03 (a/b/c). In Facebook, the influence of perceived trust in the purchase intention of touristic products is different according to user's (a) gender, (b) marital status, (c) age.

H04 (a/b/c). The influence of perceived value due to the information obtained from Facebook in the purchase intention of touristic products varies according to user's (a) gender, (b) marital status, (c) age.

H05 (a/b/c). The influence of perceived trust in the perceived value of the information obtained via Facebook to purchase touristic products varies according to user's (a) gender, (b) marital status, (c) age.

Figure 1: Proposed research model and hypotheses.



3. Methodology

Theoretical constructs were measured using validated items from prior research. Due to the scarcity of valid scales adapted to social commerce it was necessary to adapt the initial items to guarantee the content validity of the measurement instruments. Therefore, a set of measurement items was adapted with slight modifications to the specific context of this research, and a total of 18 items was obtained. In Table 1, we present the complete list of items, which were measured by means of multi-item scales, for the constructs taken into account in this research. It can be seen that the ‘trustworthiness’ construct comprises five items (Ayeh et al., 2013). The ‘purchase intention’, ‘perceived value’ and ‘perceived trust’ constructs are measured by three items each (Venkatesh, Thong & Xu, 2012; Kim et al., 2011; Kim et al., 2012). The ‘disposition to trust’ construct comprises four items (Gefen, 2000). The responses of the survey participants to each of the items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (= ‘strongly disagree’) to 7 (= ‘strongly agree’). This is the usual way of measuring variables that are not directly quantifiable or observed (Iacobucci & Churchill, 2002).

In order to validate the questionnaire, five Facebook users assessed whether these items were likely to be appropriate for the aim of studying the purchase intention of touristic products from the information received via Facebook. This validity was tested through a variation of the Zaichkowsky method (Zaichkowsky, 1985), whereby each item is qualified by a panel of experts as 'clearly representative', 'somewhat representative' or 'not representative of the construct of interest'. In line with Lichtenstein, Netemeyer and Burton (1990) an item was retained if a high level of consensus was observed among the experts. On the basis of the comments realized, modifications were made to this instrument such as the rewording of some items for reason of clarity. Following this, a pre-test was conducted on 100 randomly selected Facebook users of different gender, age and marital status in order to refine the questions and gain additional comments on the content and structure. Based on the results of this pre-test, only minor modifications were made to the wording of some items to further increase their clarity. The data from this pilot survey were not included in the main survey.

The items were translated into Spanish by a professional native English translator. This final version was then translated back into English by another native English professional translator to ensure consistency between the English and the Spanish versions of the questionnaire (Brislin, 1970). The questionnaire was complemented with questions about age, gender and marital status of participants, which were used later to segment the sample.

The study took place among Spanish Facebook users. The interviewers were trained in different sessions in the technique for administering the questionnaire to Facebook users. In this way, participants had to satisfy certain criteria. Respondent subjects were all asked to meet the following criteria: they had an active Facebook profile and used Facebook regularly to meet peers, share ideas, and collaborate. This study used convenience sampling because we cannot obtain information about Facebook users meeting the previous criteria. Then, the convenience sampling method was utilized because the population size and characteristics are unknown (San Martín & Herrero, 2012).

From 6 April to 29 May 2015, the main survey was administered to 1,200 Facebook users, who were requested to participate in the study using the link of the online questionnaire. The questionnaire was announced through welcome screens that contained the aim of this research and two filtering questions. A statement about the confidence of the user's answers was also included in the first welcome screen. Through the initial filtering question, Facebook users who had already completed the questionnaire were prevented from answering it again. Those who replied they had not yet taken the questionnaire were given the second filtering question, which asked whether they had an active Facebook profile and used Facebook regularly to meet peers, share ideas, and collaborate, and whether they wished to participate in this research. If they agreed to do so, they were requested to answer the questionnaire. The subjects completed 892 (74.33%) questionnaires, 848 (70.66%) of which were collected for data analysis, after eliminating some questionnaires that had been deemed unusable. There were 448 (52.8%) females and 400 (47.2%) males represented. The age groups were as follows: 226 (26.7%) under 20 years; 486 (57.3%) 21–30; 66 (7.8%) 31–40; 46 (5.4%) 41–50; and 24 (2.8%) 51 and over. Most of the respondents (478, 56.4%) were unmarried and 370 respondents (43.6%) were married.

4. Data analysis and results

This research is based on a regression analysis of latent variables using the optimisation technique of the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method to develop a model that represents the relationships between the five proposed constructs measured by many items. The PLS is a multivariate technique to test structural models (Chin, 1998). The PLS method estimates the model parameters which minimise the residual variance of the whole model dependent variables (Hsu, Chen & Hsieh, 2006), does not require any parametric conditions (Chin, 1998), and is recommended for small samples (Hulland, 1999).

The analysis of data took place through a two-stage methodology, in which the measurement model is developed first and evaluated separately from

the full structural equation model (Gerbing & Anderson, 1988). Therefore, the first step involves establishing individual reliability for each item and the convergent and discriminate validity of the constructs.

The individual reliability for each item is given by loadings or correlations between the item and the construct. The convergent validity of each item is acceptable for a loading higher than 0.505 (Falk & Miller, 1992). Table 1 indicates the loadings and t-values for each item. They all comply with established conditions.

Table 1: Items loading and t-values.

Construct	Item	Loadings	t-values(*)
Purchase intention (INT)	INT1: I have a strong intention to purchase a tourism product using the information provided by Facebook friends/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups	0.912	137.104
	INT2: I choose to accept tourism product using the information provided by Facebook friends/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups without any hesitation when purchasing tourism products.	0.937	189.686
	INT3: I intend to purchase tourism products using the information provided by Facebook friends/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups in the near future	0.928	210.306
Perceived Trust (PT)	PT1: The information provided by Facebook friend/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups has integrity.	0.892	98.065
	PT2: The information provided by Facebook friend/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups is reliable.	0.844	62.023
	PT3: The information provided by Facebook friend/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups is trustworthy.	0.856	86.366
Perceived value (VAL)	VAL1: Considering the effort I make in information search for organising trips by Facebook friends/Facebook fan	0.905	126.358

	pages/Facebook groups. the information provided by them is worthwhile		
	VAL2. Considering the risk involved in information search for organizing trips by Facebook friends/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups. the information provided by them is of value	0.912	109.546
	VAL3. Overall. the information provided by Facebook friends/Facebook fan pages/Facebook groups for organizing trips delivers me good value	0.897	111.376
Disposition to trust (DT)	DT1. I generally trust other people	0.886	112.504
	DT2. I tend to count upon other people	0.821	56.000
	DT3. I feel that people are generally reliable	0.867	84.671
	DT4. I generally trust other people unless they give me reason not to	0.701	27.230
Trustworthiness (EXP)	Do you think that your Facebook friends that provide information for organizing trips are:		
	EXP1. Inexperienced—experienced in travel?	0.833	58.144
	EXP2. Not experts—experts in travel?	0.874	85.817
	EXP3. Unknowledgeable—knowledgeable in travel?	0.865	85.352
	EXP4. Unqualified—qualified to offer travel advice?	0.878	103.031
	EXP5. Unskilled—skilled in travel?	0.846	75.956

(*) All tests were significant at p-value <0.001

In order to verify the reliability of indicators, the Cronbach coefficient alpha (Cronbach, 1990) and the composite reliabilities coefficient (Werts, Linn & Jöreskog, 1974) were used, which range between 0 (no similarities) and 1 (maximum similarities). Both parameters are considered, as the first shows that the contribution made by each indicator is similar, while the second takes the respective indicators into account. Table 2 indicates the value of each coefficient. Composite reliabilities are over the minimum acceptable limit of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). The Cronbach coefficient alpha levels were all above the minimum recommended level of 0.70 (Churchill, 1979).

Table 2: Composite reliability, AVE and Cronbach coefficient alpha.

	Composite Reliability	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha
INT	0.9472	0.8569	0.9164
PT	0.8984	0.7467	0.8302
VAL	0.9313	0.8188	0.8893
DT	0.8920	0.6755	0.8405
EXP	0.9340	0.7390	0.9118

Purchase intention (INT); Perceived Trust (PT); Perceived value (VAL); Disposition to trust (DT); Trustworthiness (EXP)

Convergent validity represents the common variance between the indicators and their construct. It is measured by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and the acceptable threshold should be higher than 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 2 presents the AVE scores achieved for each of the five constructs employed, which in all cases surpasses the minimum desirable value.

In order to confirm the discriminatory validity among constructs, the AVE square root must be superior to the correlation between constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 3 indicates the square roots of the AVE (in the diagonal) and the correlations among constructs. It suggests adequate discriminatory validity of the measurements.

Table 3: Discriminatory validity of constructs (*).

	DT	EXP	INT	PT	VAL
DT	0.8219				
EXP	0.3233	0.8596			
INT	0.3988	0.4452	0.9257		
PT	0.4387	0.4352	0.6093	0.8641	
VAL	0.3427	0.4444	0.6535	0.6117	0.9048

Purchase intention (INT); Perceived Trust (PT); Perceived value (VAL); Disposition to trust (DT); Trustworthiness (EXP)

(*) Correlations among constructs compared with the Square Root of the AVE (in the diagonal)

After establishing the individual reliability for each item and the convergent and discriminatory validity of the constructs, the structural model is examined. To test H1 through H5, a PLS analysis is performed. The regression coefficients are based on a bootstrapping of 500 samples and not on a sample estimator. This permits the generalization of the results and the computation of the t-student statistic for each hypothesis (Mangin, de Pablo-Valenciano & Kopyay, 2009). Figure 2 and Table 4 summarise the relationships between the different constructs. The predictive capability of the model is satisfactory because all R-Squares are higher than 0.10 (Falk & Miller, 1992).

Figure 2: Results of testing model.

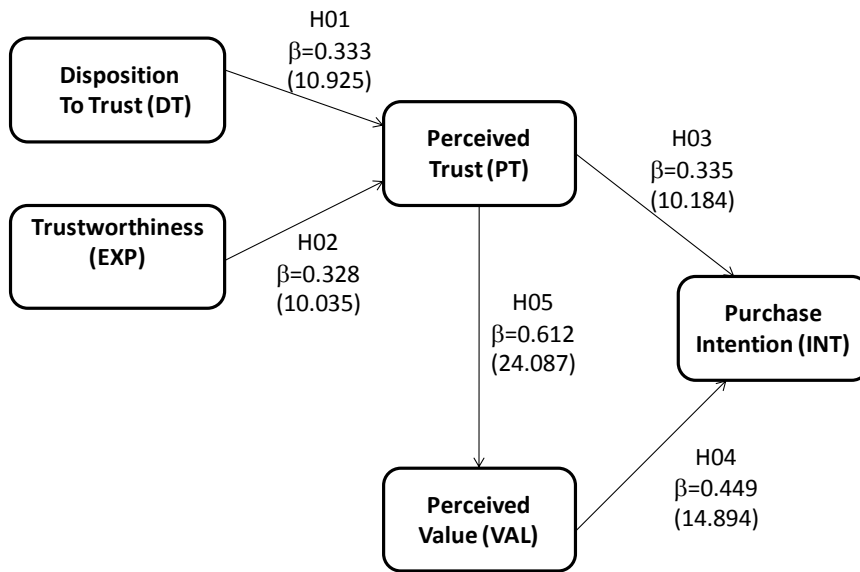


Table 4: Summary of test results for the structural model.

Path	Hyp.	Suggested effect	Path coefficient	t-value	Supported?	R-squared
DT-> PT	H01	+	0.333	10.925	Yes, p<0.001	0.289
EXP -> PT	H02	+	0.328	10.035	Yes, p<0.001	
PT -> INT	H03	+	0.335	12.184	Yes, p<0.001	0.497
PV -> INT	H04	+	0.449	14.894	Yes, p<0.001	
PT ->PV	H05	+	0.612	24.087	Yes, p<0.001	0.374

Purchase intention (INT); Perceived Trust (PT); Perceived value (VAL); Disposition to trust (DT); Trustworthiness (EXP)

The moderating effects of gender, marital status and age have been analysed from a comparative multi-group approach. The differences among the results of the subgroups of these variables have been compared using a t-test (Table 5). First, the results are presented indicating the relation among the different constructs for the sample segmented by gender, where Group 1 is 'females' and Group 2 is 'males'. Then, the multi-group analysis was performed to determine the moderating effect of the variable marital status, where Group 1 refers to 'unmarried' and Group 2 to 'married'. Finally, with regard to age, the average age of survey respondents has been used to distinguish between the

younger and the older Facebook users (Ananth, Demicco, Moreo & Howey, 1992). In this sense, two groups have been created according to the age of survey respondents. Group 1 makes reference to '26 years old or younger' and Group 2 'older than 26' survey respondents. Results that indicate the relation among different constructs for the sample segmented by age are also included in Table 5.

Table 5: Moderating effects of gender, marital status and age.

Gender segmented						
Path	Hypotheses	Females (β_1)	Males (β_2)	$\beta_1 - \beta_2$	t-value	Supported?
DT-> PT	H01a	0.3276	0.3715	-0.0438	24.5828	Yes, p<0.001
EXP -> PT	H02a	0.2468	0.4278	-0.1809	87.5704	Yes, p<0.001
PT -> INT	H03a	0.3763	0.2928	0.0834	-43.3556	Yes, p<0.001
PV -> INT	H04a	0.4178	0.4827	-0.0648	34.1205	Yes, p<0.001
PT -> PV	H05a	0.6043	0.6118	-0.0075	4.7636	Yes, p<0.001
Marital status segmented						
Path	Hypotheses	Unmarried (β_1)	Married (β_2)	$\beta_1 - \beta_2$	t-value	Supported?
DT-> PT	H01b	0.3953	0.2580	0.1373	-79.8437	Yes, p<0.001
EXP -> PT	H02b	0.3010	0.3363	-0.0353	16.4863	Yes, p<0.001
PT -> INT	H03b	0.3341	0.3427	-0.0086	4.8595	Yes, p<0.001
PV -> INT	H04b	0.4730	0.3914	0.0816	-44.7275	Yes, p<0.001
PT -> PV	H05b	0.5873	0.6358	-0.0486	32.2809	Yes, p<0.001
Age segmented						
Path	Hypotheses	≤ 26 old (β_1)	> 26 years old (β_2)	$\beta_1 - \beta_2$	t-value	Supported?
DT-> PT	H01c	0.3762	0.1789	0.1973	-110.3743	Yes, p<0.001
EXP -> PT	H02c	0.3104	0.4117	-0.1012	50.6823	Yes, p<0.001
PT -> INT	H03c	0.3499	0.2938	0.0561	-31.0614	Yes, p<0.001
PV -> INT	H04c	0.4273	0.5319	-0.1046	57.4583	Yes, p<0.001
PT -> PV	H05c	0.5812	0.7043	-0.1231	88.8276	Yes, p<0.001

Purchase intention (INT); Perceived Trust (PT); Perceived value (VAL); Disposition to trust (DT); Trustworthiness (EXP)

5. Discussion and conclusions

This study attempts to identify the relations among the different constructs linked to the intention to purchase a touristic product for different population profiles in the context of social commerce. In addition to the theoretical

contribution, the research model suggests that there are important practical implications in terms of developing an understanding of how to improve purchase intention through social media communication according to potential customers' characteristics.

5.1 Academic implications

The results of this study reveal an advance in research on purchase intention in the context of social commerce. The main contribution of the study to the literature is the evidence it provides on the relationships among disposition to trust, trustworthiness, perceived trust, perceived value and purchase intention of touristic products in the context of social media. This is a topic that has not been researched by academics in the context of tourism in the past. This paper also represents a step forward in research on the moderating effects of age, gender and marital status in the formation of that intention and the potential application of these moderating variables in order to identify more homogeneous groups of users.

First, this study conceptualizes perceived trust in the context of social media as a construct with two main dimensions (disposition to trust and trustworthiness). Our findings indicate that, in general, the main predictors of consumers' perceived trust, in order of relevance, are disposition to trust, and trustworthiness. However, significant differences have been found depending on the consumer's characteristics. Disposition to trust has shown a strong and positive influence on perceived trust (H01, $\beta=0.333$, $p<0.001$). The intensity of this relation varies according to the consumer's profile. This way, the influence of disposition to trust on perceived trust is greater in male customers, unmarried customers and young customers. The test results clearly suggest that trustworthiness has a significant and positive relation with perceived trust (H02, $\beta=0.328$, $p<0.001$). As in the previous case, the intensity of this relation also depends on the consumer's profile, being higher for male customers, married customers and older customers. In brief, the results suggest that depending on the consumer's characteristics, the main predictors of perceived trust could

change. Disposition to trust seems to be more important than trustworthiness to explain the disposition to trust for female, unmarried and younger users, while trustworthiness tends to be more relevant than disposition to trust for male, married and older users.

The findings also indicate that perceived trust is positively related to perceived value, giving support for H05 ($\beta=0.612$, $p<0.001$). This shows the importance of taking into account the perceived value factor when analysing the Facebook users' perceived trust to purchase a touristic product or service. Those users with higher levels of perceived trust tend to also receive a higher value from the touristic products from which they are receiving information via Facebook. However, significant differences in the intensity of this influence have been found according to the population segment analysed. In this way, the intensity of this relation is higher in male customers, married customers and older customers. Therefore, the relevance of this relationship should be taken into account mainly for these types of users.

Finally, regarding the results we can deduce that the main predictors of purchase intention, in order of importance, are perceived value (H04, $\beta=0.449$, $p<0.001$) and perceived trust (H03, $\beta=0.335$, $p<0.001$). Thus, the purchase intention could be influenced by the perceived value of the information that the consumer can get through Facebook and the perceived trust of its quality. This hierarchy has been identified for all users but the intensity of these relationships seems to depend on the consumer's profile. The intensity of the relationship between perceived value and purchase intention is higher for male, married and older customers. On the other hand, the intensity of the relationship between perceived trust and purchase intention is higher for female, married and young customers.

5.2 Managerial implications

This research also presents relevant practical implications for marketing practitioners and managers who design strategic plans and implement tools to improve the performance of social media. The segmentation of social media

users could help tourism company managers to better understand the formation of purchase intention in the field of social commerce and to direct them toward successful paths for supporting social commerce strategies. Gender, age and marital status seem to be good variables to allow some kind of first-level market segmentation.

On the one hand, the knowledge of the antecedents of perceived trust is useful for managers who wish to develop strategies and actions aimed at increasing the benefits of social commerce. On the other hand, as perceived trust and perceived value influence purchase intention, actions can be taken by managers to increase these perceptions and achieve the consumers' desired behaviour.

According to these results, companies should expect to see different degrees of disposition to trust and trustworthiness in potential customers according to their characteristics. Therefore, tourism companies should emphasize trust-building mechanisms in those potential customers with lower degrees of perceived trust. For example, the relevance of the two antecedents of perceived trust included in this study seems to depend on the market segment. Unmarried and young potential customers present higher effects of disposition to trust in perceived trust than other potential customers. On the other hand, married and 'not so young' potential customers present higher effects of trustworthiness in perceived trust than other potential customers. Therefore, the sources of 'perceived trust' are not exactly the same for all potential customers.

It could be suggested that in this context males and 'not so young' customers rate perceived value higher than other potential customers, while females and young customers identify perceived trust to be more important than other potential customers in order to determine their purchase intention. In this case, a different or unique social media marketing strategy is required to target these types of users.

5.3 Limitations and future research

Although the results are mostly statistically significant, there are several limitations to this study. First, self-reports are used to measure behaviour. Self-reports may create self-generated validity and thus inflated causal linkages (Feldman & Lynch, 1988). Second, users' responses may not be actual perceptions, but rather the subject's report of their perception. Third, the sample consisted only of Spanish users, which has implications for the generalization of the findings. Fourth, data used in this paper are derived from a questionnaire administered at a single point in time; therefore, the variables are not measured over time.

The findings reported in this paper pave the way for embarking on promising and relevant future research that is needed to substantiate and enrich the academic understanding and managerial practice of segmentation and strategic marketing decisions in the field of social commerce.

It is recommended that future papers in social media should focus on analysing the influence of other moderating variables on purchase intention. These other constructs could include user experience with the Internet and with online purchasing, user innovativeness, or national differences. Furthermore, the same variables could be measured over time to capture the dynamic of the research model.

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CAPÍTULO 3

PURCHASE INTENTION FOR TOURISTIC PRODUCTS IN A SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEXT: A FUZZY COGNITIVE MAPS APPROACH

Purchase intention for touristic products in a social media context: A fuzzy cognitive maps approach

Abstract

The growth of social media accelerates the need for the tourism industry to constantly develop its marketing strategies on social media. This study contributes to the tourism literature with a model that confirms the relationship between purchase intention for touristic products in a social media context and its antecedents. We also analyse the effect of the types of users of new technologies in the formation of that intention.

The model was tested employing a fuzzy method to demonstrate the dependent relationships between purchase intention and its antecedents through interviews with experts in social commerce. We conclude with a theoretical model of factors that influence the intention to purchase touristic products in the context of social media in order to contribute to a better understanding for marketing. Therefore, the results reveal a better understanding of how managers can improve purchase intention through social media communication according to IT adopters.

Keywords: fuzzy set, social media, social commerce, purchase intention, tourism industry

1. Introduction

Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have engendered a new paradigm shift in the tourism industry (Mariani & Mura, 2016), playing a central role in its growth and development (Gretzel & Fesenmaier, 2009).

One of the main motivations for using the Internet is online social media (Munar, 2012). Social media includes social networking sites (SNSs), blogs, micro-blogs, Wikipedia, social shopping sites and other content sharing sites, such as YouTube and Flickr (Liang & Turban, 2011). Among them, Facebook can be considered the most widely used, with 1.79 billion active users in September 2016 (ComScore, 2016).

Social media has deeply transformed the manner in which people access information, plan for, consume travel and subsequently share their travel experiences (Chung & Buhalis, 2008; Buhalis & Law, 2008; Hays, Page & Buhalis, 2013; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

Therefore, the change caused by social media also applies to consumer decision-making processes and marketing communications (Henning-Thurau et al., 2011; Shankar & Malhotra, 2007). In fact, travellers are increasingly using social media in order to get information on which to base their decisions (Kozinets, 2002).

The increased popularity of social media as an efficient tool for socialisation and information sharing has given rise to a new form of e-commerce called social commerce (Liang & Li, 2011). The commercial impact of social commerce is now vividly obvious to various firms (Zhang, Lu & Gupta, 2014). As a result, it is of vital importance that tourism organisation managers and destination policy makers understand the antecedents of the tourists' use and adoption of social media for travel decisions (Parra et al., 2011; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

Many researchers have already studied the importance of the use of social media in the context of tourism and its influence on purchase intention (e.g. Chung, 2008; Parra-López, Bulchand-Gidumal, Gutiérrez-Taño & Díaz-Armas, 2011; Pookulangara & Koesler, 2011; Wang et al., 2002). Of the factors that have influence in purchasing decisions in the tourism context, trust and perceived value have been proven the most relevant variables that have a huge impact on purchase intention in the tourism context (Ayeh, Au & Law, 2013; Casaló, Flavián & Guinalíu, 2011; Chen & Chen, 2010; Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014; Jin, Lee & Lee, 2015; Kim, Chung & Lee, 2011).

However, most of the studies have been carried out taking into account the opinion of social media users (e.g. Ayeh, Au & Law, 2013; Filieri, Alguezaui & McLeay, 2015; Parra-López, Bulchand-Gidumal, Gutiérrez-Taño & Díaz-Armas, 2011). Ayeh, Au and Law (2013) investigated the intention to use Consumer-Generated Media (CGM) for travel planning by carrying out a survey with leisure travellers in the USA who generally used social media and CGM websites; Filieri, Alguezaui and McLeay (2015) tested a model of antecedents and consequences of trust for CGM which was conducted on a sample of 366 users of this media; Parra-López, Bulchand-Gidumal, Gutiérrez-Taño and Díaz-Armas (2011) proposed a theoretical model to explain the factors determining the intention to use social media when organising and taking vacation trips, which was conducted on a sample of 404 individuals who normally use the Internet and had travelled on vacations in the previous 12 months.

None of those studies examined the intention to purchase based on expert opinion. The opinion of decision-makers has been very critical of tourism policy strategy planning (Liu & Chou, 2016). However, there are no studies using expert opinion to analyse this issue in the context of social media in the tourism industry.

An expert refers to one who masters knowledge in a specific field (Fang et al., 2016). Expert opinion would enable the provision of research with up-to-date and fairly unbiased evidence (Buhalis, 2002). Besides, due the fact that social media in the tourism sector is one of the most dynamic areas of tourism, the

importance of expert opinion is even greater in this sector. Because of this, understanding the point of view of tourism's experts becomes increasingly important.

Therefore, this research is focused on the analysis of the determinants of purchase intention and identifies the relationships among these factors in the context of social media, specifically Facebook, from the point of view of experts in social commerce in the context of tourism.

The issue of intention to purchase has previously been analysed by different models, but purchase intention is generally imprecise, vague and uncertain. To deal with a vague linguistic phenomenon, Zadeh (1975) proposed fuzzy theory which has been demonstrated over the years as being capable of coping with vague data in a better way than traditional methods (Wang, Xiaolei, Yunteng & Yin Hai, 2014; Chu & Guo, 2015). In this paper, we present a fuzzy approach to understand purchase intention for touristic products.

Furthermore, there are two types of users of new technologies to be differentiated, early adopters and late adopters. We try to identify how early adopters differ from late adopters for the same set of variables to better understand the time of purchase intention decision between early and late IT adopters. In order to achieve this, we identify the factors that permit an effective discrimination between early and late IT adopters.

With this in mind, this study aims: 1) to examine the determinants of purchase intention for tourist products in a social media context through the opinion of experts in social commerce; 2) to assess the effect of early and late adopters on purchase intention and their determinants.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. In the next section, we provide the theoretical background. Following that, we describe our research methodology and present data analysis and results, and finally we provide our conclusions, limitations and implications for future research.

2. Literature review

2.1 Purchase intention on social media

Purchase intention for tourism products is the main dependent variable of the model. Purchase intention arises when a person is aware of a product or service, and believes that purchasing or consuming that product or service will produce a positive effect by satisfying an unmet need (Goossens, 2000).

Several conceptual models have been proposed by researchers to capture factors that affect customer intention to purchase (e.g. Schaupp & Belanger, 2005; Brucks & Zeithaml, 2005; Zviran et al., 2006).

A review of literature on purchase intention in the tourism context indicates that trust is one of the most relevant variables in purchase intention (e.g. Kim et al., 2011; Fam, Foscht & Collins, 2004; Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014; Llach et al., 2013). Research has shown that people are more prone to purchase online if they perceive a high trust (Corbitt et al., 2003; Kim et al., 2008). This relation has also been analysed by some authors in the touristic and e-commerce sectors (Bonsón-Ponte et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2011).

Some studies have analysed the precedents of trust and their effects on intention to purchase a touristic product or service (e.g. Bonsón-Ponte et al., 2015; Escobar-Rodríguez & Carvajal-Trujillo, 2014) but most are focused on websites transactions (Beldad et al., 2010).

Perceived security and perceived privacy have been studied as antecedents of trust (Kim et al., 2008) because of their great influence on trust (Kim et al., 2009). In the e-commerce context, perceived security can be defined as the perception by consumers that the online seller has included the antecedents of security, such as verification, authentication, encryption, protection and non-repudiation (Kim et al., 2008) and perceived privacy can be conceptualised as the probability that the online seller will assure that the confidential information on the consumer acquired during the online transaction is protected against unauthorised disclosure or use (Kim et al., 2008).

Besides, reputation has been proven to be a relevant variable which influences trust. Highly reputable companies are likely to gain customer trust (Rindova et al., 2005) because positive corporate reputation is based on superior performance over a certain period of time. Thus, customers are more likely to perceive companies with a highly favourable reputation as trustworthy (Keh & Xie, 2009).

In addition, word-of-mouth referrals are a naturally occurring phenomenon in consumer behaviour (Kozinets et al., 2010). This refers to all kinds of interpersonal communication (positive and negative) about a company, brand or product between a receiver and a communicator, who is perceived as noncommercial (Arndt, 1967; Goyette et al., 2010). Word-of-mouth serves as one source of information for consumers in the purchase decision-making process as it provides information on product performance and the social and psychological consequences of a potential purchase decision (Mooradian et al., 2012; Brown et al., 2007). Since consumers are familiar with the source of word-of-mouth, the received information is considered to be more reliable, credible and trustworthy (Solomon, 2011). As a consequence, word-of-mouth as a source of information is effective in influencing consumers' decision-making.

On the other hand, in the context of social media there are some variables that require special attention taking into account the personal relations they establish. In the present study, the trust they have in Facebook and in their Facebook friends – closeness (Gefen, 2000; Ayeh et al., 2013) – has been considered.

Perceived value is also recognised as an important precedent of purchase intention (e.g. Kim et al., 2011; Chen & Chen, 2010; Jin, Lee & Lee, 2015; San Martín & Herrero, 2012). Obviously, consumers wish to shop for products with those vendors who offer maximum value (Kim, Xu & Gupta, 2012; Zeithaml, 1988). From the literature, several major issues emerge as advantages of online travel shopping and have typically included time saving (Heung, 2003, Wong & Law, 2005), information quality (Filiari & Mcleady, 2014; Kim et al.,

2008; Park et al., 2007) and even hedonic motivation (Cho & Agrusa, 2006; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Powley, Cobanoglu & Cummings, 2004).

Regarding information quality, it is defined by Kim et al. (2008) as the consumers' general perception of how complete and accurate the information on the website is, concerning both the services offered and the procedure for carrying out the online purchase transaction. Information quality reflects relevancy, sufficiency, accuracy and currency (Cheung et al., 2008; Park et al., 2007).

Hedonic motivation is defined as the fun or pleasure derived from using a technology and it has been shown to play an important role in determining technology acceptance and use (Brown & Venkatesh, 2005; Childers et al., 2001).

In addition, perceived value and ease of use are the two basic conditions that are necessary in the adoption of any technology (Lee, Korzan & Larsen, 2003). Perceived ease of use is an individual's assessment of the extent to which interaction with a specific information system or technology is free of mental effort (Davis, 1989). Yoo et al. (2007) and Yoo and Gretzel (2008) determined that if a social network does not facilitate use or access for users to share their tourism experiences, they do not share it.

Another factor of great influence on purchase intention is consumer's innovativeness (Crespo & Rodríguez del Bosque, 2008; San Martín & Herrero, 2012). Innovativeness is defined by Agarwal and Prasad (1998) as the willingness of an individual to try out any information technology.

Previous studies of tourist motivation have shown that culture affects purchase intention (Kim et al., 2009; Chau et al., 2002). Culture and lifestyle deeply influence behaviour and with a greater usage of social networking by individuals it is soon becoming the lifestyle of choice across generations and cultures and needs to be examined more closely (Pookulangara & Koesler, 2011). Culture can be defined as the degree of national cultural variation in different countries.

The six dimensions of national culture proposed by Hofstede et al. (2010) are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism, masculinity, long-term orientation and indulgence. This research focuses only on two dimensions: individualism and uncertainty avoidance. The definitions of these two dimensions by Hofstede (2011) are as follows: uncertainty avoidance is the degree to which members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations and individualism is the extent to which the ties between individuals are loose.

Successful marketers are increasingly recognising culture as the most powerful determinant of consumer attitudes, lifestyles and behaviours (Cleveland & Chang, 2009).

In addition, habit has been defined as the extent to which people tend to perform behaviours automatically because of learning (Limayem et al., 2007). Habit will have a stronger effect on intention and use for more experienced consumers.

Finally, individual acceptance of innovation is also driven by the usage of a focal innovation within their social environment. In other words, the acceptance of an innovation by an individual's peers, e.g. superiors, colleagues and customers, may signal its importance and advantages and motivate the individual to imitate. For example, if significant others rely on the Internet for research, an individual may decide to do like wise in order to keep up with their peers. It is therefore reasonable to assume that social influence will influence purchase intention.

.2.2 Literature review of fuzzy set theory in the tourism industry

To deal with the vagueness of human thoughts, Zadeh (1965) first introduced the set theory, which was oriented to the rational of uncertainty due to imprecision or vagueness. A major contribution of fuzzy theory is its capability to represent vague data. Thus, vague data may be represented using fuzzy numbers, which can be further subjected to mathematical operation in the fuzzy domain. Also, the theory also allows mathematical operations and programming

to apply to the fuzzy domain. A fuzzy set is a class of objects with a continuum of grades of membership.

Later, Buckley (1985) incorporated the fuzzy set theory into the traditional Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (FAHP), thus creating a suitable tool for solving real-world multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) problems (Buyukozkan, 2004; Fu et al., 2011; Huang & Wu, 2005; Lin et al., 2009; Sipahi & Timor, 2010).

Fuzzy set theory is a valuable tool to strengthen the comprehensiveness and reasonableness of the decision-making process. Thus, nowadays more and more studies in tourism are adopting fuzzy sets due to its inherent advantages. Because of this, the theory has been extended by many authors, working in different fields.

Regarding the field of tourism, this technique has been combined with the Fuzzy Delphi Method (FDM) by some scholars (Chen & Wang, 2010; Cho & Lee, 2013; Wang & Durugbo, 2013). For example, Hsu and Lin (2006) presented a fuzzy multi-criteria approach to measure consumers' perceived risk of travelling. Benítez et al. (2007) analysed the quality of service of three hotels based on triangular fuzzy numbers.

Guy, Curtis and Crotts (1990) used this technique to interpret international traveller's learning of a new environment in order to understand their activities within destinations.

Walmsley and Jenkins (1992) also used it to analyse tourists' perceptions of an unfamiliar environment.

However, application as a management tool in tourism research is extremely limited (Xiang & Formica, 2007). Besides, managers lack ability in analysing all the relevant factors at the same time. Usually, they tend to evaluate the factors individually or two or three factors simultaneously at best.

Therefore, computerised support for assessing the value of relevant factors which affect purchase intention would greatly contribute toward success in social media.

In many cases, knowledge about a specific domain is uncertain as well as fuzzy, because most knowledge is expressed in different causal relationships between concepts or variables. Experts describe their understanding of the relationships among the defined key factors in order to build a cognitive map. Cognitive mapping is commonly considered best for problems where experts have diverse opinions about a correct answer.

The idea is to design a fuzzy logic model that efficiently describes the subjectivity in the purchase intention of several users with respect to the various factors with different weights

2.3 Early and late adopters

The speed of diffusion of a new technology depends not only on the characteristics of the IT itself, but also on the characteristics of the users to whom it is directed (Escobar & Romero, 2014; Kavak & Demirsoy, 2009; Teo et al., 2004). Thus, we will find individuals who adopt the new technology in the first phase, while others do so later (Roger, 1983). Early adopters are relatively quicker in adopting an IT innovation than other members of the same organisation (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). Early adopters play a very important role during the innovation process, as they transmit IT beliefs through the organisation. Therefore, the analysis of their behaviour with respect to the acceptance of new IT in order to distinguish between early and late adopters is still a very interesting research topic.

The Innovations Diffusion Theory (IDT) (Rogers, 1995), suggests that early adopters should have more positive perceptions of using IT innovations than late adopters. Nevertheless, it is important to develop a deeper theoretical understanding of how IT innovations are diffused and accepted (Carayannisa &

Turner, 2006) and how early adopters could be identified before the IT innovation process begins.

Therefore, it would be interesting to know the characteristics of potential users who make up each adopter category. Because of this, the research adopts a distinctive approach to analyse the determinants of purchase intention, by proposing and empirically testing an integrated model, with contributions from well-grounded theory, IDT (Rogers, 1995). IDT can be considered valuable and useful for explaining or predicting user acceptance of IT. IDT focuses on diffusion of innovations among individuals. Rogers (1983) identifies different adopter categories depending on how inclined an individual is to adopt new technologies as compared to other members of the social system on the basis of innovativeness. Innovation is the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively early in adopting new ideas compared to other members of a system. Therefore, adopter categories include early adopters and late adopters. This would facilitate the identification of individuals who are the first to try the new IT and could help to accelerate its diffusion process.

3. Fuzzy cognitive maps

We are not always able to express our opinions exactly. Many manners are only vague and uncertain. In order to model these situations more precisely, the modified set theory was developed. This concept is known as fuzzy set theory, proposed by Zadeh (1965). This technique has been applied in such diverse fields as medicine (Papageorgiou et al., 2008), engineering (Stylios & Groumpos, 2004), information systems and information technology (Lai et al., 2009), behavioural science (Carvalho, 2010), politics (Andreou et al., 2006), business and management (Wei et al., 2008), education (Pacheco et al., 2004) and other domains (Isaac et al., 2009).

The fuzzy cognitive maps (FCM) technique specifically describes a cognitive map model with two significant characteristics. First, casual relationships between nodes have different intensities, represented by fuzzy numbers. A fuzzy number is a quantity whose value is uncertain, rather than exact. It can be

thought of as a function whose domain is usually the interval between 0 and 1 (or -1 and 1) inclusively (Xirogiannis & Glykas, 2007). Each numerical value in the interval represents the degree of membership in a fuzzy set, where 0 is non-membership and 1 is full membership.

Second, the system is dynamic. The system involves feedback and a change in a concept node may affect other concept nodes, which in turn can impact the node initiating the change.

FCM have been successfully applied for structuring and supporting decisional processes (Kang, Lee & Choi, 2004). Furthermore, when seen as a whole, FCM provides mechanisms to develop forecasting scenarios, especially 'what-if' analysis (Grant & Osei-Bryson, 2005). Since the effect of each concept antecedent is independent from the effect of other concept antecedents, it is possible to remove or add concepts and links without having to change the rest of the system. This versatility in what concerns testing new scenarios represents one of the best qualities of FCM.

A FCM is a digraph composed of nodes and edges. The nodes (x_i) are the most relevant dynamic variables or factors describing a target real-world dynamic system. For any context, the nodes are a set of entities that are relevant to the domain of study.

Relationships between nodes are represented by directed edges (w_{ij}). An edge linking two nodes can model the influence of the causal variable on the effect variable (Xirogiannis & Glykas, 2004). Moreover, edges also indicate the type of connection, incorporating either a plus (+) or a minus (-) sign (Dickerson & Kosko, 1994).

A positive relationship between two factors means that an increase or decrease in a causal variable causes the effect variable(s) to change in the same direction. When the relationship is negative, the change in the effect is in the opposite direction.

To obtain the value of a concept, the value of each of its inputs (concepts) [0..1] or [-1..1] is multiplied by the respective weight [-1..1]; then the results are added and passed by a non-linear function used, among others, to limit the range of possible output values.

An adjacency matrix represents node connectivity. FCMs measure the intensity of the causal relation between two factors, if no causal relation exists, this is denoted by 0 in the adjacency matrix.

Usually it is accepted that causality is not self-reflexive, i.e. a concept cannot cause itself (Huff et al., 1990; Spirtes et al., 2000), which means that the weight matrix always has '0' in its diagonal. However, as one will see below, sometimes authors claim that causality is not self-reflexive but inadvertently end up using self-reflexive causality in their FCM. The final representation of a FCM is its mathematical formulation. The most frequent is the one originally proposed by Kosko:

$$\forall j \in \{1, \dots, n\}, C_j(t + 1) = f \left(\sum_{\substack{i=1 \\ i \neq j}}^n w_{ij} x C_i(t) \right), (1)$$

where n is the number of concepts, $C_j(t)$ is the value of concept j in instant t, w_{ij} is the weight between concepts i and j, and finally f is a non-linear function that limits the range of possible values for a concept. The most common non-linear functions are step functions for bivalent or trivalent concepts, and the sigmoid (or logistic function) in the more interesting case of continuous concepts:

$$f(x) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-kx}}$$

where k controls the speed of saturation of a concept. Note that the restriction $i \neq j$ is only used when self-causation is assumed as impossible. An alternative approach has been introduced (Stylios et al., 1999), claiming to

‘introduce some kind of memory effect’ to concepts in FCM and has become increasingly popular, although, as discussed in Section 4, it completely alters the semantics of the original FCM:

$$\forall j \in \{1, \dots, n\}, C_j(t+1) = f\left(\sum_{\substack{i=1 \\ i \neq j}}^n w_{ij} x C_i(t)\right)$$

If one considers a matrix of concepts $C \in R^{1 \times n}$ and a matrix of weights $CW \in R^{n \times n}$, then FCM inference can be expressed as the following product of the two matrices:

$$c^{t+1} = f(c^t x W)$$

$$[C_1 \dots C_n]^{t+1} = f\left([C_1 \dots C_n]^t x \begin{bmatrix} 0 & \dots & W_{1n} \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ W_{n1} & \dots & 0 \end{bmatrix}\right)$$

4. Methodology

To develop a FCM for predicting the effect of each adopter category on purchase intention for touristic products, we carry out to the following steps.

4.1 STEP 1: Selecting the experts

The main selection criteria were profound knowledge and experience of experts in social commerce in the tourism sector. All experts had more than five years of experience in social commerce in the tourism sector. In order to build an accurate FCM which faithfully represents the intention to purchase touristic products or services in the context of social media, we formed a heterogeneous panel. A heterogeneous group is understood to be a group of people with the same knowledge but on a different social or professional scale, which describes our expert panel. Besides, the experts were not chosen just because they were easily accessible. All conditions were respected. All expert opinions were considered to be of the same importance.

Regarding to the number of experts, it is quite difficult to establish and there are no studies that have been conclusive with respect to this number (Cho et al., 2002). The optimal panel size depends on the characteristics of the research itself. However, a number of experts between 10 and 20 seems to be a good group size (Clayton, 1997; Okoli & Pawlowski, 2004).

In our study, the panel of experts comprised of 20 experts in social commerce in the tourism sector.

4.2 STEP 2: Identifying preliminary nodes

We began with a thorough review of the literature on tourism technological development, purchase intention, social media, marketing strategy and travel motivation. The purpose of this stage is to identify the main factors that have an influence on the intention to purchase touristic products or services in the context of social media.

Different characteristic factors (55) were identified from the literature review. However, not all of them could affect purchase intention and not all the factors can be applied to the context of social media. Besides, we found that some studies identified the same or similar factors. Accordingly, we carefully analysed and removed duplicates and eliminated any factors that did not impact. Finally, we found 15 factors, which are the nodes of the study.

Given the absence of research on purchase intention in social media, it is possible that relevant preliminary nodes were not identified during the critical literature review.

After the review of the literature was completed, we conducted a pilot study with three social commerce experts to understand the implications of the study. The different factors were revised according to their appropriateness based on the experts' opinions and experiences.

After gathering and analysing the data, we carried out interviews with the experts on our panel in order to investigate the issue. They were consulted

through email and personal interaction to obtain results and develop relevant FCMs. Each expert individually created a FCM. For this purpose, we firstly showed them the lists of factors which have already been demonstrated by the literature as having an influence on purchase intention. The list did not influence the expert's opinion because they could add further elements that were not included in the preliminary lists based on the literature. Even so, they could not use them. Besides, some experts added 4 further nodes to the study. Then, the final FCM consists of 19 nodes of which 11 referred to perceptions of social media and its use nodes (P) and 8 represent user characteristics nodes (C). Table 1 summarises the nodes and indicates where each was identified. As expected, the previous literature did not include all of the nodes.

Table 1
FCM Nodes

ID	NODES	
P1	PURCHASE INTENTION	LR
P2	TRUST	LR
P3	PERCEIVED VALUE	LR
P4	REPUTATION	LR
P5	INFORMATION QUALITY	LR
P6	PERCEIVED SECURITY	LR
P7	WORD-OF-MOUTH REFERRALS	LR
P8	PERCEIVED PRIVACY	LR
P9	ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY	P
P10	TIME SAVING	LR
P11	ENGAGEMENT	P
C1	CULTURE	LR
C2	HABIT	LR
C3	PERSONAL INNOVATIVENESS	LR
C4	PERCEIVED DIFFICULTY OF USE	LR
C5	HEDONIC MOTIVATION	LR
C6	SOCIAL INFLUENCE	P
C7	LACK OF PURCHASE EXPERIENCE	P
C8	CLOSENESS	LR

LR: Literature review P: Panel experts

4.3 STEP 3: Building the FCMs

FCMs are normally built by experts who have experience and sound knowledge in this regard. They offer specific knowledge in designing the FCM model (nodes, intensity and signs of the edges).

Furthermore, the FCM contains 33 edges, represented by the 19 x 19 adjacency augmented matrix and are shown in Table 2. The first column and row show the causal and effect nodes, respectively. The cells indicate the influence of one variable on another. Not all of the relationships between them are positive. This means that values would change in different directions. However, the majority of connections are positive. This means that values would change in the same direction.

The adjacency matrix shows that the enhancement of some factors causes an effect on other factors and the importance of social media in purchase intention in the tourism sector. The size of each causal effect is normalised to show unit variances.

All standardised effects range from -0.75 to 1.00 . The lowest and highest causal effects are found in the path from perceived difficulty of use to hedonic motivation and from information quality to trust.

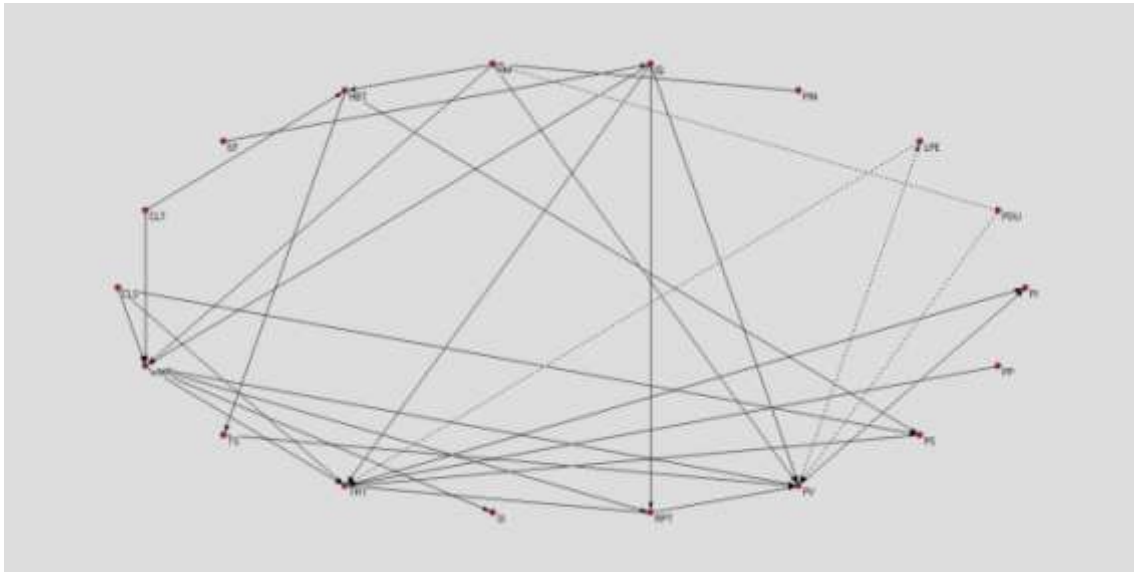
Table 2
Adjacency augmented matrix

ID	CLS	CLT	EF	HBT	HM	IQ	PIN	LPE	PDU	PI	PP	PS	PV	RPT	SI	TRT	TS	WMR	ENG
CLS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.62	0.00	0.98	0.00
CLT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.83	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.00
EF	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
HBT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.75	0.00	0.00
HM	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.69	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.88	0.00
IQ	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.96	0.93	0.00	1.00	0.00	0.50	0.90
PIN	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
LPE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.10	0.00	0.00	-0.32	0.00	0.00	0.00
PDU	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.75	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
PI	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
PP	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
PS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.00	0.00
PV	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.76	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
RPT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.95	0.00	0.00	0.86	0.00	0.00	0.00
SI	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.95	0.00
TRT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TS	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
WMR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.50	0.98	0.75	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.00
ENG	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Each cell shows one fuzzy weight (ω_{ij}). This represents the intensity of the relationships between two nodes (i and j).

Lastly, we also include the graphical representation of the final FCM shown in Figure 1, although it is not clear due to the large number of elements and relationships that compose it.

Fig. 1. Relationships between the nodes in the FCM



The FCM model represents the factors which affect the intention to purchase touristic products in the context of social media and the existing connections between them. Furthermore, this tool allows us to predict the impact of the characteristics of the users to whom Facebook is directed on the purchase intention for tourist products.

To understand the dimension of purchase intention, we used Pearson's correlation coefficient. The correlation is used to understand the 'net strength' of the relationship between two continuous variables.

Pearson's correlation coefficient measures the correlation between variables on a scale from -1.00 to $+1.00$. When the value is close to 0, it represents close to low or absolutely no correlation between variables. According to Dancey and Reidy (2007), a correlation coefficient of 1 is perfect, whereas a correlation falling between 0.7 and 0.9 is strong, 0.4–0.6 is moderate and 0.1–0.3 is weak. A correlation coefficient can be either positive or negative, depending on the direction of the correlation between variables. A negative correlation coefficient shows an inverse correlation between two variables. Correlational methods used in previous studies mainly include Pearson correlations.

The direct-relation matrix which is known as the adjacency matrix. The results for the criteria are presented in Table 2.

4.4 STEP 4: Validation

The process of validation is essential in the modelling of complex systems. This provides insights on the degree to which it represents the relevant aspects of the problem studied.

Designers should validate the model in two distinct moments (Cobelli & Carson, 2008). On the one hand, the validation process should be embedded in the process of model building. This requires the active collaboration of the experts participating in the model process. On the other hand, the validation process should also be performed once the model building is finished. To do so, designers can compare the model output with the real system data.

There is no widely accepted strategy or method by the scientific community for validating model building. The suitability of the strategy selected depends on the availability of data on the phenomena (Kleijien, 1999), the real system and model purpose (Pala et al., 1999). However, the validation of FCMs is complex and often, even impossible. This is due to the fact that FCMs are qualitative models that do not yield outputs directly measurable in the real world (Özesmi & Özesmi, 2004).

Finally, we verified the operational validity of building the FCM. For this purpose, we only consulted experts in social commerce in the tourism sector, as they really know the potential users. In general, these experts describe the FCM created as a useful and applicable tool in social commerce.

5. Discussion

This paper intends to propose a better knowledge of the determinants of purchase intention and the relationships between them to improve hotel's strategies in social media. Furthermore, the research tries to show how these relationships can be different depending on the types of users. FCM is used to

identify relationships of dependence among the different determinants of purchase intention.

The technique is used to construct a NRM (network relation map) that shows the different relationships in the model proposed by experts. The results not only indicate the influential priorities and the most important sequences of dimensions and criteria but also demonstrate the relationships between those criteria.

5.1 Clarifying the interrelations between factors

The results obtained support the different theories and show that perceived value (0.76) and trust (0.80) are the factors that have a direct influence on purchase intention. In other words, experts believe that these factors are the ones that directly affect purchase intention.

According to the experts, it can be found that information quality (0.96) is the factor that most affects perceived value directly. Besides, reputation (0.95) and time saving (0.90) can improve the perceived value. Also, word-of-mouth referrals (0.50) and hedonic motivation (0.50) have been found to be factors which could affect perceived value positively. On the other hand, the lack of purchase experience (-0.10) and the perceived difficulty of social media's use (-0.75) affect perceived value negatively.

When considering trust, the panel experts regard information quality first (1.00), which can then produce a direct influential effect on the remaining factors: reputation (0.93), engagement (0.90) and word-of-mouth referrals (0.50). Moreover, word-of-mouth referrals (0.90), reputation (0.86), perceived security (0.68), closeness (0.62) and perceived privacy (0.62) are positively related to trust. On the other hand, a lack of purchase experience (-0.32) is negatively related to trust.

Perceived security can be affected by closeness (1.00) and habit (0.50). Reputation can be affected by word-of-mouth referrals (0.98), information quality (0.93) and engagement (0.90). Word-of-mouth referrals can be affected

by closeness (0.98), social influence (0.95), hedonic motivation (0.88), information quality (0.50) and culture (0.30).

Table 3

Results - Balanced matrix

ID	NODES	
P1	PURCHASE INTENTION	0.811
P2	TRUST	0.951
P3	PERCEIVED VALUE	0.913
P4	REPUTATION	0.895
P5	INFORMATION QUALITY	0.739
P6	PERCEIVED SECURITY	0.697
P7	WORD-OF-MOUTH REFERRALS	0.883
P8	PERCEIVED PRIVACY	0.500
P9	ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY	0.500
P10	TIME SAVING	0.623
P11	ENGAGEMENT	0.660
C1	CULTURE	0.500
C2	HABIT	0.672
C3	PERSONAL INNOVATIVENESS	0.500
C4	PERCEIVED DIFFICULTY OF USE	0.500
C5	HEDONIC MOTIVATION	0.444
C6	SOCIAL INFLUENCE	0.659
C7	LACK OF PURCHASE EXPERIENCE	0.500
C8	CLOSENESS	0.500

Table 3 indicates the values of the balanced matrix. The purchase intention has an average of 0.811, with 1 as the desired level. The average gap, indicating room for improvement is 0.188 (this is the distance from 1).

Trust has the highest gap value (0.951). This indicates that trust does not need to be improved as much. In the opposite case, hedonic motivation has the lowest value (0.444). This means that it should be the first priority for improvement if managers attempt to achieve the desired level.

To sum up, the results reflect the current challenges for hotel's tourism development: how to overcome the lack of trust and perceived value for travellers.

For the decision-makers, this solution is not only intelligent but also makes it easy to identify improvement priorities from among the complex criteria.

5.2 Scenarios: Early and late adopters

In order to perform this analysis, it is necessary to create 'what-if' scenarios and to simulate them separately.

We designed two scenarios to study how strongly and weakly controllable the innovativeness influence is on purchase intention for touristic products on social media.

Adopter categories are the classifications of the members of a social system on the basis of innovativeness, the degree to which an individual or other unit of adoption is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than other members of a system. The purchase intention in social commerce depends on the degree of innovation. The speed of innovation process is not always the same. The diffusion of an IT innovation develops through time as a factor of potential users, in such a way that potential users will accept it at different moments in time. Thus, we will find individuals who adopt the new technology in the first phase, while others do so later (Rogers, 1983). In order for the diffusion process of an IT innovation to take place, it is necessary that this innovation is adopted by a series of individuals who are what has come to be known as early adopters. With this in mind, we define the value of each node in each initial state vector for each simulated scenario. In Scenario 1, we present early adopters who are open to change. They seek out and embrace innovations, are venturesome and are unafraid of risks. In Scenario 2, we simulate the opposite case, late adopters who are afraid of risks.

In order to create these scenarios, we have classified the nodes that have an influence on purchase intention into two types. The first type are nodes which

are directly related to the characteristics of social media and their use. These nodes are trust, perceived value, reputation, information quality, perceived security, word-of-mouth-referrals, perceived privacy, economic feasibility and time saving. The second type of nodes are the characteristics of social media users. These nodes are culture, habit, personal innovativeness, perceived difficulty of use, hedonic motivation, closeness, lack of purchase experience and social influence. The characteristics of social media and their use as perceived by the members of a social system determine its rate of adoption to purchase touristic products or services.

We simulate both scenarios changing all the users' characteristics (culture, habit, personal innovativeness, perceived difficulty of use, hedonic motivation, social influence, lack of purchase experience and closeness) and their value depends on the type of adopter.

The values of the nodes in the initial state vectors are illustrated in Table 4. In this simulation, we want to know how the acceptance of innovations in social commerce affects purchase intention. For this reason, we create two scenarios. First, Scenario 1 represents an early adopter in which we compute C1, C2, C3, C5, C6 and C7 with a value of 1 and C4 and C8 with the value 0. However, Scenario 2 represents the opposite case. In this simulation, we seek to assess the influence on purchase intention of late adopters. In order to achieve this, we compute C1, C2, C3, C5, C6 and C8 with a value of 0 and C4 and C7 with the value 1. It means that the results express how a change on the degree of innovation of a user affects purchase intention for touristic products or services and the different factors which have an influence on the purchase intention through social media.

Table 4 shows that there are important differences in most of the nodes between the scenarios. For instance, the results show that early adopters perceive higher trust, perceived value, perceived security, time saving than late adopters. However, there are also some nodes that do not change.

Besides, Table 4 shows that the balance for early adopters has a higher value on purchase intention, trust, perceived value, reputation, perceived security, word-of-mouth referrals, social influence and time saving.

In addition, as shown in Table 4, the room for improvement is higher in most of the nodes of a late adopter. This indicates that the managers must take actions to improve these nodes (purchase intention, trust, perceived value, reputation, perceived security, word-of-mouth referrals, social influence and time saving) for late adopters.

Table 4
Simulations' results

ID	NODES	Scenario 1 Results		Scenario 2 Results	
		1	simulation 1	2	simulation 2
P1	PURCHASE INTENTION	0	0.819	0	0.791
P2	TRUST	0	0.973	0	0.889
P3	PERCEIVED VALUE	0	0.959	0	0.806
P4	REPUTATION	0	0.903	0	0.865
P5	INFORMATION QUALITY	0	0.739	0	0.739
P6	PERCEIVED SECURITY	0	0.817	0	0.500
P7	WORD-OF-MOUTH REFERRALS	0	0.969	0	0.591
P8	PERCEIVED PRIVACY	0	0.500	0	0.500
P9	ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY	0	0.500	0	0.500
P10	TIME SAVING	0	0.679	0	0.500
P11	ENGAGEMENT	0	0.660	0	0.660
C1	CULTURE	1	1.000	0	0.000
C2	HABIT	1	1.000	0	0.000
C3	PERSONAL INNOVATIVENESS	1	1.000	0	0.000
C4	PERCEIVED DIFFICULTY OF USE	0	0.000	1	1.000
C5	HEDONIC MOTIVATION	1	1.000	0	0.000
C6	SOCIAL INFLUENCE	1	1.000	0	0.000
C7	LACK OF PURCHASE EXPERIENCE	0	0.000	1	1.000
C8	CLOSENESS	1	1.000	0	0.000

Considering the scenarios effects, the differences among the nodes of the model are shown in Table 5. Table 5 shows how purchase intention and its determinants are affected by the degree of innovation of a social media user and its degree of intensity.

Although most of the nodes suffer strong changes, we found the highest difference between early and late adopters in word-of-mouth referrals and perceived security. This means that when the user is an early adopter, the perceived security and the word-of-mouth referrals is higher and obviously the purchase intention is higher.

In the opposite case, purchase intention, reputation and trust are the nodes which are less affected by a change in the user's characteristics. In other words, these nodes are highly affected by the degree of innovation of a user but less than the others.

However, this model shows that there are also some nodes which are not affected by the degree of user innovativeness. These nodes are economic feasibility, information quality, perceived privacy and engagement. In other words, they have the same weight for early or late adopters, as they do not depend on the user.

Table 5

Differences between scenarios

	Early - Late adopter
PURCHASE INTENTION	0.028
PERCEIVED SECURITY	0.317
PERCEIVED VALUE	0.152
REPUTATION	0.037
TRUST	0.083
TIME SAVING	0.179
WORD-OF-MOUTH REFERRALS	0.378

6. Conclusions, limitations and future works

6.1 Theoretical and managerial implications

This research attempts to create a model which identifies the relations among the different constructs linked to the intention to purchase a touristic product or service in the context of social commerce in the tourism sector through the point of view of experts in social commerce. The fuzzy

method was used by experts to address dependent relationships in the proposed model. In addition to the theoretical contribution, the research model suggests that there are important practical implications in terms of developing an understanding of how managers can improve purchase intention through social media communication according to IT adopters.

The results of this study reveal an advance in research on purchase intention in the context of social commerce in the tourism sector. The main contribution of the study is a simulation model that is adapted to the different types of IT adopters (early and late adopter). It provides the existing literature with the relationships between purchase intention and the different factors which affect it in social commerce depending on user characteristics. Because of the strong differences between early and late adopters in purchase intention and some of the determinants found in this study, social media managers must recognise the importance of it when developing marketing strategies on social media. Thus, the findings can be made more effective if the measures taken by managers are adapted to both types of users. This is a topic that has not been researched in this context by academics in the past. This paper represents a step forward in research on IT adopters.

Moreover, the findings of this study confirm that some effective marketing social media strategies on engagement, information quality or economic feasibility, could be key determinants of purchase intention. With regard to the FCM analysis, different factors have an effect on tourists' purchase intention. However, these strategies are not affected by the different type of adopters. This means that managers do not have to adapt these strategies, as they can offer common ways for both user types.

Most importantly, this study offers several contributions related to marketing strategy and travel motivation in the development of destination strategies for the tourism industry, as it demonstrates the most important factors where managers have room for improvement, for example perceived privacy, lack of purchase experience, economic feasibility or engagement.

In the travel decision-making process on social media, tourists often consider multiple objectives and criteria before the purchase (trust, perceived value, information quality, reputation...). Thus, tourism managers should understand and identify these core attributes of tourists and conduct a more conscientious and careful analysis of those critical factors to attract tourists.

In addition to the theoretical contribution, this research suggests important practical implications and develops an understanding of how to improve social media in the tourism industry. Early adopters play a very important role in the marketing strategies, as they have a positive influence on purchase intention and on the different factors which affect purchase intention, but the room for improvement in purchase intention is higher for late adopters. So, they should be the first priority for improvement if managers attempt to achieve the desired level. Therefore, it is quite important that tourism managers understand this before deciding their marketing actions.

Furthermore, although the rapid economic development in many countries has brought many opportunities to promote and grow the tourism market, it has also increased competition worldwide and increased the challenges associated with such competition. Many studies have shown different factors which could have an impact on purchase intention from the point of view of social media users. However, this study employed an integrated framework that utilised diverse expert experience and managerial knowledge regarding the importance of social media in the tourism industry.

Finally, this study has analysed the relationships and weights of the factors that affect purchase intention; based on FCM results, the study has confirmed the different theories that the literature suggested. We found that trust and perceived value are the only ones that directly affect purchase intention. Thus, based on limited resources and time, managers should carefully consider every aspect of purchase intention during promotions and implement communication strategies to attract more tourists.

6.2 Limitations and future works

Although the study made specific contributions to the field, it also has several limitations that restrict the extent to which the findings can be generalised. First, although the sample size was representative, it only consisted of Spanish experts. In future research, the sample could be extended and increased to cover more expert contexts in different cultures. Secondly, one must consider the subjectivity of the weight and impact of one's factor influence over others. These measurements and calculations of the criteria take into account only the expert opinions. Third, the simulation of scenarios demonstrated applicability and usability of the proposed tool, this being the aim of the present paper. However, other scenarios could have been simulated. We invite researchers and practitioners to propose further possible scenarios.

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CAPÍTULO 4

CONCLUSIONES Y FUTURAS LÍNEAS DE INVESTIGACIÓN

1. Conclusiones

Las conclusiones que se presentan en esta investigación han sido elaboradas a partir de los objetivos propuestos inicialmente en este trabajo. En concreto, el objetivo general planteado ha sido analizar el éxito de los procesos de implantación de las redes sociales en el sector turístico así como los factores que condicionan su influencia en la intención de compra de productos turísticos. Además, se han propuesto tres objetivos específicos para el desarrollo de este trabajo.

De acuerdo con el primer objetivo específico, evaluar los factores críticos para conseguir una implementación exitosa de las redes sociales en las empresas turísticas, las principales conclusiones obtenidas en este estudio han sido las siguientes:

- Contribuimos a la literatura al destacar el papel estratégico que las redes sociales (concretamente Facebook) han jugado en las empresas turísticas, ya que son fundamentales para las estrategias de marketing al permitir crear un vínculo entre la compañía y los clientes actuales y potenciales.
- El estudio muestra por orden de importancia las variables que más han conducido a la empresa al éxito en la implementación de Facebook y aquellas variables que todavía son susceptibles de mejorar. Estas variables son adaptabilidad y flexibilidad, compromiso y apoyo, comunicación y cooperación, continuo aprendizaje y mejora, motivación y recompensa, el personal adecuado, pragmatismo y estrategias formales.
- La aplicación del nuevo sistema de comunicación que las redes sociales aportan, implica llevar a cabo un proceso planificado con una serie de actividades asociadas a las diferentes etapas de la transición, así como invertir una cantidad significativa de recursos, todos con el liderazgo apropiado.

- La adopción de Facebook en la compañía ha sido exitosa, no solamente por el elevado número de seguidores y su compromiso sino también por los cambios producidos en la empresa. Este éxito se ha debido principalmente a la alta adaptabilidad y flexibilidad, el gran compromiso y apoyo de toda la empresa, así como el continuo aprendizaje y apoyo.
- Todavía existen algunos factores calificados como mejorables en los que la empresa debe concentrar sus energías para aprovechar al máximo las oportunidades y hacer frente a las amenazas de la mejor manera posible.

En resumen, en referencia con el primer objetivo planteado en este estudio, se ha podido identificar cuáles han sido los diferentes factores que han ayudado a la adopción exitosa de Facebook en la compañía analizada.

Sin embargo, a pesar de la adopción exitosa de la herramienta en la compañía, hay que destacar una falta de conocimiento del valor estratégico de los medios sociales en un nivel superior de gestión. Por ello, destacamos la necesidad de llevar a cabo campañas de sensibilización para educar a aquellos departamentos que todavía tienen diferentes puntos de vista sobre la importancia de esta herramienta para las empresas hoteleras.

Además, destacamos que los cambios organizacionales producidos por la adopción de Facebook no se han producido por elección consciente. Por ello, la compañía debería de integrar Facebook dentro de su política comercial.

Por último, los resultados sugieren que la falta de formalización y la sinergia entre las culturas organizacionales e iniciativas de Facebook pueden poner en peligro el éxito de la empresa.

Respecto al segundo objetivo específico planteado, éste ha sido desarrollar un modelo que permita identificar las relaciones existentes entre los constructos vinculados a la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico a partir de la información obtenida de Facebook para evidenciar las

diferencias existentes entre distintos perfiles de la población. Las principales conclusiones obtenidas han sido las siguientes:

- El modelo obtenido puede ser utilizado para predecir la intención de compra de los usuarios en el contexto de las redes sociales ya que muestra los principales predictores de la intención de compra en este contexto.
- Esta investigación extiende el uso de los efectos moderadores de la edad, género y estado civil, en la formación de la intención de compra para identificar grupos más homogéneos de usuarios en el contexto de redes sociales.
- Los principales predictores de la intención de compra en el contexto de las redes sociales son, por orden de importancia, el valor percibido y la confianza percibida. Aunque esta jerarquía no varía en función de los diferentes perfiles de la población, su intensidad es diferente.
- El modelo propuesto confirma las hipótesis sobre los antecedentes de la confianza percibida, extrapoliéndolas al contexto de las redes sociales. Además, sugiere que, dependiendo de las características del consumidor, los principales predictores de la confianza percibida pueden cambiar.
- De manera similar, este estudio también indica que la confianza percibida está positivamente relacionada con el valor percibido. Esto demuestra la importancia de tener en cuenta el factor de valor percibido al analizar la confianza percibida por los usuarios de Facebook para comprar un producto o servicio turístico

Esta investigación también presenta implicaciones prácticas que podrían ser relevantes para los profesionales y los gerentes de empresas turísticas que

diseñan herramientas y planes para mejorar sus estrategias de marketing a través de las redes sociales.

De acuerdo con el segundo objetivo específico, los resultados de la investigación permiten identificar los factores críticos que influyen en la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico a partir de la información obtenida de Facebook, tales como la confianza percibida y el valor percibido. El conocimiento de los antecedentes de la intención de compra, puede ayudar a los directivos y gerentes a tomar acciones para aumentar estas percepciones y lograr el comportamiento deseado de los consumidores.

Con respecto a la influencia que las características de los usuarios pueden tener en la intención de compra, los hallazgos de este trabajo presentan la importancia de la segmentación de los usuarios en los medios de comunicación como Facebook. Tanto es así que los hombres casados y más mayores identifican la confiabilidad como una variable que influye mucho en la confianza frente a las mujeres, solteras y jóvenes. Sin embargo, éstas últimas identifican la disposición a la confianza como un factor más importante para la confianza frente a otro tipo de usuarios, es decir, la disposición a la confianza es un factor importante a la hora de comprar un producto o servicio turístico para este perfil de usuario.

Por último, y teniendo en cuenta el análisis de las conclusiones obtenidas del segundo objetivo, existe una diferencia significativa entre la edad, género y estado civil de los diferentes usuarios. Por lo tanto, los hallazgos de la investigación conducen a reflexionar acerca de la importancia de adaptar las estrategias de marketing de las redes sociales a los diferentes tipos de usuarios para crear un marketing diferente o único para cada tipo de usuario.

En relación con el tercer y último objetivo específico, examinar cómo influye el grado de innovación de los adoptantes de estas nuevas tecnologías en un mismo conjunto de variables vinculadas con la intención de compra de un producto o servicio turístico con el fin de conseguir un mayor entendimiento de la decisión de compra final, destacamos las siguientes conclusiones:

- El modelo propuesto por los expertos confirma las hipótesis sobre los antecedentes de la intención de compra y sus relaciones, extrapolándolas al contexto de las redes sociales, concretamente Facebook. Por lo tanto, la confianza y el valor percibido son los dos únicos factores que influyen directamente en la intención de compra.
- Los resultados del estudio también nos muestran cuáles son los factores más importantes en los que existe un mayor margen de actuación, como la privacidad percibida, la falta de experiencia de compra, las ofertas disponibles y la falta de experiencia de compra. Los responsables de las redes sociales en los hoteles deben llevar a cabo acciones centradas en mejorar estos factores.
- Las diferencias existentes encontradas entre los usuarios que adoptan las tecnologías temprano y aquellos tardíos para un mismo conjunto de variables vinculadas con la intención de compra, pone de manifiesto la necesidad de llevar a cabo acciones enfocadas a cada tipo de usuario.
- Los administradores de redes sociales en los hoteles deben reconocer la importancia de las diferencias entre un adoptante temprano y otro tardío para el desarrollo de estrategias de marketing en las redes sociales
- El estudio sugiere implicaciones prácticas importantes para que los administradores de las redes sociales conozcan cómo mejorar la intención de compra a través de la comunicación de medios sociales de acuerdo con los adoptantes de las nuevas tecnologías.
- De forma resumida podemos decir que las principales diferencias entre un adoptante temprano y uno tardío son las siguientes:
 - ▶ Los adoptantes tempranos tienen una actitud positiva hacia la compra.
 - ▶ Los adoptantes tempranos perciben una mayor seguridad al utilizar Facebook.

- ▶ Los adoptantes tempranos perciben una mayor utilidad al utilizar Facebook.
- ▶ Los adoptantes tempranos tienen una percepción de más confianza hacia Facebook.
- ▶ Los adoptantes tempranos perciben un mayor ahorro de tiempo al utilizar Facebook.
- ▶ Los adoptantes tempranos tienden más a utilizar el boca a boca por el uso de Facebook.
- ▶ Los adoptantes tempranos perciben una mayor reputación

Por lo tanto, de acuerdo con el tercer y último objetivo específico planteado, hemos identificado diferencias fuertes en la intención de compra y sus antecedentes, entre los usuarios que adoptan las nuevas tecnologías de forma temprana y de forma tardía. Dichas diferencias se observan en la intención de compra, seguridad percibida, valor percibido, confianza, ahorro de tiempo, boca a boca y reputación.

En resumen, si tenemos en cuenta las principales conclusiones obtenidas y del resultado general de este estudio, podríamos concluir que esta investigación ha sabido responder al objetivo general planteado inicialmente que ha sido contribuir al conocimiento general del uso que las empresas turísticas están haciendo de las redes sociales así como las implicaciones que pueden tener para sus clientes en la decisión de compra, concretamente en el proceso de búsqueda de información, reserva y compra de productos o servicios turísticos a través de esta red.

2. Futuras líneas de investigación

Con la finalidad de poder extender el modelo propuesto, futuras líneas de investigación podrían llevarse a cabo en el sector turístico.

En primer lugar, se podría ampliar el alcance de este trabajo a un entorno internacionalidad para poder establecer líneas de comparación. Además, si

aumentásemos la muestra de la investigación, podríamos generalizar los hallazgos encontrados.

También, se podría ampliar la muestra, incluyendo en ella más contextos, no solamente en diferentes países si no también en diferentes culturas para analizar cómo difiere la intención de compra dependiendo de la cultura del usuario de las redes sociales.

Para finalizar, dado las diferencias encontradas entre diferentes segmentos de población, se podría continuar con esta misma línea investigación pero utilizando diferentes variables de segmentación de usuarios que nos permitan analizar la influencia de otras variables moderadoras en la intención de compra. En concreto, sería interesante no solamente segmentar la muestra por género, edad, estado civil y la innovación del usuario, sino que también se podría añadir variables de segmentación tales como la experiencia del usuario con internet y las compras en línea o las diferencias nacionales entre los usuarios de las redes sociales. Además, las mismas variables podrían medirse en el tiempo para captar la dinámica del modelo de investigación.