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# A STUDY ON TRAVEL INFORMATION ADOPTION INTENTION IN THE ONLINE SOCIAL COMMUNITY: THE PERSPECTIVES OF CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND INFORMATION ADOPTION MODEL

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## Abstract

*With the popularity of the online social community, people have become accustomed to sharing their travel experiences online. Internet users can read about others' experiences, view tour photos, and gather information from other users during their leisure time or before travelling abroad. This study based on the information adoption theory and the concept of experience marketing; additionally, the moderating effects of consumption point on association among customer experiences, information usefulness, and information adoption intentions has been investigated. An Internet survey was conducted for data collection, and 492 returned responses were analyzed. The findings show that customer experience and information usefulness increase Internet users' information adoption intentions and that the quality and credibility of Internet tourism information have a positive effect on customer experience and information usefulness. Content vividness was linked to an improved user experience. Consumption point influences the relationship between information usefulness and information adoption intentions, but it does not affect the relationship between customer experience and information adoption intention.*

*Keywords: Travel Information Adoption Intention, Customer Experience, Information Usefulness, Information Credibility, Vividness, Consumption Point*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Based on a 2011 Taiwanese Tourism Survey published by the Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications, 56% of the respondents indicated that they acquired their tourism information from the Internet and electronic media (Ministry of Transportation and Communications, 2012). Internet users frequently engage in exchange over travel experiences on tourism blogs and social communities; such exchanges help others select tourist attractions for their travel itineraries, and they entertain. Internet users can imagine themselves following a blogger's journey through mountains, along seashores, and in local cuisines; additionally, they can learn about various customs and cultures through vivid descriptions and beautiful photos published in people's blogs. Online exchanges offer recreational effects and relief from accumulated weekday pressures.

When searching for information in travel blogs or social tourism communities, Internet users usually judge information credibility and usefulness based on bloggers' personal travelling experiences or historical material cited in social community forums. While browsing articles that describe the sights, sounds, and impressions of travellers' experiences, especially in diverse cultures and foreign countries, readers often become motivated to travel to the same destinations. Customer experience is an important determinant of behavioral intention in e-retailing (Rose et al., 2012; Sheng and Teo, 2012). Users could choose to visit a travel blog, which provides reliable, understandable, novel, and interesting content and then plan a travel (Chen et al, 2014). Therefore, further interest is generated in information associated with these specific tourist destinations.

Lead-time before travelling abroad can affect information collection, evaluation of content, and decisions regarding information adoption. With sufficient lead-time before travelling abroad, travellers may browse the Internet to learn about other people's experiences (e.g. through bloggers' travel journals). They can view sample itineraries to select potential tourist destinations. As the time to travel abroad approaches, travellers will filter tourism information to research intended destinations; then, they may arrange their own itineraries based on information obtained from their searches.

The increased influence of tourism blogs and travel-related communities has become evident from the volume of online traffic to these sites. However, the true value of experiential travel information in facilitating users' travel plans is not well understood. Therefore, this study aims to assess various elements regarding tourism-related information that can be adopted by users in planning their own itineraries. Ayeh and Law (2013) investigated users' adoption intention towards information in blogs for travel planning based on TAM model. This study would like to explore this issue not only from the utilitarian view but also from the hedonic view. Based on the information adoption model, the methodology used in this study included an evaluation of the relationship between the credibility, quality, and usefulness of online information and information adoption intentions. Because tourism-related information on blogs and communities has become increasingly diverse, people tend to share detailed travel experiences and photos, thereby offering their audience a sense of immersion. Hence, this study has included the concept of experience marketing to assess the influences of information vividness and customer experience on information adoption intentions. An assumption is that many readers do not have definite travel plans when browsing; therefore, their online activities may be undertaken to relieve pressures or exercise their imaginations. An underlying interest associated with this study was the relationship between browsing purposes and judgements regarding information content. Therefore, the research questions for this study are as follows:

1. When Internet users are browsing tourism information, will information usefulness and customer experience affect information adoption intentions?
2. When Internet users are browsing tourism information, will consumption time affect the relationships between customer experience, information usefulness, and information adoption intentions?

3. When Internet users are browsing tourism-related information, what factors will have an impact on information usefulness and customer experience?

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH MODEL**

### **2.1 Information adoption model**

Sussman and Siegal (2003) introduced their information adoption model to assess users' intentions to adopt information based on perceived information usefulness. When they feel that information is valuable or helpful, users are more willing to adopt it. Information usefulness is determined by information quality and source credibility. Information adoption intention refers to that users intend to utilize specific information purposely (Sussman and Siegal, 2003). Cheung et al. (2008) expanded the model by Sussman and Siegal by addressing other factors affecting customers' use of Internet reviews and purchasing decisions. The extended model by Cheung et al. (2008) includes the concepts of information quality and source credibility, suggesting that information quality can be evaluated by the relevance, timeliness, accuracy, and comprehensiveness of information, while source credibility can be measured by source expertise and trustworthiness. Source expertise indicates that the source of the information is knowledgeable, and source credibility is a reference to authenticity.

In this research, the model was built on information credibility instead of source credibility. When browsing information, readers often do not really know or recognize the author of an article; therefore, they are unable to identify his/her level of expertise regarding the subject. Although some social forums have provided scoring systems to monitor author credibility, source credibility has not been verified to large extent. Therefore, a premise of this study is that an author's professionalism can be determined by the content of his/her articles.

When entering blogs or forums to browse information about backpacking, for example, users will evaluate the information content of articles during the scanning process; typically, they are interested in the publication date of the article and updated information reflecting environmental changes, etc. Therefore, this study proposes that if the information is comprehensive and the article is current given environmental conditions of the intended destination, it will be perceived as containing a high level of quality information. When entering blogs or forum platforms to collect information, users generally use certain external signals to judge the credibility of articles; these may include, for example, the number of published articles by the author or forum credits. Thus, this study infers that when information sources are more reliable and credible, information usefulness is enhanced. Based on the information adoption model, greater perceptions of information usefulness lead to greater information adoption intentions (Sussman and Siegal, 2003). When users think that browsed information is useful for planning cost-efficient routes and points of interest for backpacking itineraries, for example, the intent to adopt information from the article will increase. Hence, we propose:

**H1: Information usefulness can affect information adoption intentions positively.**

**H2: Information quality can affect information usefulness positively.**

**H3: Information credibility can affect information usefulness positively.**

### **2.2 Customer experience**

Experience is not merely a feeling (Kelly, 1987)—it is also feedback or a conception generated by an individual after becoming familiar over time with stimuli or activities (Kelly, 1987; Schmitt, 1999). Experience is usually triggered by an external stimulus (Schmitt, 1999), and it is personal and difficult to imitate (Pine and Gilmore, 1998). Therefore, no one's experience is entirely identical to another's, and the value of each person's experience is generally unique. Businesses create unforgettable activities for their customers (i.e. experiences). Holbrook (2000) suggested that customer experience resulted from the pursuit of fantasies, feelings, and fun.

Schmitt (1999) defined five different types of customer experiences:

- Sense: The sensory experience is created by media to promote individual pleasure, excitement, and satisfaction (e.g. images in photos and sound in videos).
- Feel: The feel experience is the customer's internal sensible and emotional response triggered by the media.
- Think: This experience involves heuristic thinking and problem-solving; it is generated by media stimuli. It allows customers to expend more effort evaluating products via surprising and interesting methods.
- Act: This type of marketing is designed to affect an individual's lifestyle by increasing physical experiences so that the customer can participate in activities and interact through media.
- Relate: Relating is facilitated by the media and the individual; it allows individuals to generate connections with others. From a marketing perspective, it is advantageous to build strong brand relationships.

Hsu and Tsou (2011) stated that browsing different types of articles result in a variety of experiences, feelings, and opinions. For example, when readers are browsing blogs that introduce various local cuisines, a sensory experience may be generated by visual attraction, and the feel experience can be triggered by text descriptions. When readers are browsing articles containing authors' memories of working abroad, the related photos, texts, and descriptions of adventures and experiences can stimulate the reader's think experience. The feelings and opinions generated from experiences may further influence the scale regarding information adoption intentions (Hsu and Tsou, 2011). Hence, we propose:

**H4: Customer experience can affect information adoption intentions positively.**

## **2.3 Customer experience and antecedents**

### *2.3.1 Vividness*

Marks (1972) defined vividness as the combination of clarity and brightness. The more vivid the appearance, the closer the real world seems. Steuer (1992) defined vividness as the level of information richness that the media environment brings to the human senses; its two primary variables are sensory breadth and sensory depth. While browsing, users are inclined to read an article based on the attractiveness of an author's text descriptions and images or photos. Then, through audio-visual stimuli from the media, readers are persuaded directly or indirectly by the author's experiences. Inspired by their various imaginations, readers may feel as if they are in the same environment described by the author. Comprehensive details and excellent language skills create an attractive atmosphere for readers. Sheng and Teo's (2012) study showed that the product information with entertaining and aesthetic presentation could increase users' valuation towards product brand. That is, vivid content could increase users' valuation towards the travel information and then are willing to adopt it. Hence, we propose:

**H5: Vividness of information content can affect the customer experience positively.**

### *2.3.2 Information quality and information credibility*

Information quality is determined according to relevance, timeliness, comprehensiveness, and accuracy (Sussman and Siegal, 2003). When such tourism information in blogs and forums is updated based on the external environment, posted government announcements, or official articles about famous tourism festivals in various countries, information accuracy will be improved and readers can adjust their original plans based on timely information. In addition, when the information is fairly comprehensive and related to tourists' destinations, itineraries, and local civilian cultures—with detailed pictures and text based on themed photos—readers will relate to the author. Hence, when backpacking abroad, readers can enjoy visiting tourism attractions without necessarily following detailed map instructions.

The research by Bloch et al. (1986) has shown that accumulating experiences is the objective for collecting information from various sources. Information credibility can be treated as a combined resource of sense, vision, feelings, and recognition that transform into unforgettable and valuable customer experiences (Hsu and Tsou, 2011). Blogs or forums are platforms for long-time users and bloggers who regularly share their travel experiences (e.g. backpacking abroad); further, they report related news and discuss applicable government announcements. They also introduce famous festivals held throughout the world. Reliable and objective information, as well as articles published by credible authors, can help readers determine if they should adjust their itineraries accordingly. Hence, we propose:

**H6: Information quality can affect the customer experience positively.**

**H7: Information credibility can affect the customer experience positively.**

## **2.4 Moderating effects of consumption point**

Information decision makers consider time needed to reach a decision, thus, they intentional focus on the types of information (Kardes et al., 2006; Liberman et al., 2007). Liberman and Trope (1998) emphasized that during the process of achieving goals, different phases will require different considerations. Thus, when the time to travel abroad is approaching, users tend to browse the available information for specific recommendations or data in line with their goals (Liberman and Trope, 1998). For example, users focus on useful information promoting success of their trip, such as arrangement of transportation, accommodation and routes, weather, as well as other noticeable notes when the time to travel abroad is approaching. They may also carefully review flight schedules for travel to intended destinations or recommendations for restaurants. On the contrary, users focus on hedonic information enhancing aspiration towards their trips, such as photos and portraits of beautiful scenes, delicious foods, famous restaurants, or peregrination, if the trip abroad is not immediately approaching. They may tend to browse information for more abstract recommendations or data, as long as the information is sufficient for helping them meet their goals (Liberman and Trope, 1998). For example, users may wish to browse types of places they would like to visit after arrival, such as cities known for art or fashion, or small towns with countryside scenery (Köhler et al., 2011). Spark et al. (2013) indicated that the persuasive effect of the specific information is greater than vague information. Users who plan to travel in a near future think specific information is more trustworthy and useful, so they will pay more attention on specific information, evaluate it carefully and then adopt it.

Consumption point is the interval from the time readers start browsing tourism information to the time readers begin a journey. Consumption point makes readers choose different information content to browse (Köhler et al., 2011). When the consumption point is distant, information reviewed tends to be abstract, simple, rough, and fuzzy. When the consumption point is impending, the information searches tend to be specific, complicated, refined, and clear (Köhler et al., 2011). As the consumption point varies from distant to near, the reader's content search varies as well. Bloggers' or forum users' shared experiences and photos will be helpful to readers, who can gradually move beyond blurred and abstract thoughts to specific and clear ideas. When the consumption point is still distant, tourism information that readers browse tends to be random, covering a broad range of information, and the criteria for information usefulness tends to be rougher and fuzzier. When the consumption point is quite near (i.e. date of departure is impending), readers will pay more attention to information that is related specifically to travel destinations; thus, the criteria for information usefulness is also clearer, and information quality has less impact. Kim et al. (2014) showed that users' recognition accuracy is greater when they conduct goal-directed search for travel information. That is, users tend to be sensitive and concerned towards information usefulness and specificity if they begin a travel in a near future. When browsing tourism information while the consumption point is somewhat distant, users tend to think more broadly, and they are less likely to integrate information and graphics content closely. Thus, it is more difficult for users to generate adoption intentions based on customer experiences. Hence, we propose:

**H8: The consumption point will affect the relationship between customer experience and information adoption intentions.**

**H8a: When the consumption point is distant, information usefulness has a greater effect on information adoption intentions, and vice versa.**

**H8b: When the consumption point is distant, customer experience has less effect on information adoption intentions, and vice versa.**

The framework for this study is shown in Figure 1.

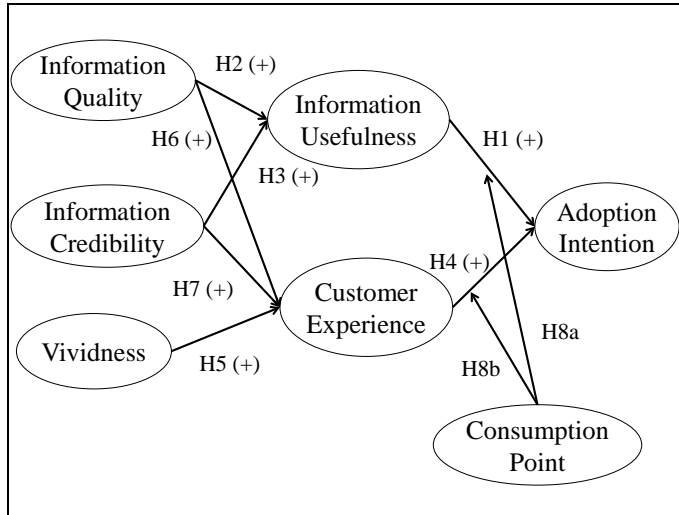


Figure 1. Research model

### 3 RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1 Operationalization and instrument design

The instruments for constructs were adapted from literature and revised to fit our research context; constructs include vividness, information quality, information credibility, information usefulness, customer experience, consumption point, and adoption intention. The operational definition is shown in Table 1. All items were anchored on five-point Likert scales, from strong disagreement to strong agreement. A short interview with several colleagues and experts and a pre-test were carried out to ensure face validity and content validity for the compliant questionnaires.

Constructs	Definitions	Number of Items	Sources
Vividness	The extent to medium richness of content in virtual community	3	Coyle and Thorson (2001)
Information Quality	The extent to accuracy and appropriateness of content in virtual community	4	Kim et al. (2012)
Information Credibility	The extent to credibility or professional of content in virtual community	5	Hsu and Tsou (2011)
Customer Experience	The extent to which one experiences sense, feel, thinking, act and relation when browsing content in virtual community	15	Hsu and Tsou (2011)
Information Usefulness	The extent to usefulness of content in virtual community	3	Bailey and Pearson (1983)

Information Adoption Intention	Customers' behavioral intention to adopt content in virtual community	5	Sussman and Siegal (2003); Wu and Shaffer (1987)
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*Table 1: Operational definition and numbers of measurement items*

### 3.2 Data collection

An Internet survey was used in this study to research intentional behaviours of social forum users to adopt tourism information. Pre-test was conducted to validate whether questions were clearly. The survey was launched on the Internet and uploaded to the survey forum, sweepstakes forum, Japan travel forum, and Korea travel forum on PTT (ptt.cc). Subjects were asked to answer questions based on the social forum that he/she used most frequently. A sweepstakes was held to increase survey responses. Five hundred and thirty eight responses were received. After a data filtering process, 492 responses were identified for analysis.

## 4 DATA ANALYSIS

### 4.1 Measurement model

The measurement model was assessed by confirmatory factor analysis using AMOS 20.0. The construct of vividness was excluded because it was measured by formative indicators. Factor loadings of indicators were all above the acceptable level of 0.5 and significant ( $p \leq 0.01$ ), range from 0.51 to 0.83. The fit indices were above the threshold. GFI, IFI, and CFI are all above 0.90, and RMSEA is between 0.05 and 0.08. As suggested by Bagozzi and Yi (1988), one item in the construct of information credibility was deleted; additionally, five items in the construct of customer experience and one item in the construct of adoption intention were deleted. It reveals the acceptance of construct validity. Reliability and convergent validity were acceptable when compared with the threshold suggested by Bagozzi and Yi (1988)—0.7 and 0.5 respectively, as shown in Table 2. The discriminant validity is acceptable based on the rule that the correlations between any two distinct constructs are lower than the square root of the average variance extracted from them (Fornell and Larcker, 1981), as shown in Table 3.

Construct	Mean	S.D.	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Information quality	3.88	0.60	0.97	0.89
Information credibility	4.22	0.63	0.98	0.92
Information usability	4.06	0.58	0.97	0.92
Customer experience: Sense	3.89	0.63	0.89	0.81
Customer experience: Feel	3.27	0.80	0.94	0.88
Customer experience: Think	3.71	0.64	0.92	0.84
Customer experience: Act	3.83	0.60	0.88	0.79
Customer experience: Relate	3.40	0.74	0.83	0.71
Consumption Point	3.64	0.94	0.91	0.68
Adoption intention	3.75	0.57	0.87	0.78

*Table 2: Reliability and convergent validity*



	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Information quality (1)	<b>0.94</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Information credibility (2)	0.69	<b>0.96</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Information usability (3)	0.76	0.67	<b>0.96</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Customer experience: Sense (4)	0.58	0.47	0.64	<b>0.90</b>	—	—	—	—	—	—
Customer experience: Feel (5)	0.29	0.11	0.20	0.40	<b>0.94</b>	—	—	—	—	—
Customer experience: Think (6)	0.59	0.46	0.59	0.67	0.54	<b>0.92</b>	—	—	—	—
Customer experience: Act (7)	0.51	0.33	0.54	0.57	0.44	0.82	<b>0.89</b>	—	—	—
Customer experience: Relate (8)	0.33	0.17	0.26	0.47	0.47	0.43	0.67	<b>0.84</b>	—	—
Consumption Point (9)	0.47	0.26	0.33	0.25	0.15	0.35	0.27	0.00	<b>0.83</b>	—
Adoption intention (10)	0.62	0.68	0.76	0.58	0.29	0.59	0.51	0.33	0.47	<b>0.88</b>

Table 3. Discriminant validity (diagonal represents square root of AVE of each construct)

## 4.2 Hypotheses testing

Two steps were performed to test hypotheses. First, H1–7 were examined with the structural equation model by AMOS 20.0. Second, moderating effect (H8) was examined with multi-group structural equation modelling analysis. Samples were classified by cluster analysis.

The results of testing the first seven hypotheses are presented in Figure 2. All hypotheses were supported. Both information usefulness and customer experience influence users' adoption intentions. Information quality, information credibility, and vividness enhance the customer experience. Both information quality and information credibility enhanced users' perceived information usefulness. The explained variances in adoption intention, information usefulness, and customer experience were 60%, 44%, and 37%. The fit indices are all above the threshold.

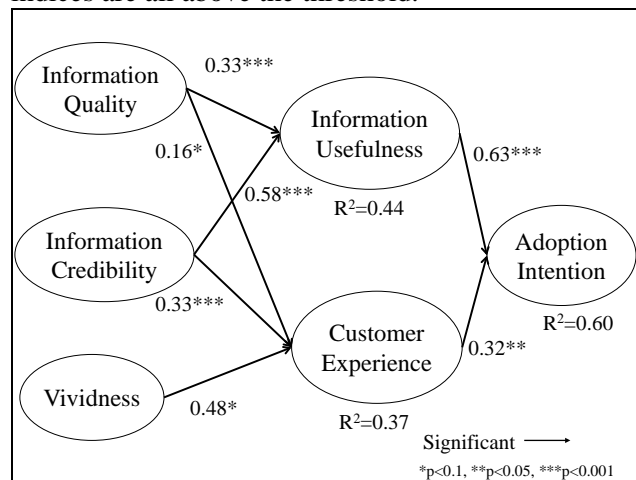


Figure 2. Main effect

To evaluate the moderating effect of the consumption point (H8), two steps were carried out. First, a two-stage cluster analysis was performed based on the log of numbers of posts and scopes of accepting information to identify possible groups. In a two-stage cluster analysis, hierarchy clustering with Ward's method and a squared Euclidean distance measurement was performed; then, a k-means clustering analysis was conducted. The first group included 311 respondents whose consumption point was approaching (i.e. central point of cluster was 4.24). The second group included 181 respondents whose consumption point was distant (i.e. central point of cluster was 2.61). AMOS 20.0 was used to examine the moderating effect of the consumption point by comparing the differences in path coefficients between clusters. The fit indices of the two models' estimations were acceptable as they revealed that the models

fit well with the observed data. Figure 3 shows the results of structural model estimation for the two groups. Table 4 reveals the results of chi-square testing. Findings showed that only a moderating effect between information usefulness and adoption intention existed. That is, H8a was supported and H8b was not supported.

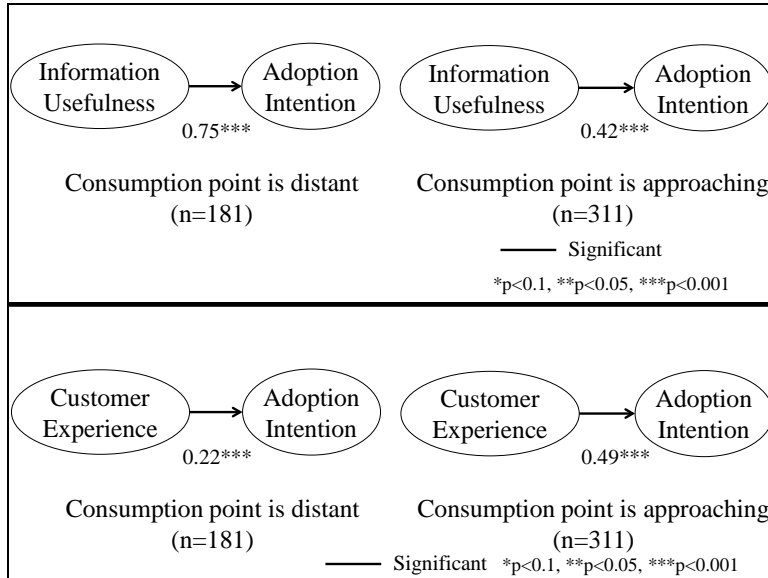


Figure 3. Moderating effect

Consumption Point	Relationship between information usefulness and adoption intention	Relationship between customer experience and adoption intention
Distant	$5.457 > X^2_{df=1, p < 0.05}$	$1.018 < X^2_{df=1, p < 0.05}$
Approaching	$5.457 > X^2_{df=1, p < 0.05}$	$1.018 < X^2_{df=1, p < 0.05}$

Table 4: Chi-Square difference test regarding groups with farther and nearer consumption points

## 5 DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions and future research

In this study, we have attempted to understand backpackers' information adoption intentions; thus, we extended the information adoption model by taking into account factors such as vividness, customer experience, and consumption point.

The results of data analysis supported the applicability of the extended information adoption model, especially for researching the usefulness of tourism information and customer experience on social community forums. In the extended information adoption model, source credibility was replaced by information credibility, and vividness was included to assess users' perceptions of information usefulness. The findings showed that information quality and information credibility affected information usefulness significantly. A high level of information quality and confidence in the credibility of information lead to acknowledgement of information usefulness. When readers think that information is helpful for planning future travel itineraries, their information adoption intentions are greater. Vividness of information content can appear in various forms, including texts, graphics, pictures, or videos. Vivid content inspires

readers to visit a particular destination, and detailed information from an experienced traveller assists readers in planning their own itineraries.

This study also took into account the influences of customer experience. The original model presents a rational approach to evaluating information for possible adoption. Today's environment emphasizes 'experience marketing', and plentiful online tourism information has the capacity to influence readers' emotions and alter their intentions to use it. In this study, results of data analysis also verified the influence of customer experiences. Further, information quality, information credibility, and vividness all significantly affect customer experiences. Detailed and rich information content allow readers to imagine themselves in a travel scene. Their vicarious experiences often motivate them to plan their own visits to destinations described on the Internet. In social forums, tourism articles with brisk narratives and vividness (e.g. beautiful photos) improve readers' perceptions about customer experiences.

An underlying consideration of this study was an individual's prior intentions to take a future-backpacking trip before reading tourism articles or participating in social forums. When the tourism article that the reader is browsing is close to his/her departure date, the reader will study the content in more detail and analyze its usefulness more rationally. An impending departure date will motivate the reader to find only information that relates specifically to the intended destination; in other words, information that is useful and specific to travel plans will be adopted. Thus, the extent of information usefulness readers perceived must be much higher and then readers would like to adopt this information. On the contrary, when the consumption point is more distant, the reader generally has fuzzy travel plans; consequently, he/she will tend to feel that most information is useful and then would like to adopt most information. Thus, information usefulness is more sensitive to information adoption intentions. However, the effects of customer experience on information adoption intentions do not change significantly based on the lead-time prior to travel departure. Customer experience is an important factor regardless of time.

## **5.2 Academic implications**

This study aims to assess the adoption of backpacking and related tourism information from social community forums. This study is implemented based on information adoption model modified by Cheung et al. (2008) and incorporates the concept of experience marketing and the moderating effects of the consumption point. The study results showed the applicability and interpretability of the extended information adoption model.

Few studies have discussed in depth the effectiveness of customer experience on travel reviews. This study not only includes research on information adoption activities from a rational perspective, but it also accounts for users' emotional factors. The results indicated that customer experience is an important factor. Hence, the relationship between customer experience and information adoption intentions is not affected by the length of time until departure. This study also revealed the significant effects of vividness on customer experience. Associated elements of an article, such as multimedia components, hyperlinks, or numerous photographs, can increase a customer's propensity to Feel, Think, Act, Sense, and Relate.

Although the results indicate that both customer experience and information usefulness could affect users' information adoption intentions, the importance of information usefulness is greater than customer experience, thus illustrating rational judgment above emotions for empirical activities such as travelling. In addition, information quality and information credibility may alter customer experience, showing that users value information relevance, timeliness, accuracy, comprehensiveness, and credibility.

In addition, this study has taken into account personal preferences and the length of time between browsing tourism information and actually beginning a travel abroad. Results show that the time until the consumption point is reached would affect the relationship between information usefulness and information adoption intentions. In other words, when users browse tourism information, different reading purposes (pure viewing based on a distant consumption point or purposeful searching because of an approaching consumption point) could result in different ways of evaluating tourism articles.

### 5.3 Managerial implications

Before travelling abroad, most people will log on to the Internet to search for tourism attractions at travel destinations; additionally, they will consult other Internet users about tourism plans, recommended points of interest, and local cuisines. The business value of a travel website focused on backpacking, for example, could be increased if there is evidence that novice backpackers can learn from experienced backpackers who share their experiences on the website. Hence, this study could contribute to managers of tourism websites who wish to understand the relationship between information adoption intentions and information content. Managers of tourism social websites could improve the quality of articles for accuracy and comprehensiveness, and regularly update visitor information. Additionally, improved credibility of articles is important. Information provided must relate to backpacking plans in the example discussed here; additionally, it should include information regarding dining, clothing, lodging, and transportation. Moreover, vividness of articles can trigger readers' sensory experiences through photos, links, or videos to enhance messages from tourism articles. Website managers can differentiate readers' goals for browsing articles because whether readers have specific backpacking plans can influence their evaluations and perceptions of the tourism articles on the website. For example, websites managers could identify whether readers' plan is approaching or distant and then suggest readers information whose degree of concreteness fits readers' purpose of browsing tourism information.

### 5.4 Limitations

Due to limitations of this study, results should be treated with caution. First, data could be collected from multiple virtual communities, such as Plurk, Facebook, Twitter, or Microblog. We only post message of data collection on 'ptt', which is the most popular BBS in Taiwan, diversity of respondents may be limited. Diversified data sources could enhance generalizability of this study. Second, the doubts of self-selection maybe lead to a bias, since participants were volunteers and attracted by monetary incentives. Third, this study only considers vividness as an important antecedent of customer experiencing. An additional study could consider other factors that could increase customers experiencing, such as storytelling, virtual reality, and so on.

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