

## Evaluating Tourism Digital Marketing Activities: Case Study of Moc Chau, Son La, Viet Nam



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**ABSTRACT:** In the context of 4.0, Digital Marketing is becoming more and more important for all aspects of life, including tourism. This study aims to examine the tourist's evaluation of the use of tourism digital marketing (digital marketing tools) by travel agencies in Moc Chau, Son La. The results show that "Social Media Marketing" has the maximum level of appearance, level of attraction and level of influence. In addition, "Video Marketing" and "Multimedia Marketing" also have a high frequency of appearance, level of attraction, and high level of influence. From studying the theoretical basis of Digital Marketing, with the survey results and in-depth interviews, the research team proposes to make some suggestions to improve the efficiency of using digital marketing tools for Moc Chau tourism and government agencies.

**KEYWORDS:** Marketing, Digital Marketing, Tourism, Tourist, Moc Chau, Son La

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Moc Chau owns plateaus of more than 50,000 hectares, with many grasslands, tea hills, apricot, plum, and peach forests. Moc Chau is also a tourist site with many scenic spots: Floating market on Da River, Hang Doi which has been ranked nationally by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism and Son Moc Huong cave, Ban Ang pine hill, Dai Yem waterfall, Ngu Dong, Ban On, Xuan Nha national reserve, Phieng Luong peak 1,500m high. In addition, there is also a system of archaeological relics in the area along the Da River such as: Quan Tai cave, animal fossils in Chieng Yen commune, traces carved on rocks in Xuan Nha commune and other revolutionary cultural history sites: Moc Ly Fort, commemorative stele of the 83rd Vietnamese volunteer army in Laos...". Besides, Moc Chau has many streams (Muong Khoa, Phu Mao, Ban Bo, Hua Pang...) and converges many types of unique ethnic cultures such as: Thai Trang, Muong, Mong, Dao, Xinh Mun, Kho Mu. Each ethnic group with different living and production habits has created a diversity of culture and festivals. The most attractive is the love market (1 time only once a year). Mong people in neighboring provinces do not have an appointment, but every year on Independence Day (September 2nd) they come here to meet, exchange, and date... (Sonla.gov.vn, 2020)

When coming to Moc Chau, visitors can participate in experiencing the following activities: Community tourism, visiting export tea processing factories, dairy farming and milk processing facilities, visiting high-tech zones which grow vegetables and flowers for export... Tourists can participate in production labor, visit ethnic cultural heritage tourism, convalescent, sports tourism, and entertainment. (Sonla.gov.vn, 2020)

Moc Chau (Son La) has promoted the development of community tourism, thereby contributing to protecting the landscape environment, diversifying types of services, and increasing income for ethnic minorities in the region, cooperation between agricultural product development and tourism and service activities. However, according to assessments of authorities and surveys of travel and tourism companies visiting *promotion and advertising activities are not regular and continuous*. (Hai My, 2021)

Digital Marketing today is all about using internet technologies to reach out to existing and newer audiences and engage with them. Today digital marketing has disrupted industries and changed the way businesses reach out to customers. In the tourism industry, the disruption was felt a few years ago and has transformed the way businesses reach out to users. For any business to be successful digitally in the tourism industry, the above mentioned six points- quality website, SEO, Email marketing, Presence on social media, content, mobile-friendly play a very crucial role. (Gurneet Kaur, 2017)

The study examines the tourism Digital Marketing activities of Moc Chau, Son La by pointing out tourism Digital marketing tools, the importance of these tools, and surveying domestic tourists about the side:

- Frequency of appearance of Digital Marketing tools
- Attractiveness of Digital Marketing tools
- The level of influence of Digital Marketing tools

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Using random and snowball sampling methods (finding the next survey respondents based on survey participants' referrals), the research team collected 272 votes, of which 271 were valid to analyze.

In addition, the study conducted in-depth interviews with leaders of 4 tourism companies in Moc Chau, Son La to supplement the research results.

From the results of the survey and in-depth interviews, the research team proposed a number of discussions to improve the effectiveness of using Digital Marketing tools for Moc Chau, Son La.

## 2. THEORETICAL BASIS OF TOURISM DIGITAL MARKETING

### 2.1. Some related concepts

#### 2.1.1. Marketing and Tourism Marketing

Marketing is a social management process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating, offering, selling and exchanging products of value with others. (Philip Kotler & Armstrong, 2007)

Marketing is the economic and social mechanisms that organizations and individuals use to satisfy their needs and desires through the process of exchanging products in the market. (Nguyen Thi Thu Thuy, 2008)

#### *Tourism Marketing*

Tourism marketing includes all marketing and advertising activities to satisfy customer needs in the tourism industry. (Nguyen Phuong, 2022)

Tourism marketing is a system of research and planning aimed at giving a tourism organization a complete management philosophy with appropriate strategies and tactics to achieve its goals. (Michael Coltman, 1991)

Tourism marketing is the process of researching and analyzing customer needs, tourism products and services and methods of supply and support to bring customers to products to satisfy their needs, also achieve the goals of the business. Tourism marketing is a process of research and analysis (customer needs - tourism products - supply methods and organizational support) to bring customers to products to satisfy customer needs and profit goals. (Tran Hoang Tuan, 2014)

Tourism is a broad, diverse and complex field. Therefore, the competition between businesses operating in the tourism industry is huge. To survive and keep up with domestic and foreign tourism trends, a marketing plan is indispensable. Tourism marketing helps identify market needs (customers, competitors), position the business in the mind of target customers, well organize the process of providing value to customers, become a connecting customers and sales departments, and increasing product brand recognition. (Nguyen Phuong, 2022)

#### 2.1.2. Digital Marketing and Tourism Digital Marketing

Internet marketing and e - advertising, called e-marketing, web marketing, online marketing, or e-marketing, is advertising goods and services through the Internet. (Ruzic, D. 2003).

E-Marketing is the process of planning the product, price, distribution and promotion of products, services, and ideas to meet organizational and individual needs based on electronic media and the Internet. (Philip Kotler, 2007)

Internet marketing and the use of the internet and other digital technologies alongside traditional methods to achieve marketing goals. (Chaffey, D., Ellis-Chadwick, F., Mayer, R., Johnston, K. 2009). Digital marketing is a form of applying information technology tools instead of communication tools to conduct the marketing process. (Le Si Tri, 2018)

Traditional Marketing involves collecting data through the process of market research and then analyzing the same to help understand the audiences better. The digital nature of the Internet technology provides a comprehensive and detailed insight into the characteristics of consumers and their behavior in the electronic environment. (Batinić, 2015)

Hudson, S., Roth, SM, & Madden, JT (2012) points out the Digital Marketing communication options shown in Table 1

**Table 1. Digital marketing Communication options**

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Website          | Businesses should design their websites to represent their purpose, history, products, and vision. Developing a site that is attractive at first sight and appealing enough to encourage repeat visits is the primary challenge. Designing a mobile-responsive website is on the increase since the consumer is often on a mobile device |
| Social media     | Companies should care about social media due to its potential for engagement and collaboration with consumers. Social media promotion will lead to relatively stronger results owing to its ability to build emotional ties with its target audience based on social media activity.   |
| Mobile marketing | Mobile phone marketing is growing now that smartphone usage among travelers is increasing in particular.   |

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|                                  |   |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Internet-specific ads and videos | Thanks to user-generated content sites such as YouTube and Instagram, video consumers and practitioners can upload ads and videos shared by millions of people virally  |
| Display ads                      | Display ads are small, rectangular boxes containing text and sometimes they are in the form of a picture that companies pay to place on relevant websites. The larger the audience, the more the placement costs  |
| Microsites                       | A microsite is a limited area on the web managed and paid for by an external advertiser/company. Microsites are individual web pages or clusters of pages that function as supplements to a primary site  |
| Search ads                       | Paid search or pay-per-click ads represent 40% of all online ads. Thirty-five percent of all searches are reportedly for products or services. These terms serve as a proxy for the consumer's consumption interests and trigger relevant links to product or service offerings alongside search results from Google, MSN, and Yahoo! Advertisers pay only if people click on the links |
| Online communities               | Many companies sponsor online communities whose members communicate through postings, instant messaging, and chat discussions about special interests related to the company's products and brands.   |
| Interstitials                    | Interstitials are often video or animation advertisements that pop up in between web pages, similar to turning a page of a magazine and being encountered with the page advert that you cannot get rid of seeing before turning the page again  |
| Blogs                            | Blogs are usually controlled by individuals with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other materials such as graphics or videos. The best-quality blogs are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message each other.   |
| E-mail                           | E-mail uses only a fraction of the cost of a direct mail campaign   |

Source: Hudson, et al., (2012)

### Digital Marketing in the Tourism Industry

According to Asialion (2020), Hudson et al. (2012), and Better Growth (2023), there are the following trends in Digital Marketing for tourism:

#### 1. Social Media marketing

Social media marketing is the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Zalo or Tiktok... to promote products or services. Each platform will have its own characteristics to make it different in the eyes of their users.

#### 2. Influencer/ Affiliate

Affiliate marketing is a form of promoting products or services that suppliers want through online promotion channels of publishers to customers. Affiliate marketing is a type of marketing based on the CPA (cost per action) advertising fee model. CPA is the most optimal advertising fee model today based on user actions. Marketing through travel Influencers (Vloggers, Streamers) has also brought in a significant amount of revenue in recent times. Working with influencers and affiliate marketing allows you to tap into their audience base and associate your brand with their image.

**3. Multimedia Marketing:** produce content to post on many different media channels, thereby promoting marketing effectiveness.

**4. Search Engine Optimization:** the process of implementing methods to improve the ranking of a website in the results pages of search engines (most commonly Google). The most important methods to consider when optimizing a website for search engines include: (i) Improving content quality; (ii) Improve user engagement; (iii) Make the website mobile-friendly; (iv) Increase the quantity and quality of incoming links.

Three common SEO benefits are: (i) Technical SEO: helps search engines navigate and crawl your website better; (ii) On-page SEO: is the work that needs to be done to optimize elements displayed right on the website; (iii) Off-page SEO: helps your website increase its reputation and be more trustworthy.

#### 5. Video Marketing

Video Marketing is a branch of Multimedia marketing, a future marketing trend. Through video, you can create a more personal experience of your highlights for travelers to enjoy even before their trip.

#### 6. Content marketing

Content marketing is a strategic marketing approach that focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain customers.

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**7. Virtual Reality Marketing:** is a simulated experience that may or may not be completely different from the real world. VR typically combines auditory and video feedback but may also enable other sensory and force responses through haptic technology.

**8. Email marketing:** use email to develop relationships with prospects or customers with an appropriate flow of marketing communications. Through sharing useful information and deepening relationships, you can convert leads into customers and drive sales.

**9. Blog marketing:** Blog marketing is a form of marketing and advertising for brands, websites, products... through blogging platforms. The main forms of blog marketing include advertising, PR articles, review articles.

### Tourists

According to Clause 2, Article 3 and Article 10 of the 2017 Law on Tourism, tourists include domestic tourists, international tourists to Vietnam and tourists going abroad.

- Domestic tourists are Vietnamese citizens or foreigners residing in Vietnam traveling within Vietnamese territory.
- International tourists to Vietnam are foreigners, Vietnamese people residing abroad come to Vietnam for tourism.
- Outbound tourists are Vietnamese citizens and foreigners residing in Vietnam traveling abroad.

According to LinkBC (2008) someone who travels at least 80 km from his or her home for at least 24 hours, for business or leisure or other reasons.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (1995) tourists can be:

- Domestic (residents of a given country traveling only within that country)
- Inbound (non-residents traveling in each country)
- Outbound (residents of one country traveling in another country)

### 2.2. The necessity of Digital Marketings

Digital marketing is significantly related to the performance of cultural tourism. (Kerdpitak, C, 2022)

The nature of tourism marketing is to discover needs and find ways to satisfy them to achieve business goals of the business. In tourism business, tourism marketing application is necessary to understand the needs of visitors for the art of satisfying for effective business. The role of tourism marketing is to link the supply and demand systems in the tourism market and influence the regulation of visitor demand. (Tran Hoang Tuan, 2014)

The tourism industry includes all the people, activities and organizations involved in providing services to holidaymakers, for example hotels, restaurants, and tour guides. Before the launch of digital marketing, the role of those providing these services was integral to the success of the business. With the advent of the internet, newer methods of marketing different services to the target audience have evolved. The tourism industry, in particular, has been completely disrupted with the rapid development of the internet. (Gurneet Kaur, 2017)

In the context of cultural tourism, consumer technology can play a role in customizing and evolving experiences. (Joanna, Jody, & Bridson, 2014)

Overall, communicating technology will let users customize and personalize their experiences, as well as provide ideas to make the experience more meaningful. Now, digital technology has ushered in a new tourism era. The image of the tourism sector has been dramatically transformed because of the development of digital services throughout time. (Kerdpitak, C, 2022)

Furthermore, ongoing technological innovation allows for the development of new talents, materials, services, performance, and organizational structures. (Weiermair, 2006)

This is especially true in any industry, including tourism, where a rising number of studies have attempted to explain how technology affects innovation in manufacturing processes, services, and delivery systems. (Buhalis & Law, 2008)

Through multimedia learning, education, and worldwide networking, technology expands the professional development prospects for small tourism operators, enhancing their ability to innovate. (Mohd Bukhari & Faiz Hilmi, 2012)

Various technical tools, such as the Internet, smartphones, GPS, social media websites, and applications, enable tourism managers to drive and implement innovative ideas (Liburd, 2005), and improve cultural tourism performance more effectively.

3. Tourist's Reviews About Moc Chau Son La's Digital Tourism Marketing

3.1 Description of tourists participating in the survey

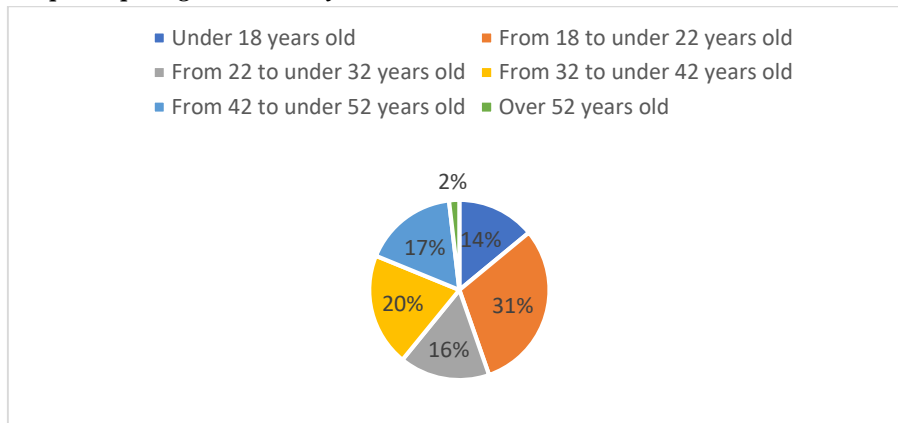


Figure 1. Age of survey participants

Source: Survey results

Of the 271 people surveyed, there were 38 people under 18 years old (14%), from 18 to under 22 years old were 83 people (31%), from 22 to under 32 years old were 44 people (16%), from 32 to under 42 years old is 55 people (20%), from 42 to 52 years old is 46 people (17%) and over 52 years old is 5 people (2%).

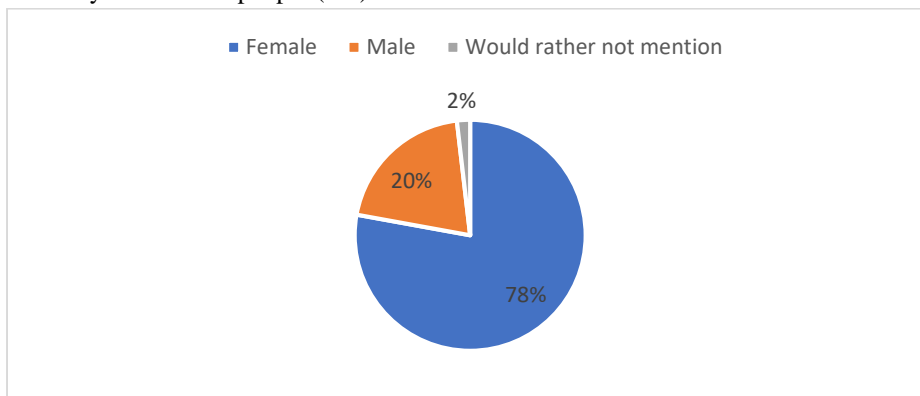


Figure 2. Gender of survey participants

Source: Survey results

Of the 271 people surveyed, 211 were female (78%), 55 were male (20%), and 5 did not want to be specific (2%).

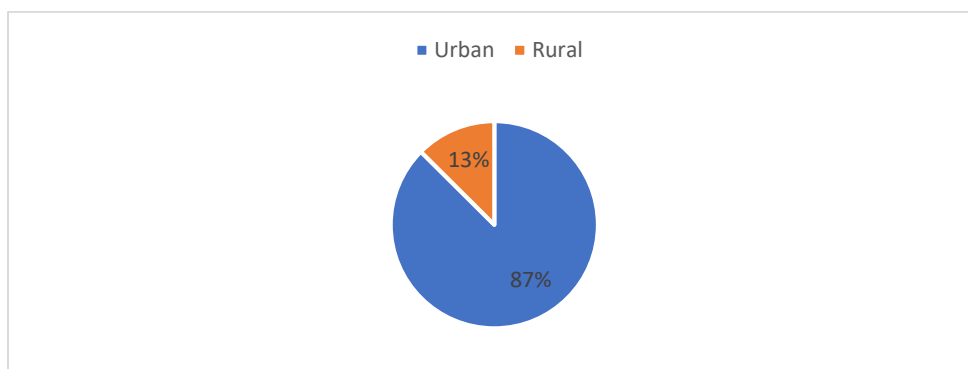
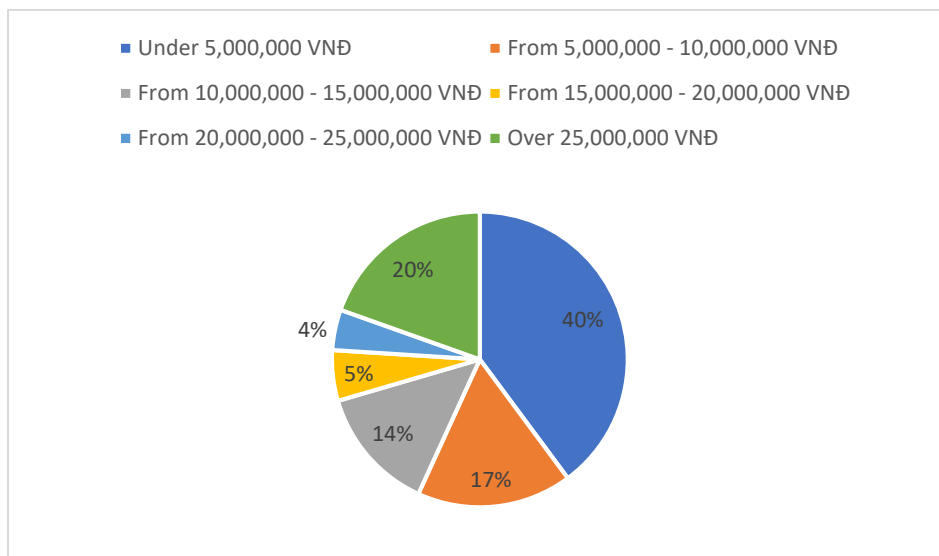


Figure. Living area of survey participants

Source: Survey results

Out of 271 people surveyed, 237 people are from urban areas (87%) and 34 people are from rural areas (13%).

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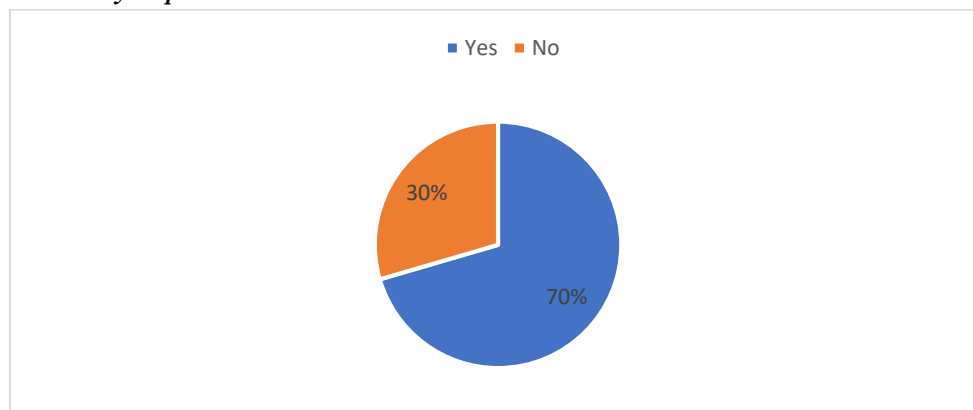


**Figure 4. Income level of survey participants**

*Source: Survey results*

Among the 271 people surveyed, there are 108 people with an income of less than 5 million VND (40%), accounting for the largest proportion, from 5 to less than 10 million VND is 46 people (17%), from 10 to 15 million VND is 37 people (14%), from 15 to 20 million VND are 15 people (5%), from 20 to 25 million VND are 12 people (4%) and over 25 million VND are 53 people (20%).

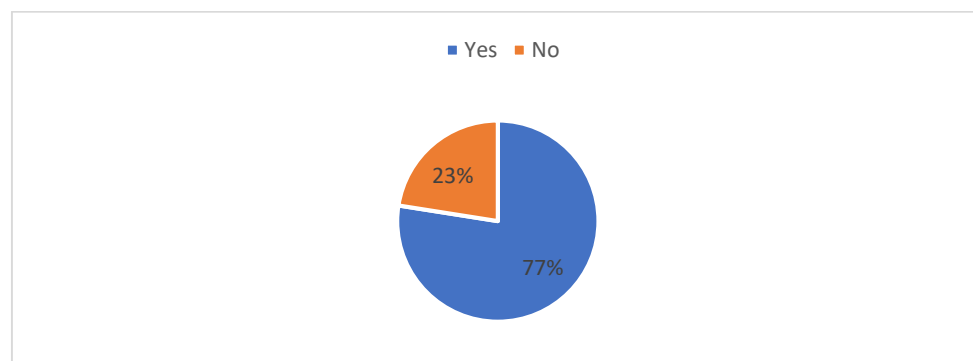
### 3.2. Information about survey respondents' access to Moc Chau tourist destination



**Figure 5. Information about knowing Moc Chau tourist destination**

*Source: Survey results*

Of the 271 people, 191 people have ever known about Moc Chau tourist area (70%), and 80 people have never known Moc Chau tourist area (30%).

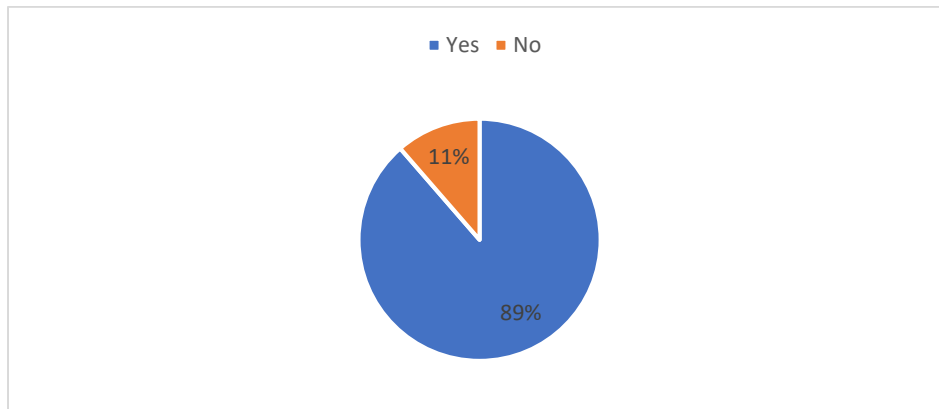


**Figure 6. Information about ever/never traveling at Moc Chau tourist destination**

*Source: Survey results*

Among 191 people who have ever known Moc Chau, 148 people have ever traveled to Moc Chau (77%), and 43 people have never traveled to Moc Chau (23%).

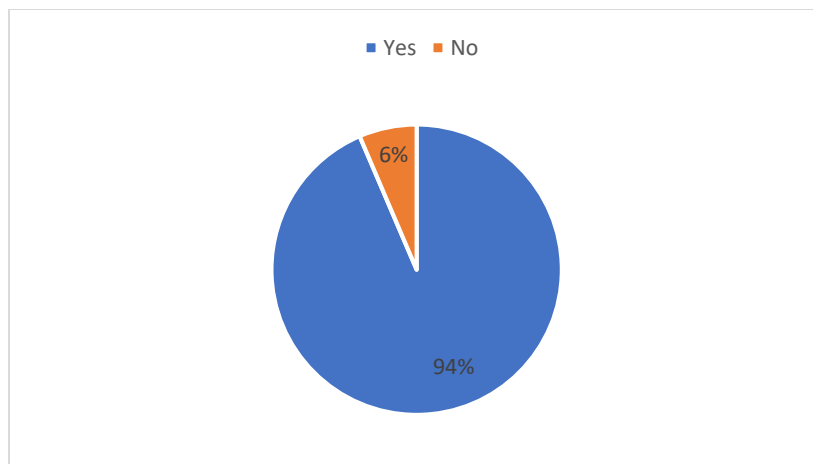
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**Figure 7. Intention to learn about Moc Chau**

*Source: Survey results*

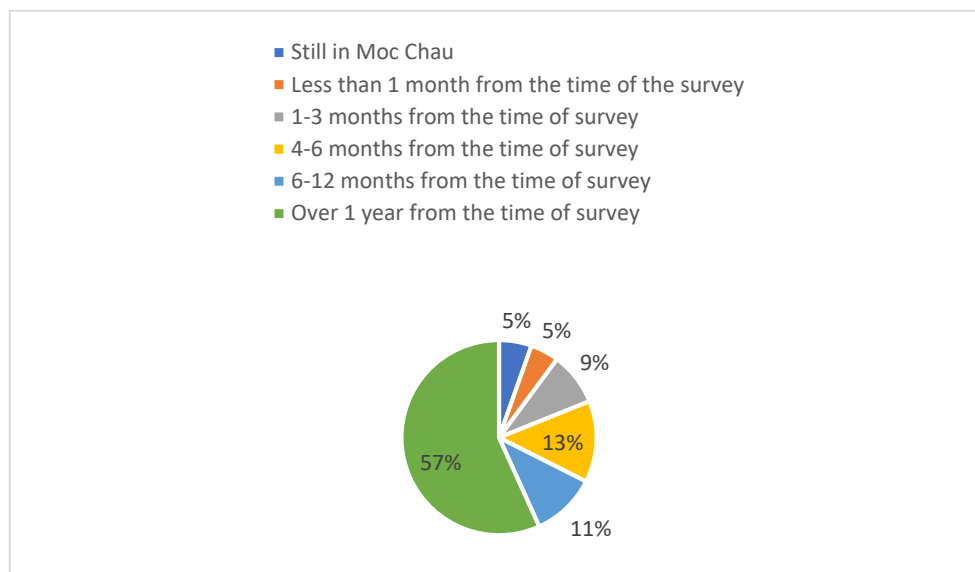
Of the 123 people who have never known about Moc Chau tourist area or have never traveled to Moc Chau tourist area, 109 people have plans to learn about and travel to Moc Chau (89%), and 14 people have no plans. intend to learn about and travel to Moc Chau (11%).



**Figure 8. Intention to learn about Moc Chau tourism through Digital Marketing tools.**

*Source: Survey results*

Of the 109 people who intend to learn about and travel to Moc Chau, 102 people intend to access Digital Marketing tools to learn about Moc Chau tourism (94%), and 7 people do not plan to continue. Access to Digital Marketing tools to learn about Moc Chau tourism (6%).

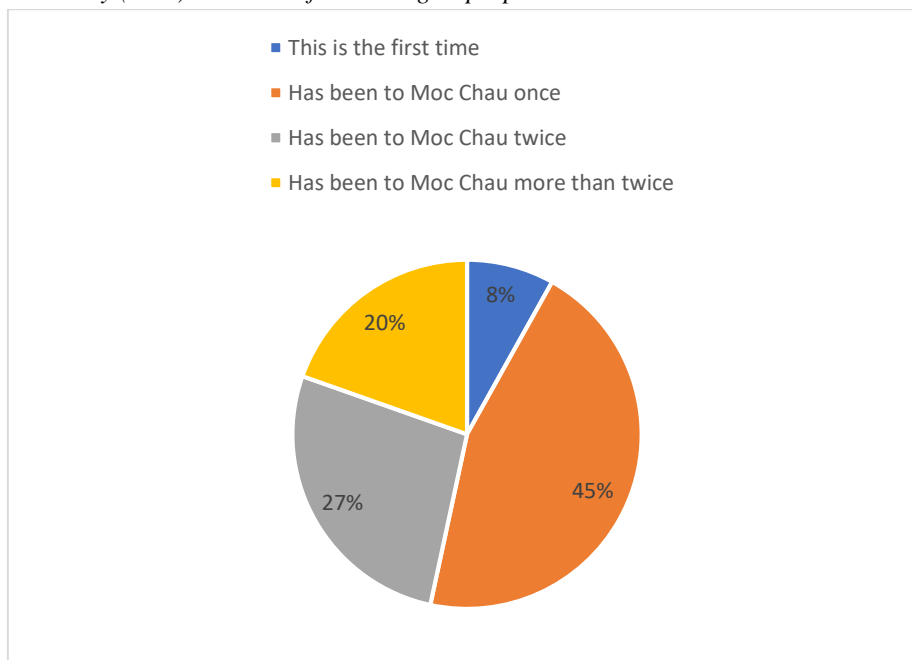


**Figure 9. Time since the last time traveling in Moc Chau**

*Source: Survey results*

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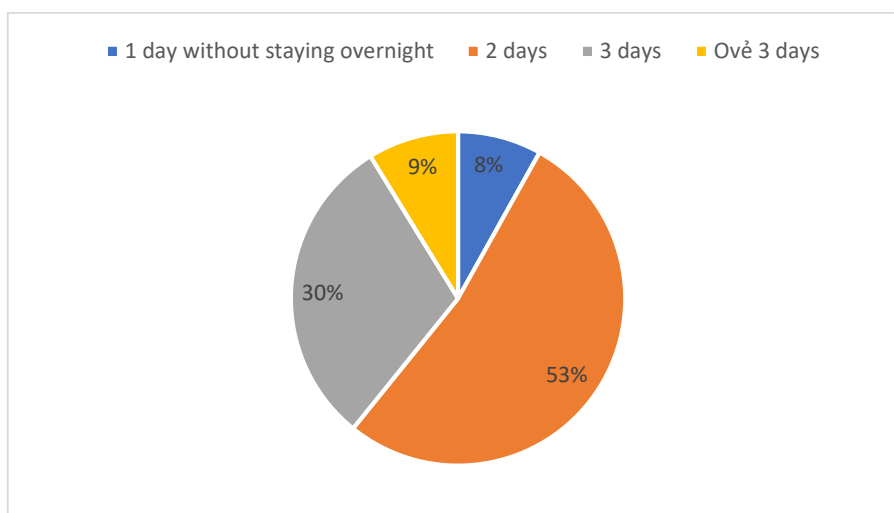
Among 148 people who have ever traveled in Moc Chau, 8 people are traveling to Moc Chau (5%), 7 people have been to Moc Chau less than 1 month since the time of the survey (5%), 13 people have been to Moc Chau for 1-3 months since the time of the survey (9%), 20 people have been to Moc Chau for 4-6 months since the time of the survey (14%), 16 people have been to Moc Chau from 6 to 12 months from the time of the survey (11%), and 84 people who have been to Moc Chau for more than 1 year since the time of the survey (57%) accounted for the largest proportion.



**Figure 10. Number of times visited Moc Chau**

*Source: Survey results*

Of the 148 people who have traveled to Moc Chau, 12 people came to Moc Chau for the first time (8.1%), 67 people went to Moc Chau once (45%), 40 people went to Moc Chau. 2 times (27%), there are 29 people who have been to Moc Chau more than 2 times (19.6%).



**Figure 11. Time staying in Moc Chau**

*Source: Survey results*

Among 148 people who have traveled in Moc Chau, 78 people stayed for 2 days (53%) accounting for the most proportion, 12 people stayed 1 day without overnight (8.1%), 45 people stayed 3 days (30%), 13 people stayed more than 3 days (9%).



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**Table 2. Source to access information about Moc Chau**

| No | Sources of information                 | For those who do not know and have never been to Moc Chau but intend to learn about and travel to Moc Chau |                | Of the people who have traveled in Moc Chau |              |
|----|--|--|----------------|---|--------------|
|    |  | Number of choices (and %)  | Choice's order | Number of choices (and%)                    | Choicesorder |
| 1  | TV                                     | 22 (21,6%)   | 7              | 60 (40,5%)                                  | 4            |
| 2  | Radio                                  | 7 (6,9%)   | 10             | 15 (10,1%)                                  | 9            |
| 3  | Newspaper                              | 21 (20,6%)   | 8              | 46 (31,1%)                                  | 5            |
| 4  | Social Media                           | 94 (92,2%)   | 1              | 110 (74,3%)                                 | 2            |
| 5  | Travel website, blog                   | 75 (73,5%)   | 2              | 83 (56,1%)                                  | 3            |
| 6  | Advertisement                          | 23 (22,5%)   | 6              | 36 (24,3%)                                  | 7            |
| 7  | Influencers                            | 49 (48%)   | 4              | 44 (29,7%)                                  | 6            |
| 8  | Search Engine                          | 48 (47,1%)   | 5              | 36 (24,3%)                                  | 7            |
| 9  | Friends/acquaintances                  | 70 (68,6%)   | 3              | 116 (78,4%)                                 | 1            |
| 10 | Travel flyers                          | 4 (3,9%)   | 11             | 4 (2,7%)                                    | 10           |
| 11 | Advertisements on social media         | 19 (18,6%)   | 9              | 31 (20,9%)                                  | 8            |
| 12 | Marketing calls, text messages, emails | 3 (2,9%)   | 12             | 1 (0,7%)                                    | 11           |
| 13 | Others                                 | 1 (1%)   | 13             | 1 (0,7%)                                    | 11           |

*Source: Compiled and calculated from survey results*

The survey results show that even for those who do not know and have never been to Moc Chau but intend to learn and travel to Moc Chau or those who have been to Moc Chau, there are 3 channels that survey respondents use to The most learned about Moc Chau are: “Social media”; “Travel Website, blog” and channel “Friends/acquaintances”.

**Table 3. Staying places in Moc Chau**

| No | Staying places        | Of the people who have travelled to Moc Chau |
|----|-----------------------|--|
| 1  | 1 star hotel          | 1 (0,7%)                                     |
| 2  | 2-3 stars hotel       | 44 (29,7%)                                   |
| 3  | 4-5 stars hotel       | 42 (28,4%)                                   |
| 4  | Motel                 | 6 (4,1%)                                     |
| 5  | Homestay              | 73 (49,3%)                                   |
| 6  | Friends/acquaintances | 5 (3,4 %)                                    |
| 7  | Guest house           | 7 (4,7%)                                     |
| 8  | Other places          | 7 (4,7%)                                     |

*Source: Compiled and calculated from survey results*

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Survey results for those who have been to Moc Chau, the 3 most chosen accommodation establishments are “Homestay”, “2-3-star hotel” and “4-5 star hotel”.

**Table 4. Sources of information about accommodation facilities**

| No | Sources of information | Of the people who have travelled to Moc Chau |
|----|------------------------|--|
| 1  | TV                     | 9 (6,1%)                                     |
| 2  | Radio                  | 4 (2,7%)                                     |
| 3  | Newspaper              | 9 (6,1%)                                     |
| 4  | Social Media           | 71 (48%)                                     |
| 5  | Travel websites/blogs  | 51 (34,5%)                                   |
| 6  | Influencers            | 23 (15,5%)                                   |
| 7  | Search engine          | 45 (30,4%)                                   |
| 8  | Friends/acquaintances  | 82 (55,4%)                                   |
| 9  | Others                 | 7 (4,9%)                                     |

*Source: Compiled and calculated from survey results*

The results show that, in choosing the type of accommodation, tourists find out through friends and acquaintances, through *social networking sites*, and *tourism websites and blogs* are the main search channels.

### 3.3. Tourist’s reviews about Moc Chau tourism Digital Marketing tools

In the research, the research team evaluated the frequency of appearance, level of attractiveness, and level of influence of Digital Marketing tools for Moc Chau tourism.

**Table 5. Frequency of appearances of Digital Marketing Tools**

| Frequency                  | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | Average score | Frequency of appearance | Average score order |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Social Media marketing     | 9  | 22 | 56 | 52 | 9  | 3.20          | Sometimes               | 1                   |
| Influencer/ Affiliate      | 20 | 43 | 49 | 33 | 3  | 2.70          | Sometimes               | 6                   |
| Multimedia Marketing       | 13 | 25 | 63 | 36 | 11 | 3.05          | Sometimes               | 2                   |
| Search Engine Optimization | 20 | 35 | 57 | 29 | 7  | 2.78          | Sometimes               | 5                   |
| Video Marketing            | 18 | 31 | 58 | 34 | 7  | 2.87          | Sometimes               | 3                   |
| Content marketing          | 15 | 38 | 56 | 32 | 7  | 2.85          | Sometimes               | 4                   |
| Virtual Reality Marketing  | 56 | 43 | 31 | 14 | 4  | 2.10          | Rarely                  | 8                   |
| Email marketing            | 70 | 41 | 22 | 13 | 2  | 1.89          | Rarely                  | 9                   |
| Blog marketing             | 52 | 43 | 30 | 16 | 7  | 2.21          | Rarely                  | 7                   |

*Convention: 1. Never; 2. Rarely; 3. Sometimes; 4. Frequent; 5. Very often*

*Source: Compiled and calculated from survey results*

The results show that for those who have been to Moc Chau, the following 3 digital marketing tools have the highest frequency: “Social Media Marketing”, “Multimedia Marketing” and “Video Marketing”. However, all three of these digital marketing tools have an average score of “sometimes”. The tools with the lowest frequency are Virtual Reality Marketing, Email marketing and Blog Marketing, the average score is “Rarely”.

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**Table 6. Attractiveness level of Digital Marketing tools for Moc Chau tourism**

| Attractiveness             | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | Average score | Level of Attractiveness | Average score order |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|---------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Social Media marketing     | 4  | 12 | 65 | 56 | 11 | 3.39          | Average                 | 1                   |
| Influencer/ Affiliate      | 11 | 19 | 64 | 44 | 10 | 3.16          | Average                 | 4                   |
| Multimedia Marketing       | 10 | 20 | 59 | 50 | 9  | 3.19          | Average                 | 3                   |
| Search Engine Optimization | 10 | 31 | 59 | 41 | 7  | 3.03          | Average                 | 6                   |
| Video Marketing            | 12 | 19 | 55 | 48 | 14 | 3.22          | Average                 | 2                   |
| Content marketing          | 11 | 23 | 65 | 46 | 3  | 3.05          | Average                 | 5                   |
| Vitual Reality Marketing   | 34 | 29 | 48 | 26 | 11 | 2.67          | Average                 | 7                   |
| Email marketing            | 50 | 32 | 44 | 20 | 2  | 2.27          | Unattractive            | 9                   |
|                            | 37 | 30 | 51 | 25 | 5  | 2.53          | Unattractive            | 8                   |

Convention: 1. Very unattractive; 2. Unattractive; 3. Average; 4. Attractive; 5. Very attractive

Source: Compiled and calculated from survey results

The results show that for people who have been to Moc Chau, the following 3 Digital Marketing tools are the most attractive: “Social Marketing”, “Marketing via multimedia” and “Multimedia Marketing”, “Video Marketing”. However, all three of these Digital Marketing tools only have an average score of “normal”, the least attractive tools are Email marketing and Blog Marketing, the average score is “Unattractive”.

**Table 7. Level of Influence Digital Marketing tools for Moc Chau tourism**

| Level of Influence         | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | Average Score | Level of Influence | Average score order |
|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|---------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Social Media marketing     | 2  | 7  | 49 | 76 | 14 | 3.63          | Influential        | 1                   |
| Influencer/ Affiliate      | 10 | 18 | 51 | 58 | 11 | 3.28          | Average            | 5                   |
| Multimedia Marketing       | 8  | 13 | 52 | 58 | 17 | 3.43          | Influential        | 2                   |
| Search Engine Optimization | 9  | 23 | 53 | 53 | 10 | 3.22          | Average            | 6                   |
| Video Marketing            | 12 | 18 | 47 | 52 | 19 | 3.32          | Average            | 3                   |
| Content marketing          | 8  | 22 | 52 | 49 | 17 | 3.30          | Average            | 4                   |
| Vitual Reality Marketing   | 25 | 28 | 49 | 33 | 13 | 2.87          | Average            | 7                   |
| Email marketing            | 41 | 35 | 42 | 24 | 6  | 2.45          | Not influential    | 9                   |
| Blog marketing             | 30 | 33 | 45 | 34 | 6  | 2.68          | Average            | 8                   |

Convention: 1. Very unaffected; 2. Not influential; 3. Average; 4. Influential; 5. Very influential

Source: Compiled and calculated from survey results

The results show that for people who have been to Moc Chau, the following 3 Digital Marketing tools have the highest level of influence: “Social Media Marketing”, “Multimedia Marketing”. Both Digital Marketing tools have an average score of “Influential”. In addition, some tools that are considered to have a “Average” level of influence are Video Marketing and Content Marketing. The tool with the least impact is Email Marketing, with an average score of “Not influential”.

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### 4. RESULTS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH BUSINESSES IN THE TOURISM SECTOR AT MOC CHAU ABOUT TOURISM DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS

#### 4.1. General information on the interviewees

**Table 8. General information on the interviewees**

| No. | Companies' name   | Address   | Business areas                        | Started year | Type of ownership | Main types of businesses |
|-----|---|---|---------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| C1  | Moc House Homestay  | Motel sub-area - Nong Truong Moc Chau - Moc Chau, Son La town, Viet Nam | Homestay                              | 2017         | Private           | Accommodation, hotel     |
| C2  | Homestay Hieu Nga   | Ban ang, Dong Sang district, Moc Chau, Son La, Viet Nam                 | Homestay                              | 2014         | Private           | Accommodation, hotel     |
| C3  | Mun Homestay  | Sub-area 3, Nong Truong town, Moc Chau                                  | Lodging service                       | 2019         | Private           | Accommodation, hotel     |
| C4  | Phuong Hoang Moc Chau International Development LLC company | Ban Ang, Dong Sang, Moc Chau, Son La, Viet Nam                          | Both investing and exploiting tourism | 2017         | Two-member LLC    | Accommodation, hotel     |

*Source: Compiled from in-depth interview results*

#### 4.2. Evaluation of company managers on the company's tourism Digital Marketing activities

*Regarding the use of Digital Marketing tools, the interview results show:*

**Table 9. Digital Marketing tools in use.**

| No. | Digital Marketing tools        | C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 |
|-----|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1   | Social Media Marketing         | x  |    | x  | x  |
| 2   | Influencer/Affiliate Marketing |    |    | x  | x  |
| 3   | Multimedia Marketing           | x  |    | x  | x  |
| 4   | Search Engine Optimization     |    |    | x  |    |
| 5   | Video Marketing                |    |    | x  | x  |
| 6   | Content Marketing              |    |    | x  | x  |
| 7   | Virtual Reality Marketing      |    |    |    |    |
| 8   | Email Marketing                |    |    | x  | x  |
| 9   | Blog Marketing                 |    |    |    |    |

*x shows that Digital Marketing tools are used in the corresponding line*

*Source: Compiled from in-depth interview results*

“Social Media Marketing” and “Multimedia Marketing” are the most used tools, by 3 out of 4 companies. “Search Engine Optimization” is the tool with the lowest usage, only 1 out of 4 companies. “Virtual Reality Marketing” and “Blog Marketing” are tooling no other company has put to use.

*Regarding the level of use of Digital Marketing tools:*

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**Table 10. Level of use of Digital Marketing tools of 4 companies conducting in-depth interviews**

| No. | Digital Marketing tools        | C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 |
|-----|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1   | Social Media Marketing         | 1  |    | 1  | 1  |
| 2   | Influencer/Affiliate Marketing | 3  |    | 4  | 2  |
| 3   | Multimedia Marketing           | 2  |    | 6  | 5  |
| 4   | Search Engine Optimization     |    |    | 3  |    |
| 5   | Video Marketing                |    |    | 5  | 3  |
| 6   | Content Marketing              |    |    | 2  | 4  |
| 7   | Virtual Reality Marketing      |    |    |    |    |
| 8   | Email Marketing                |    |    | 7  | 6  |
| 9   | Blog Marketing                 |    |    |    |    |

Annotate: the frequency of used tools is rated in order from 1 => 9, in which: 9. Very rarely used; 8. Rarely used.... => ....2. Usually use; 1. Used very often). Each tool corresponds to a score from 1 => 9

*Source: Compiled from in-depth interview results*

In-depth interview results show that 3 out of 4 companies rated “Social media marketing” as the most frequently used, Regarding the frequency of using each Digital Marketing tools:

**Table 11. Frequency of using Digital Marketing tools**

| No. | Digital Marketing tools        | C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 |
|-----|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1   | Social Media Marketing         | 4  |    | 5  | 5  |
| 2   | Influencer/Affiliate Marketing | 4  |    | 3  | 4  |
| 3   | Multimedia Marketing           | 4  |    | 5  | 3  |
| 4   | Search Engine Optimization     |    |    | 4  | 2  |
| 5   | Video Marketing                |    |    | 3  | 5  |
| 6   | Content Marketing              |    |    | 3  | 3  |
| 7   | Virtual Reality Marketing      |    |    |    |    |
| 8   | Email Marketing                |    |    | 1  | 1  |
| 9   | Blog Marketing                 |    |    |    |    |

Annotation: 1. Very little use or no use; 2. Rarely; 3. Medium; 4. Often; 5. A lot

*Source: Compiled from in-depth interview results*

According to the results of the in-depth interview, the most used Digital Marketing tool in 3 out of 4 interviewed companies are “Social Media Marketing” and “Multimedia Marketing”, “Email Marketing” is the tool rated least used by 2 out of 4 companies.

Regarding the effectiveness of using each Digital Marketing tools:

**Table 12. Effective use of Digital Marketing tools**

| No. | Digital Marketing tools        | C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 |
|-----|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1   | Social Media Marketing         | 4  |    | 5  | 5  |
| 2   | Influencer/Affiliate Marketing | 4  |    | 4  | 5  |

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|   |                            |   |  |   |   |
|---|----------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| 3 | Multimedia Marketing       | 4 |  | 5 | 4 |
| 4 | Search Engine Optimization |   |  | 5 | 3 |
| 5 | Video Marketing            |   |  | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | Content Marketing          |   |  | 3 | 4 |
| 7 | Virtual Reality Marketing  |   |  |   |   |
| 8 | Email Marketing            |   |  | 1 | 2 |
| 9 | Blog Marketing             |   |  |   |   |

Annotation: 1. Not effective; 2. Little to no effect; 3. Average; 4. Quite effective; 5. Very effective

Source: Compiled from in-depth interview results

According to the results of in-depth interviews, the most effective Digital Marketing tools for 3 out of 4 interviewed companies are “Marketing via social media” and “Marketing via multimedia” and “Influencer/Affiliate Marketing”, “Email marketing” is the tool rated the least effective by 2 out of 4 companies.

Regarding Digital Marketing tools expected to be used frequently in the future with interviewed companies.

**Table 13. Digital marketing tools that are expected to be used frequently in the future**

| No. | Digital Marketing tools        | C1 | C2 | C3 | C4 |
|-----|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1   | Social Media Marketing         | x  | x  | x  |    |
| 2   | Influencer/Affiliate Marketing |    |    | x  | x  |
| 3   | Multimedia Marketing           |    |    | x  |    |
| 4   | Search Engine Optimization     |    |    |    |    |
| 5   | Video Marketing                |    |    | x  |    |
| 6   | Content Marketing              |    |    | x  |    |
| 7   | Virtual Reality Marketing      |    |    |    |    |
| 8   | Email Marketing                |    |    |    |    |
| 9   | <b>Blog Marketing</b>          |    |    |    |    |

Source: Compiled from in-depth interview results

According to the results of in-depth interviews, “Social media marketing” (3 out of 4 companies) and “Influencer / affiliate marketing” (2 out of 4 companies) are the tools intended to be put to the most frequently use “Search Engine Optimization” “Virtual Reality Marketing” “Email Marketing” and “Blogging Marketing” are tools no company is planning to use.

Some issues about advantages/disadvantages when using Digital Marketing were discussed by companies and the research team summarized in Table 14:

**Table 14. Advantages/disadvantages of using Digital Marketing and some recommendations from 4 interviewed companies.**

| No. | Questions   | C1                   | C2 | C3   | C4  |
|-----|---|----------------------|----|--|---|
| 1   | What are the main advantages of the company today related to Digital Marketing? | Simple and Effective |    | - Practical tools in use<br>- More guests awareness, interaction, and reservations | - There are resources to make many videos with rich content |

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|   |   |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| 2 | What are companies' current main difficulties related to Digital Marketing?   | Can not run advertisements by themselves  | No advertisements, little awareness on the company<br>Company's point: Promoting through patrons is also simple, with enthusiastic service, customers will come | - The cost is a bit high, some tools are not very effective (for example: running ads, not effective for the amount of money spent, not up to expectation)  | - Human resources are crucial, the company's marketing human resources are still weak<br>- Investors are appreciating more traditional Marketing |
| 3 | To attract more tourists to Moc Chau, in your opinion, what practical solutions or policies should the tourism management agencies as well as the Moc Chau People's Committee have? | - Moc Chau tourism has created many opportunities for growth (for example, expanding roads, organizing tourism conferences ...)<br>- Need to continue investing in infrastructure | There must be a program to support advertising and provide visual information   | The policies of tourism management and Moc Chau People's Committee have been very generous to businesspeople, providing a lot of support.<br>It is necessary to turn Moc Chau into a proper town and a national tourist area. | - The Committee needs to continue to create many events to contribute ideas - share knowledge and support resources                              |

### 5. DISCUSSIONS

The percentage of people who know Moc Chau and have ever traveled to Moc Chau accounts for a large proportion, for those who do not know and have never been to Moc Chau, the percentage of people who want to learn and travel to Moc Chau accounts for a high percentage, and they also want to learn about Moc Chau through Digital Marketing tools, this is a good signal for local tourism as well as a requirement that Moc Chau needs to increase the use and improve the efficiency of the tourism tools. Digital Marketing tools.

The survey results also recorded a high rate of visits to Moc Chau 2 times or more (47%), showing that Moc Chau is attractive to tourists, however most people come to Moc Chau above 1 year ago. Therefore, there needs to be campaigns to attract customers to come back to Moc Chau more, many times a year. Therefore, it is necessary to have information about the differences between seasons in Moc Chau, promote tourist attractions, festivals and the time of ethnic festivals in Moc Chau to attract visitors. destination, and wish to visit Moc Chau in different seasons, as well as visit different tourist destinations of Moc Chau.

According to those surveyed, visitors to Moc Chau often choose to stay overnight in Moc Chau, so it is necessary to develop accommodation to attract more guests. The results also show that the most chosen type of accommodation is lower middle-class accommodation: *Homestays and 2-3star hotels*, this is why investors need to focus on developing this type of accommodation in Moc Chau.

From the survey results of the research team, it can be seen that *“Social media marketing”* of Moc Chau tourism leads in terms of frequency of appearance, level of attraction and level of influence on those surveyed. In addition, the results show that the majority of tourists found out about Moc Chau’s attractions and accommodation facilities through “Social networking sites”. Thus, this tool can be assessed as a Digital Marketing tool that will be effective to help develop tourism in Moc Chau. Investors and Moc Chau government agencies need to continue promoting their brand on social networks, ensuring relevant, quality and attractive content.

With the tool *“Marketing through multimedia tools”* of Moc Chau tourism also leads in frequency of appearance, level of attraction and level of influence for tourists who have come to Moc Chau. It can be assessed that this digital marketing tool can have some potential in the present and in the future for tourism units in Moc Chau. The *“Video Marketing”* and *“Content Marketing”* tools have average frequency, appeal, and influence and need more optimization.

Although the tool *“Influencer Marketing - Influencer / Affiliate”* is not as influential and attractive to survey participants as other tools, it is one that has a lot of potential for travel agencies, which is why this digital marketing tool needs to be promoted and developed. It is necessary to have representatives for Moc Chau tourist destinations, and organize big events, especially on Tet and other festivals, to attract more visitors to Moc Chau.

Tourism units also need to take advantage of available resources. Encourage website development, run advertisements, promote product brands on big platforms like Google, since Google has segments such as Google Network, Google Display Network, keyword optimization (SGO) associated with the website. In addition, tourism units should also put into use tools that are not yet widely used such as *“Email Marketing”*, *“Blog Marketing”* and *“Virtual Reality Marketing”*. In particular, although *“Blog*

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**Marketing**” has a low level of influence, frequency of appearance and attractiveness, the majority of tourists who have never been to Moc Chau would often search for information there. Hence, tourism units in Moc Chau need to do research in order to diversify the use of tools and improve the effectiveness of these tools.

Furthermore, Moc Chau needs to continue and promote the application of information technology in tourism development such as: Creating 3D/360 interactive tourism maps; promotional videos and clips: “Ta So - Strange Land”, “Moc Chau Culinary Street”; operating websites promoting Moc Chau tourism with domain names such as Checkinmocchau.vn; creating tourism softwares and apps in Moc Chau... Maintaining the activities of the Moc Chau District Information - Tourism Management Team; establishing Tour Guide Clubs... In addition, Moc Chau needs to develop many content and service modules, integrate digital payment systems and digital identification systems... in order to attract hundreds of thousands, or even millions of people to install and use in the future, becoming a valuable data resource to help Moc Chau analyze and put into use.

## 6. CONCLUSION

*In the current explosive development trend of digital technology and digital communication, digital transformation of the tourism industry is extremely necessary to expand connectivity and introduce Moc Chau tourism products to domestic tourists. and international. While traditional Marketing only focuses on “impressing”, Digital Marketing focuses on a new aspect, which is to allow users to experience products and services, especially in the booming era of the Internet. . Continuing to improve Digital Marketing tools for Moc Chau tourism is necessary to further enhance tourism value in this land, increase Moc Chau's accessibility to the world, and improve service quality. and management, towards sustainable development. Moc Chau realizes that the application of information technology and implementation of digital transformation to develop the district's spearhead service industry is an urgent requirement.*

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