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WEB 2.0 IN RESTAURANTS: INSIGHTS REGARDING TRIPADVISOR'S USE IN LISBON

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ABSTRACT

Web 2.0 in restaurants: insights regarding TripAdvisor's use in Lisbon
João Pedro Saraiva

TripAdvisor is a Web 2.0 platform that gathers information about restaurants, hotels and sightseeing spots, generated by users for users. It also has an application for mobile devices, which allows users to know what they desire at anytime, anywhere, increasing their user experience (Lugano 2008).

This dissertation is focused on the use of this platform by restaurants and users. As so, theoretical concepts like Web 2.0, User-Generated Content, Mobile Social Network, Electronic Word of Mouth and Mobile Marketing are studied in order to know whether or not TripAdvisor is being used and, if positive, in what conditions.

With these theories in mind, a dissertation model is created. Thus, willing to know whether or not Lisbon restaurants and users of TripAdvisor are taking advantage of this platform (i.e. answer the research question), several secondary questions arise. These are answered by the nine hypotheses generated, which are based on the model's goals.

Subsequently, in order to collect information from restaurants and users that can verify or not the hypotheses, two surveys are created. Intermediary conclusions that aim to validate each hypothesis are drawn from the results obtained.

When analysing these intermediary conclusions, the results show two different answers to the research question. On one hand, restaurants are taking advantage from TripAdvisor's platform, even if they are not using all the capacities offered. On the other hand, Lisbon users are not yet taking benefits from this platform.

This inconsistency can be explained due to the fact that restaurants centre TripAdvisor around tourists and Lisbon habitants use it outside of Lisbon while travelling. Thus, Lisbon citizens do not use this platform on a daily basis: they do it while visiting other cities. In comparison, Lisbon restaurants use this platform in order to attract tourists, which mean that they are taking advantage of TripAdvisor but not from Lisbon users.

RESUMO

Web 2.0 in restaurants: insights regarding TripAdvisor's use in Lisbon
João Pedro Saraiva

O TripAdvisor é uma plataforma Web 2.0 que agrega informação sobre restaurantes, hotéis e espaços culturais, gerado por utilizadores para utilizadores. Esta plataforma possui também uma aplicação para dispositivos móveis, que permite aos utilizadores saber o que desejam em qualquer momento e lugar, aumentando a sua participação (Lugano 2008).

A presente dissertação foca-se no uso desta plataforma tanto por parte dos clientes como dos restaurantes. Assim, conceitos como *Web 2.0, User-Generated Content, Mobile Social Network, Electronic Word of Mouth* e *Mobile Marketing* são estudados para perceber se o TripAdvisor está a ser usado e, em caso afirmativo, sob que condições.

Tendo estes conceitos presentes, é criado um modelo para a dissertação. Neste, e com o objetivo de saber se os restaurantes e os clientes na zona de Lisboa estão a tirar partido da plataforma TripAdvisor (isto é, responder à pergunta de investigação), várias questões secundárias são levantadas. Estas são respondidas pelas nove hipóteses geradas, que por sua vez são baseadas nos objetivos do modelo.

Consequentemente, e de forma a recolher informação acerca dos restaurantes e clientes que permite validar ou não as hipóteses, dois questionários são criados. Com os resultados obtidos, conclusões intermédias que visam validar cada hipótese são geradas.

Os resultados da análise das conclusões intermédias apresentam duas respostas diferentes para a pergunta de investigação. Por um lado, os restaurantes estão a tirar vantagens da plataforma do TripAdvisor, mesmo não usando todos os serviços oferecidos. Por outro lado, os clientes lisboetas ainda não estão a tirar partido desta plataforma.

Esta inconsistência pode ser explicada devido ao facto de os restaurantes e clientes de Lisboa estarem a usar a plataforma para turistas e enquanto turistas, respectivamente. Assim, os utilizadores lisboetas não utilizam o TripAdvisor no seu quotidiano: fazem-no enquanto visitantes de outras cidades. Em comparação, os restaurantes de Lisboa usam esta plataforma para atrair turistas, o que significa que estão a tirar benefícios do TripAdvisor mas não por parte dos clientes lisboetas.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Today, people are starting to use mobile social networks to find things that they are interested in and that are recommended by friends or unknown people with common interests (Humphreys 2007). These mobile social networks platforms are being developed in order to satisfy the needs that emerge in a certain time and place (Humphreys 2007). To accomplish this, the help of user-generated content is being taken, once that it is becoming a more reliable source in the decision making process (O'Connor 2010). A good example of these mobile social network platforms that were created to fulfil the needs through user-generated content is TripAdvisor, the world's largest travel site (TripAdvisor 2013).

TripAdvisor is a platform that gives several tools to organize journeys (flights, hotels, restaurants) through recommendations that are brought out by real travellers. It has around 200 million unique monthly visitors and more than 100 million reviews and opinions (TripAdvisor 2013). In January of 2012, TripAdvisor announced that it was the world's second most downloaded travel app, right after Google Earth (TripAdvisor 2012).

This platform has functionalities such as finding a restaurant or a hotel nearby, choose a vacation destination, write reviews, rating the places that users previously visited or even organize an entire journey since the flight reservation till the best places to visit. Customers can use TripAdvisor functionalities through a website and/or mobile application.

This dissertation is focused on TripAdvisor, and how the user-generated content can influence both the restaurant industry and the platform users. One main research question leads this dissertation:

RQ: Are Lisbon restaurants and customers of TripAdvisor taking advantage of its platform?

Several subsidiary questions are generated in order to work around the research question: what drives the use of this platform? Are travellers using it on a regular basis? Is the user-generated content affecting the process of decision-making among TripAdvisor users? Are restaurant owners capable of distinguishing TripAdvisor customers? Are they taking advantage of the reviews and ratings that previous clients have created? And are Portuguese restaurants and TripAdvisor users exploring TripAdvisor platform?

The aim is not only to comprehend if TripAdvisor can influence the Portuguese restaurants strategy but also to find out if TripAdvisor is changing customers' habits when they have to choose a restaurant. In addition, this dissertation examines TripAdvisor's platform in order to know if restaurants are using its service and if people are using on a daily

basis and for what purposes.

To achieve the dissertation goal, TripAdvisor functionalities are studied and detailed. On the other hand, theoretical concepts about social networks such as Web 2.0, mobile social network, user-generated content, electronic word-of-mouth and mobile marketing are used in order to create a model that leads to different questions. Given this, and willing to achieve an answer to those questions, several hypotheses are put forward.

In order to gather information to validate or not the hypotheses surveys are elaborated and launched, reaching both Lisbon TripAdvisor users and restaurant owners. With the findings obtained, intermediary conclusions are made. From these, the research question is answered.

Restaurant industry in Lisbon is also analyzed to find out how many restaurants are, in this area, registered in TripAdvisor.

The structure of this dissertation begins with the literature review in the chapter 2. The theoretical concepts are exposed with the aim of understanding the changes that they brought to the market. In chapter 3, TripAdvisor is described and analysed. Then, in order to answer the research question, methodology is presented and surveys are done – chapter 4. Chapter 5 analyses the results from the survey and presents the hypotheses' validation. In chapter 6, the last one, conclusions are made and the research question is answered.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to describe technology concepts such as web 2.0, user-generated content, mobile social network, electronic word-of-mouth and mobile marketing in order to fully comprehend TripAdvisor and understand how enterprise business models are changing due to the impact of these technologies.

2.1 Web 2.0

The term Web 2.0 was introduced in a series of seminars by Tim O'Reilly in 2004 (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Martignomi & Stanoevska-Slabeva 2007; O'Connor 2010; Tredinnick 2006).

O' Reilly defined Web 2.0 as follows: "Web 2.0 is the network as platform, spanning all collected devices; Web 2.0 applications are those that make the most of the intrinsic advantages of that platform: delivering software as a continually-updated service that gets better the more people use it, consuming and remixing data from multiple-sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and services in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an architecture of participation, and going beyond the page metaphor of Web 1.0 to deliver rich user experiences." (Martignomi & Stanoevska-Slabeva 2007; Wilson 2006).

With Web 2.0, Internet is not static any longer. It is not just sending e-mails or visiting simple pages and navigating through them anymore (Laudon & Traver 2011; Murugesan 2007). Web 2.0 shares a new approach between users and developers of software that start to use World Wide Web (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Users can create, participate, rate and share information at the same time that they build communities and distribute content (Laudon & Traver 2011).

Information is easier to access and it is the user that is now in control (O'Connor 2010). The experts that once created the information released (one-to-many) are losing their influence (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Laudon & Traver 2011; O'Connor 2010). The user participation has become significant.

Web 2.0 is not just an evolution from the past. It is a all new sort of internet, which also offers a set of new web technologies (Murugesan 2007) that "sets the user-content at the heart of its development" (Balasubramaniam 2009).

An example of these web-based services is Wikis: web tools that allow users to generate content and manage it. In Wikis, the power is given to the customers (Tredinnick 2006). Anyone can share their knowledge by creating and/or editing an article (Murugesan 2007). Wikipedia is the most known Wikis example. Thanks to users' collaboration it has "become the most successful online encyclopedia, far surpassing the professional encyclopedia such as Encarta or Britannica" (Laudon & Traver). The more users participate in an article review, the more complete and successful it becomes (O'Connor 2010). This is a good example of the growing importance of users and of the reliability of their knowledge.

Another example that Web 2.0 offers is RSS – Really Simple Syndication. RSS allows users to have updated information in their computers, phones or tablets (Laudon & Traver 2011) through a XML that sends a brief description about what was published (article, blog, news, etc.) (Murugesan 2007). It enables an easy access to fresh information (Kiryakova et al. 2011) and, at the same time, it aggregates all the information in the same space (Tredinnick 2006). It is easier for the reader to keep up all the information that is generated in the Internet.

Blogs, Mashups, Folksonomy and Tags are other new web technologies that are worldwide consumed. For instance, social services such as Twitter or Facebook and applications like YouTube or Photobucket have millions of users registered worldwide that interact with each other everyday through the creation of new content.

All these new web technologies share a common pattern: they are made by user for user (O'Connor 2010). These new applications and sites are interactive and rely on ordinary people. In addition, these types of technologies are developed to reach large audiences (Laudon & Traver 2011) and can be used worldwide (global reach).

However, Web 2.0 is not enough nowadays. With mobile devices being part of our lives (Kaplan 2012), Web 2.0 has evolved to Mobile Web 2.0. As Kaplan & Haenlein wrote in 2010: "Mobile Web 2.0 evolutions will grow from a mere \$5.5 billion today to an impressive \$22.4 billion by 2013". The main factor is related with mobile social media applications (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010): between July 2011 and July 2012, in U.S., mobile applications usage increased around 85% due to the rising number of applications and smartphones (Nielsen 2012).

By Pew Research Center, in 2020, the predominantly Internet connection will be through mobile devices (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010).

2.1.1 Influence of Web 2.0 in Business

With users having an important role in Web 2.0, enterprises need to adapt to these new technologies through the change of their businesses models (Kiryakova et al. 2011).

These days, companies are not just sending information to their customers. Instead, they are sharing the information with them (Kiryakova et al. 2011). Customers are giving their opinion about a product or a brand: they are creating information that enterprises can use to become more efficient (Kiryakova et al. 2011). Additionally, users are contributing to the creation of new products towards free software tools and communities platforms that are provided by enterprises (Laudon & Traver 2012).

Previously, enterprises controlled the information that was released through public relations and press-announcements (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). By giving this power to customers, companies are loosing control of that information that is created and shared between them (Kiryakova et al. 2011). Now, corporations are just spectators that don't have the power to change the feedback made by their customers (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). For instance, Wikipedia does not allow the participation of companies in their community (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Knowing this, enterprises are aware that Web 2.0 technologies need to be properly used.

A study conducted by McKinsey & Company, showed that companies exploring Web 2.0 "have developed a new way of bringing technology into businesses" (Bughin & Manyika 2007). Enterprises can target their customers in an efficient way, creating new opportunities and new markets (Kiryakova et al. 2011). Given this, companies intend to increase their investments in Web 2.0 technologies since they consider these technologies strategic in their business model (Bughin & Manyika 2007).

2.2 User-Generated Content

Internet is "more embedded in people's lives" and users have been exploring it to share their opinions through user-generated content applications developed for that purpose (OECD 2007). Indeed, and because of Internet powerfulness (Web 2.0), this kind of applications are being successfully released (Martignomi & Stanoevska-Slabeva 2007). User-generated content is the main characteristic of Web 2.0 – participative web (OECD 2007).

User-generated content became well-known in 2005 (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010) and in 2006, TIME magazine elected "you" as Person of the Year. TIME decided to honour all the

unknown web users that create, collaborate and share content and allowed the spread of the Web (Van Dijck 2009).

User-generated content is defined by OECD (2007) as public content accessible over Internet that is made by users through a creative effort without intervention of firms (Balasubramaniam 2009; Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Still, there is some controversy regarding this definition (Ochoa & Duval 2008). For instance, there is some generated content that is only available for private communities or firms that are sponsoring blogs. Even so, OECD definition reflects only the main features of user-generated content (Ochoa & Duval 2008).

People participate in user-generated content platforms in order to express themselves, have reputation and communicate with others (OECD 2007). However, this participation is only possible due to technological, social, economical and institutional and legal drivers that facilitate the creation of content (OECD 2007).

Nowadays, with the improvement of technology, it is possible to upload and download large files like videos or pictures to the Web (OECD 2007) . User-generated content is not limited to simple text any longer due to the fact that Internet is faster and its broadband availability has increased (OECD 2007). In addition, hardware development in mobile phones or digital cameras (better features) helped users to share content easily and with higher quality (Balasubramaniam 2009). On the other hand, improvements in software platforms enable users to create, edit and share information with no professional background on the subject. These applications allow users to increase their participation on the Web (OECD 2007).

The content creators are usually young people. They are the ones that are more inclined to create content, participate in social networks and follow new trends (Balasubramaniam 2009). These users are early adopters and admirers of new technologies (OECD 2007). Indeed, it is this young generation that is driving the use of user-generated content due to their IT skills, motivation to be online and their will to expose personal information (OECD 2007).

With the combination of users' IT skills and technological development, there are more ideas emerging to create user-generated content applications (Balasubramaniam 2009). These applications are becoming desirable by companies since the information created by customers can be used to increase companies' revenues (OECD 2007). For instance, Netflix purposed a contest where users could improve their video recommendation algorithm by giving ideas. This contest had a million dollars prize and attract over 25.000 participants (Shenkan & Sichel 2007).

In addition, user-generated content creation rate is one of its key features due to less production efforts and the higher number of creators (Cha et al. 2007). For example, since 1888 until 2007, IMDb has close to one million movies in its database. On the other hand, YouTube needs only two weeks to produce the same amount if the users continue to upload 65.000 new videos everyday (Cha et al. 2007).

User-generated content has also become more popular because of the implementation of legal methods (OECD 2007). For example, Creative Commons licenses permit that customers utilize the content created by others for free if they mentioned the author name (Balasubramaniam 2009). These kind of methods give more flexible access to other users' works (OECD 2007). In addition, the end-user licensing is rising (OECD 2007). Creators are becoming more protected.

There are different types of user-generated content. People can create information as text, images, audio, video, citizen journalism, educational content, mobile content, virtual content (OECD 2007) and share it in platforms like blogs, wikis, podcasting, social networks sites, filesharing sites, virtual worlds (OECD 2007). Therefore, user-generated content has a more volatile behaviour since it is difficult to control who created it and where it is shared (Cha et al. 2007). For instance, in the past, users watched the same TV programmes at the same time. However, currently, it is possible to see personalized videos thanks to the Web and the constantly update of new videos (Cha et al. 2007).

Individuals offer the content without any boundary and for free (Martignomi & Stanoevska-Slabeva 2007). Even without any reward regarding their contributions, the number of people creating and sharing content is rising and it is becoming a powerful source for companies (Balasubramaniam 2009). These contents can be used everywhere and without any cost, firms are exploiting customers' knowledge to better understand their interests and needs (Balasubramaniam 2009).

According to OECD (2007), companies role regarding user-generated content has increased. Firms are funding, gathering, spreading and hosting these user-generated content platforms (OECD 2007) in order to have access to their databases and use them for their own benefit. It is known that even if the goal of these platforms in an initial phase is to increase the user community, the potential to generate money in the future is huge with the application of business models in a large scale (OECD 2007). YouTube is a great example. Three students founded it in 2005 and Google bought it in 2006 for $1.6 billion. For Google, this acquisition was not about the technology itself, but about YouTube users database (Van Dijck 2009). Integration with Google search engine was the main reason (Van Dijck 2009).

2.3   Mobile Social Network

Social network is a key concept that was introduced for the first time in 1954 by Barnes and it became famous through the "Small World Problem" investigation done by Milgram in 1967 (Lugano 2008). A social network includes a group of people that share interests, communicate or divide the same space (Laudon & Traver 2012). However, they are restricted to a certain time and place (O'Connor 2010; Ziv & Mulloth 2006).

With the emergence of Internet, these social network started to get place in a virtual world, where time and place are not a boundary anymore (Ziv & Mulloth 2006). People do not need to meet face to face any longer (Laudon & Traver 2012).

These social networks platforms evolved and now they are an online meeting point where people talk about specific subjects (e.g. TripAdvisor), share their opinions, photos and videos (e.g. Wordpress) and keep in touch with friends and colleagues (e.g. Facebook) (Ziv & Mulloth 2006). Indeed, social networks sites like Facebook, Google Plus or Cyworld "primarily support pre-existing social relations" (Boyd & Ellison 2007; Nielsen 2012).

It allows people to be connected and to share their social networks with others. It offers the opportunity of connecting with individuals which they would not be able to meet if it were not these kinds of platforms (Boyd & Ellison 2007). Therefore, social network sites simplify the way information is exchanged and discussed and how people interact (O'Connor 2010). It is the most popular online activity in the world (comScore 2011).

Lugano (2008), by quoting Rheingold (2002), refers that with the evolution of mobile technologies and Internet development, there is a new way of communication. With the improvement of mobile platforms, social networks are not only accessed through websites anymore. People are using their mobile devices to communicate with each other – mobile social network (Ziv & Mulloth 2006).

Mobile devices are the future of social networking since they offer the possibility to be connected in real time and on-the-go (comScore 2011). Indeed, mobile devices are increasing their usage when compared with computers. However, the use of computers is still the most used tool, but over the last years had decreased (comScore 2011; Nielsen 2012).

The Social Media Report 2012, by Nielsen, refers that in the U.S. 30% of the people mobile time is used in social networks. It is more than in any other category of sites. Social networking is all about mobile when it comes to access social content (Nielsen 2012).

Lugano (2008) defined mobile social network as the users' patterns of interconnection with others emerging through the social use of mobile devices. The cooperation between

social network websites and mobile social applications (e.g. TripAdvisor; FourSquare; etc.) allows people to interact at anytime, anywhere - ubiquity (Lugano 2008). Therefore, social network websites have created mobile applications that increase the user experience and brand recognition (comScore 2011).

Over the time, mobile social network has evolved and is now in a new stage, thanks to location-based services (Ziv & Mulloth 2006). These location-based services have helped mobile social network applications developing. They are now capable of knowing the user exact position and use that information to alert their friends and colleagues or even help them to find their destinations (Global Positioning Systems) (Ziv & Mulloth 2006).

With location-based service, social network that before existed regardless people geographical place, is now associated to a specific location where people maintain their social ties (Ziv & Mulloth 2006).

A good example that joins together the functionalities of mobile social network and location-based service is Dodgeball (Humphreys 2007; Ziv & Mulloth 2006). This service was created in 2000 and helps people meet in a certain city through location-based information (Humphreys 2007; Ziv & Mulloth 2006). With Dodgeball, individuals can share their location with their friends and colleagues' through mobile devices. Users can also send messages to their Dodgeball friends about a party, a joke, a promotion, etc. that is happening (Humphreys 2007). This service worked in simple mobile phones without the need to download or buy anything to use it (Ziv & Mulloth 2006).

Mobile social networks are changing the way people interact between themselves. Indeed, the content created by these platforms its becoming personalized (one-to-one) due to the accessibility of mobile social network tools that before were difficult to acquire (Ziv & Mulloth 2006).

However, and knowing that social networks are more incorporated in peoples lives because of mobile technology (comScore 2011), there are some limitations: small screens, connectivity, privacy concerns and security (Ziv & Mulloth 2006). These constraints do not make it possible to take all the advantages from mobile social networks.

2.3.1 Mobile Social Networks in Organisations

Companies are using social network platforms to promote their business. Some of them are present in social netoworks in order to build brand communities, another ones are present to do marketing research (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). For instance, companies are

creating Facebook profiles to increase their brand awareness through promotions, discounts or even using Facebook as a distribution channel (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Another example to increase the firm visibily is the like button on Facebook. This is the most common action made by users after a watching a social adverstisiment (Nielsen 2012). By being in these kind of platforms, companies can have a more accurate result about a campaign or a new product.

Furthermore, Amis (2007) quoted by O'Connor (2010) reported that social networks begun to have the same influence as television regarding customers purchases (offline and online). It is easier to search for information thanks to search engines that increase the firms' visibility. (O'Connor 2010).

Still, enterprises need to be aware how active social networks are and how fast they change (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010) What today it is assured, tomorrow could be not in the virtual world anymore (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). It is important that companies use social network applications with attention.

Kaplan & Haenlein wrote some advices that firms should be aware of, which are presented next. Firms need to choose carefully the applications in which they want to be present. The message and target of the company need to match the users interests (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). By being in these social networks applications, companies are more exposed to users' participation and collaboration. It is not just about advertsing and selling anymore (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). Companies need to be sure that all the activities are aligned and integrated between the online and offline channel in order to make the message simple and clear (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010), with no misunderstandings.

On the other hand, companies need to be active and interesting to their customers. Firms must interact with their users and keep them updated with the latest information (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). In addition, know what their customers like to talk about, what they want to hear, what their interests are and what they value is essential for a company that is involved with social networks (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). For instance, Starbucks allows their clients to share ideas. These ideas can be voted by others and the best ones are executed. The goal is to develop products and services that match customers expectations (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010).

From the companies' point of view, these social networks are an opportunity to increase their business (Ziv & Mulloth 2006). With the information that is exchanged between individuals, enterprises can easily understand what they want.

In addition, and thanks to mobile devices, the geographical proximity between users and companies can help businesses to achieve success. For example, firms using mobile

applications are able to do specific sales promotion and discounts to their customers through location-based service (Kaplan 2012). What in the past was considered boring (sales promotion), can now become interesting due to the use of mobile devices (Kaplan 2012). It is easier to target the right customers and increase efficiency given the fact that time and place are not an edge anymore (Ziv & Mulloth 2006).

2.4 Electronic Word-of-Mouth

Offline word-of-mouth, as various articles have pointed out, has been playing an important responsibility regarding consumers' buying decision (Gruen et al. 2006; O'Connor 2010).

Indeed, authors have defined word-of-mouth in a similar way. For example, Arndt (1967) defined it has an "oral, person-to-person communication between a perceived non-commercial communicator and a receiver concerning a brand, a product, or a service offered for sale". Or, as Zhang et al. (2010) quoting Richins (1983), word-of-mouth "refers to interpersonal communications among consumers concerning their personal experiences and evaluations of a firm or a product".

As it can be seen, before Internet, the "water cooler effect" prevailed. People interacted in small groups and shared information between each other (O'Connor 2010).

Nowadays, the development of Internet has brought opportunities for users. They can now interact and share opinions regarding products and services over the Internet (Zhang et al. 2010).

Given this, word-of-mouth evolved and it is now known as electronic word-of-mouth: "any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet" (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). A successful case is Amazon.com that since 1995 has been offering the possibility to their users to review or rate. As a matter of fact, these are the most popular features in this website, ensuring its popularity (New York Times 2004).

Internet is now seen as a source and a channel for word-of-mouth (Gruen et al. 2006). Furthermore, when compared with offline (traditional) word-of-mouth, it needs extra skills and conditions that are relevant in the online atmosphere (Gruen et al. 2006).

Over the years, the number of user-generated content platforms has increased and now it is possible to rate and review several categories of products and services such us hotels, books, cars, restaurants, among others. Therefore, the competition over the Internet between

similar products and services to attract consumers' attention has increased. Even if consumers have more options to review, their time is the same so they need to choose which information they want to see more carefully (Zhang et al. 2010).

Anyhow, the more online popularity a product or a service has, the more success it may have in the future since opinions are easily spread and accessible by others using different formats and types of platforms (Zhang et al. 2010). Hence, as Doh & Hwang (2009) mentions, the electronic word-of-mouth with higher popularity is more influential when compared with lower popularity. Doh & Hwang (2009) also refers that "consumer-related factors, such as involvement with and prior knowledge about the product, greatly influence word-of-mouth effects".

These reviews help customers to reduce their risks and uncertainties since it provides precise, comprehensive and reachable information and works as a recommendation (O'Connor 2010; Zhang et al. 2010). Indeed, in products or services where some features are difficult to identify, word-of-mouth plays a major role (Zhang et al. 2010).

On the other hand, findings made by Bickart & Schidler (2001) and quoted by Gruen et al. (2006) advocate that word-of-mouth, when compared with marketer-provided websites, is more trustful and have higher probability of enhancing empathy with consumers. In addition, to spread the word it is not necessary to spend money in features like brochures or advertisements anymore (Gruen et al. 2006; O'Connor 2010).

However, the facility that users have to create and access reviews has carried some problems. Sometimes, it is not easy for the user to choose the information that fits better or, on the other side, they do not have enough resources to compare all the reviews. This can lead to bad choices and afterwards to disappointment (O'Connor 2010).

Another problem associated is the reviews' credibility. Recommendations can be produced by enterprises to improve their results and help the customers in their decision-making process (O'Connor 2010). On the other hand, they can also generate bad reviews regarding competitors to decrease their prestige (O'Connor 2010).

As O'Connor (2010) wrote, by quoting Keates (2007), a fake review can be identified if its different from the average and classifies other establishments nearby as better positioned. Another indicators that can identify if a review is true or not, are the number of times that a user visited the website and if users have posted only about one business (O'Connor 2010). The more a user visited a website and the more reviews are written, the less likely it is of being a fake review.

For instance, in order to prevent these problems, TripAdvisor users that make a review or rating are obligate to agree with their terms and conditions. For the ones that do not respect this, TripAdvisor has a clear message: "we have zero tolerance for fake reviews" (Jeacle & Carter 2011).

Even with tools to prevent fake reviews, it is not possible to control all of them. However, opinion platforms that have a huge reviews' database have less probability to have fake recommendations once that the true ones cannibalize these (O'Connor 2010).

2.5 Mobile Marketing

Over time, mobile technologies have been improving and penetration rates regarding mobile devices have been increasing (Varnali & Toker 2010). Given these developments, mobile marketing has become desirable for companies since it is a huge revenue generator (Varnali & Toker 2010). Indeed, and taking into consideration eMarketer (2007) quoted by Varnali & Toker (2007), this area is predicted to surpass 16 billion dollars in US between 2011 and 2012.

In order to better define mobile marketing, this topic is focused in Kaplan (2012) article: "If you love something, let it go mobile: Mobile marketing and mobile social media 4x4."

Using Kaplan (2012) definition, mobile marketing is "any marketing activity conducted through a ubiquitous network to which consumers are constantly connected using a personal mobile device". This definition requires the omnipresence of and a constant access to Internet under the use of a personal device like a mobile phone or tablet (Kaplan 2012)

For Kaplan (2012), there are four types of mobile phone applications having in mind this mobile marketing definition: victims, strangers, patrons and groupies.

The first one, victims, is the one where companies know their customers and send them information without asking permission (push strategy with high knowledge).

Strangers, the second application, is universal information that is transmited to a large amouth of mobile devices users that company does not know (push strategy with low knowledge).

The third application, pull strategy with high knowlegde, is a one-to-one communication. Customers actively share personal information with enterprises and give the permission to receive information. This kind of applications is know as patrons. From a study

made by Nielsen (2012), 26% of the people are confortable with advertisement based in their personal information.

The last application is about groupies: a pull strategy with low knowledge. In this case, customers do not share personal information with companies but, on the other hand, give permission to receive information (Kaplan 2012).

Kaplan (2012) also differentiates the mobile social media applications in four types, taking into account mobile marketing. These type of applications are based in user-generated content, giving users an opportunity to create and share content, which give to enterprises an opportunity to better comprehend their customers.

Given this, mobile social media applications can be classified in quick and slow-timers and in space-timers and space-locators (Kaplan 2012).

Quick-timers are applications based in users that have high time-sensitivity but no location-sensitivity. For instance, users have interest in share messages in a particularly moment. For instance, they update their status on Facebook using their mobile devices in order to be become more closeness.

The second classification is slow-timers. In this case, for example, users use their mobile devices to watch a video on YouTube, i.e., they are not sensitivity to location and time.

Space-timers locations, third application, users are location and time sensitivity. These applications are in real time. Users share "messages with relevance for one specific location at one specific point in time" (Kaplan 2012). An example of this is Foursquare or Dodgeball: applications where users can do check-ins regarding their locations and let others know what they are doing in real time.

The last classification is space-locators. Users are location-sensitive but not time-sensitive. In this case, they use their mobile devices to create and share messages about a certain location and place to be read later by others. TripAdvisor or Booking.com are application that fit in this classification. Users share their opinions about a place but not in real time.

In terms of mobile marketing, the space-timers are the most significant since users are creating information in real time that can be used by companies to understand customers' needs (Kaplan 2012).

With user-generated content applications, companies have lost the power of information to their users (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010; Laudon & Traver 2011; O'Connor

2010). However, given this huge amount of information that is being generated, the power is returning to enterprises again. (Kaplan 2012).

For example, companies can take advantage from these powerful databases to enhance their businesses by doing marketing research, company-to-consumer communication, promotions and discounts to specific users based on their location or even relationship development (Kaplan 2012).

2.6 Summary

This chapter explores the theoretical notions behind TripAdvisor. The literature review starts with the explanation of Web 2.0 by defining it and giving an overview concerning the development over the last years. Web 2.0 carried services and features like online social networks, blogs, wikis, folksonomies and many others. These new functionalities give the power to the people. They can now create, edit and distribute content.

This development had impact in the business model of the firms. They are not sending information anymore. Instead, they are sharing and receiving knowledge from their clients and use it to take advantages.

With the users having a more active role, it is important to talk about user-generated content: second concept of this literature review. Platforms like Twitter or YouTube, allow people to express themselves through a creative effort but without professional ends. Four drivers are necessary to explain what pushes this user participation: technological, social, economical, and institutional and legal.

The third concept is the mobile social network. With the evolution of Internet, people are taking advantages from the virtual world to get to know users that share commnon interests. Given the development of mobile devices, it is possible to be connected in real time and on-the-go.

From an enterprise point of view, it is explained the importace of these new features to boost their business. Some advices are described in order to prevent mistakes in these competitive environment.

Electronic word-of-mouth is the fourth concept. It is expained how people's risks and uncertanties are reduced due to the word-of-mouth effect. Another issue that is covered is the use of Internet and how it affects the credibility. Problems regarding word-of-mouth are explained as well.

Lastly, this chapter ends with mobile marketing concept. It starts by providing some numbers regarding mobile marketing revenues. Then, mobile marketing is defined and it is followed by the description of four types of mobile phone applications: victims, strangers, patrons and groupies. Furthermore, mobile social media applications, considering mobile marketing, are also described taking into account time and location-sensitivity.

In the next chapter, TripAdvisor is presented and studied in detail. In addition, a subtopic regarding organizations and the user of TripAdvisor platform is described.

3   TRIPADVISOR

This chapter aims to present TripAdvisor, application in which this dissertation is focus, and comprehend how it works by describing its features. In addition, it explains how TripAdvisor enterprises can increase visibility and productivity using marketing tools.

Therefore, this chapter presents TripAdvisor background, followed by TripAdvisor for Business subtopic.

3.1   TripAdvisor Background

TripAdvisor was founded in 2000 by Stephen Kaufer. It is a website that assembles travel information that is generated by users for users. With this information, TripAdvisor's customers can plan their trips and take advantage of this platform since it is based on previous travellers' opinions. Moreover, it is not necessary to have a pre-existing relation between users to communicate through reviews, ratings (with five possibilities: terrible, poor, average, very good and excellent) and discussion forums, which is a key difference when compared with other platforms like friendship sites (Miguéns et al. 2008).

TripAdvisor has around 32 million registered members that every minute post around 60 new recommendations (TripAdvisor 2013). In 2008, for instance, TripAdvisor accounted only with 5 million registered members that wrote around 10 million reviews and opinions. At the time, it had 25 million unique monthly visitors (Miguéns et al. 2008).

Nowadays, it is present in 30 countries and employs more than 1.600 people. It accounts in its database with more than one million accommodations and it has 116.000 destinations and 259.000 attractions. Furthermore, TripAdvisor enables the upload of travellers' pictures and videos of places they visited. So far, users added more than 14 million pictures regarding restaurants, hotels and attractions (TripAdvisor 2013).

It is also known that this platform has more than two million recommendations regarding the one million restaurants listed (TripAdvisor 2013). Users can find a restaurant using the following features: rating, price, type of cuisine, neighbourhoods or dining options. In addition, travellers can also use the tools that TripAdvisor offers to make an online restaurant reservation and see where it is located. In Portugal, TripAdvisor has a partnership with BestTables[1], allowing users to book/reserve online.

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[1] BestTable – Portuguese platform that allows users to find the best restaurants that suits their needs and, at the same time, book it through online reservaiton. http://www.besttables.com/about (July 13th, 11:52am)

TripAdvisor offers other powerful tools that increase user benefits. Facebook integration, for instance, allows travellers to have access to their Facebook friends' opinions. Furthermore, users can be in contact with their friends' friends, which increase the network and make "the user experience even more personalized and fun" (TripAdvisor 2013). Another example is the "review at a glance". With this tool, users can rapidly analyse the reviews posted by other travellers. It summarises and shares the most common sentences. It gives the big picture of overall reviews (TripAdvisor 2013). Additionally, there are other tools like offline city guides, check rates, advanced hotel selection tool or forums that make users take the most of TripAdvisor database.

Regarding mobile devices, in 2012, TripAdvisor application reports an average of 25 downloads per minute performing a total of 15 million downloads worldwide free of costs (TripAdvisor 2012). In the current year, 2013, TripAdvisor accounts with 45 million unique monthly mobile visitors and 31 millions downloads including its own application, city guides and SeatGuru applications (TripAdvisor 2013).

TripAdvisor application is available for all platforms with features that not only help users to determine which hotels, restaurants or attractions are near them, but also takes a close look through maps and images or videos (TripAdvisor 2012).

From a study conducted in 2012 by PhoCusWright, TripAdvisor understands that mobile devices are being adopted when travellers want to find hotels, restaurants and attractions near them. Indeed, bookings by mobile travellers were worth around 2,6 billion dollars in 2011 to a predicted 8 billion dollars in 2013 (Rose & Schetzina 2012). Given this, TripAdvisor is developing its mobile applications in order to offer the best involvement when travellers are planning their journey (TripAdvisor 2012).

From an economic point of view, TripAdvisor, in 2011, had revenues of $426.045. When compared with 2010, it had an increase of 36%. Regarding the net income, it had a result of $177.677 (TripAdvisor 2011). TripAdvisor is traded in NASDAQ Stock Market since 2011 with an initial price of $27.5. Currently, it is traded at $52.49 (NASDAQ 2013).

3.1.1 TripAdvisor for Business

TripAdvisor, in order to take advantage from its powerful database and to improve the relation with owner properties, decided to create a new service: TripAdvisor for Business. This has a clear goal: "we are dedicated to helping the tourism industry connect with these potential customers" (TripAdvisor 2013).

It is now possible for a hotel, a restaurant or an attraction to register their business and have access to a manage center where they can add business details, share booking information, upload pictures and videos, track performance and competitors and disclose its exact location in the map. These businesses can also manage their reviews by getting notifications, quickly respond to them or remember clients that previous visited them to write a new review. It shows that they are paying attention (TripAdvisor 2013).

Additionally, and thanks to TripAdvisor database, the involvement between firms and travellers increased due to the several tools that TripAdvisor for Business provides. For example, establishments can share the reviews on their Facebook page or even promote their area by showing what it is near them (TripAdvisor 2013).

On the other hand, businesses can add several user-generated content widgets to their websites in order to help them increase visibility and revenues. A restaurant, for instance, can use a widget that displays a snippet from the recent reviews or to show how many "excellent" reviews it has. Another examples are TripAdvisor stickers, business cards and flyers: it is a way that owners have to promote their service and encourage clients to write reviews (TripAdvisor 2013).

In order to make firms take all the benefits from TripAdvisor for Business, TripAdvisor offers master classes (on-demand webinars), videos, guides and tip sheets. These tools have precise information regarding different topics and can be accessed at any time. "How to post a special offer" or "making the most of your business listing" are some examples of on-demand webinars (TripAdvisor 2013).

These services are free of costs until a certain limit. If enterprises want to go further regarding advertising and partnerships, they have to pay for that. This payment gives access to better tools that help them boosting their businesses (TripAdvisor 2013).

For instance, TripAdvisor businesses can promote announcements and special offers. This last one can appear in the property page, area search result, keyword search, slide show and in the map with a different colour (TripAdvisor 2013). Moreover, for an additional fee, firms can do a mobile upgrade for their business listing and promote a special offer that can be viewable on the app and mobile site. However, these features are currently not available for the restaurants (TripAdvisor 2013).

Businesses are aware of the potential of these functionalities and because of that TripAdvisor for Business accounts now with more than 2,5 million businesses listed including more than 1,1 million accommodations (TripAdvisor 2013).

3.2   Summary

This chapter presents TripAdvisor. It begins by giving an overview about its creation/foundation and an explanation regarding how it works. Some important numbers like monthly visitors, registered members and recommendations are exposed. TripAdvisor tools are also described in order to give a quick look about what this platform can do. An outline about its economic health is displayed by showing the revenue, net income and stock price from recent years.

Furthermore, TripAdvisor for Business is presented through an explanation of its goal. Some examples are given to better elucidate its tools and the impact for property owners that are listened in TripAdvisor.

The next chapter presents the methodology. Three subtopics are described: dissertation model, research hypotheses and survey questions.

4 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the methodology of this dissertation. Bearing this in mind, a model that aims to answer the research question is created.

The dissertation model establishes the goals taking into consideration the theoretical concepts studied previously and, in order to achieve these goals, several hypotheses are generated.

From the research hypotheses, questions are raised aiming to gather information about TripAdvisor users and restaurants to further analyse.

This dissertation is centered on TripAdvisor and its restaurant functionality. According to the dissertation's objectives, the goal is to comprehend if both restaurants and customers are using this platform in the Lisbon area.

TripAdvisor lets users have an active voice in the virtual world by giving them the possibility of creating and sharing their opinions and participate in forums. It is a Web 2.0 platform that combines all the content from different sources by creating a culture of participation, where the more users it has (creating information), the better it becomes (Martignomi & Stanoevska-Slabeva 2007; Wilson 2006).

The model for this dissertation is established taking into account the research hypothesis and its validation; therefore it is based on the current usage of TripAdvisor in the city of Lisbon, both by users and restaurants. Given this, it focuses on understanding whether or not restaurants are exploiting the potential of TripAdvisor platform through the marketing tools that are offered. In addition, it aims to realize what drives restaurants to be present in TripAdvisor.

On the other hand, the present model analyses if TripAdvisor is being used to help users deciding which is the restaurant that better fits in their needs or wills (process of decision making) and if they are willing to receive information considering their profile information.

Lastly, it is also centered in knowing the impact that mobile devices have in restaurants businesses and understanding how restaurants adapt themselves taking into account the content created and shared by customers.

The next section presents the dissertation model, based on the five concepts described in the literature review.

4.1 Dissertation Model

After studying Web 2.0 concept, and knowing that TripAdvisor is an example that fits this theory since it utilizes the functionalities that O'Reilly's definition of Web 2.0 describe (Martignomi & Stanoevska-Slabeva 2007; Wilson 2006). With Web 2.0 the power is now in user's control (O'Connor 2010), which means that enterprises are not just sending information to their users. Alternatively, they are sharing content with them (Kiryakova et al. 2011). So, applying this knowledge to the present dissertation, the question that emerges is: Do restaurants recognize that TripAdvisor is a powerful platform?

The second goal is linked with user-generated content theory, the main characteristic of Web 2.0 (OECD 2007). User-generated content platforms applications allow users to express themselves, build a reputation and communicate with others (OECD 2007) through the creation of information. Given this huge amount of information that is being generated, the power is returning to enterprises again (Kaplan 2012). Therefore, companies are using it for their own benefit (OECD 2007) since that they can now have a clearer view of their costumers' tastes. Hence, the question that arises is: what makes people participate in these platforms? And, is the content of this platform helpful for the restaurant industry?

Mobile social network shows that companies are present in platforms like TripAdvisor to promote themselves, build brand communities or even do marketing research (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010). In addition, these kinds of mobile applications brought a geographical proximity between enterprises and their clients, making companies understand what their customers want, which is an opportunity for their business (Ziv & Mulloth 2006). In this stage, the aim is not only to understand if this is true, but also to answer the question: do customers use TripAdvisor's mobile application?

The fourth goal is related with the electronic word-of-mouth concept and how important it is in the consumer's buying decision process (Gruen et al 2006; O'Connor 2010). With electronic word-of-mouth, risks and uncertainty are reduced given the precise information that is shared (O'Connor 2010; Zhang et al. 2010). Indeed, the more online popularity a product or a service has, the more success it has since its information is easily spread (Zhang et al. 2010). Thus, the next query is: does TripAdvisor's content influence customers' choice? On the other side, and since it is the user that is generating the information, the question that arises is: do restaurants and regular users believe in TripAdvisor's content?

The last theoretical concept is about mobile marketing. Since TripAdvisor is an application based in user-generated content, giving users an opportunity to create and share content, it is classified as patrons (Kaplan 2012). However, TripAdvisor is an application, as Kaplan (2012) described, where users create and share messages about a certain location and place to be read later by other users: space-locators application. Now, taking into account the information that TripAdvisor shares with its users, the following question emerges: Is TripAdvisor's mobile marketing effective?

In the next section, aiming to find a solution for the research question, hypotheses are created based on the model that takes into consideration the theoretical concepts from literature review.

Theoretical Concepts	Goals (Understand the:)
Web 2.0	TripAdvisor's power
User-Generated Content	What drives users participation in TripAdvisor
	Importance of TripAdvisor content for restaurant
Mobile Social Network	Utility of TripAdvisor's platform for users in their mobile devices
	TripAdvisor's usefulness to restaurants' promotion
Electronic Worth-of-Mouth	Authenticity of TripAdvisor ratings and reviews
	TripAdvisor's content influence in customers' choice
Mobile Marketing	Effectiveness of TripAdvisor's mobile marketing

Table 1 – Summary of dissertation model's goals

4.2 Research Hypothesis

Given the model and the inquiries previously made, several research hypotheses are generated.

The first three hypotheses are related with Web 2.0 and the restaurants' capacity of exploring the powerfulness of TripAdvisor's platform. Thus, the first hypothesis is about TripAdvisor's platform and its capacity to aggregatte the information generated by other costumers about their experiences. With this, the aim is to understand if restaurants are being sensitive about TripAdvisor's impact in users and if they are using that to their own benefict.

H1) Restaurants are aware of TripAdvisor influence and use its database and platform; Restaurants are investing in TripAdvisor marketing tools.

The next hypothesis is related with restaurants and their presence in TripAdvisor. The goal is to identify what drives a restaurant to be present in this type of application and if it can boost their business. Therefore, this second hypothesis is verified in TripAdvisor restaurants.

H2) Restaurants are listed in TripAdvisor in order to promote their business and increase brand awareness.

The hypothesis number three is about restaurants and their ability to recognize customers that are coming thanks to the use of TripAdvisor. Thus, restaurants are the ones inquired.

H3) Restaurants are capable of identifying TripAdvisor customers from regular ones; restaurants are dealing with TripAdvisor customers in a different way.

The fourth hypothesis is related with user-generated content and how applications are attracting customers that contribute with their experiences - new level of involvement (Ochoa & Duval 2008). This hypothesis wants to understand what drives people to participate in TripAdvisor and, therefore, it is tested in TripAdvisor users.

H4) Users are contributing with opinions to TripAdvisor database; reputation, communication and self-expression drive the participation in TripAdvisor.

The fithth hypothesis is related, once more, with the concept of user-generated content and the restaurants' capibility to use the large amounts of information that is generated by users. The aim is to comprehend how helpful TripAdvisor's content is for restaurants.

H5) TripAdvisor's reviews and ratings allow restaurants to understand customers' preferences; restaurants owners believe that user-generated content can lead to better performances.

The research hypothesis number six is about mobile social network (location-based service fuctionality) and mobile marketing concepts. It is known that TripAdvisor is an aplication where users create information about a certain place for other users: space-locators application. Hence, the aim is to understand if customers use TripAdvisor mobile application on-the-go through their mobile devices to find restaurants. Thus, this hypothesis is confirmed in TripAdvisor users.

H6) Users are exploring TripAdvisor location-based service on their mobile devices in a daily basis to find out the best restaurant that fits their needs.

TripAdvisor users that make a review or rating are obligate to agree with their terms and conditions. Even so, it is hard to control the user-generated content available. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis questions whether users and restaurants believe in TripAdvisor's content, i.e., understand if TripAdvisor users and restaurants are able to comprehend whether a review or rating is fake or not.

H7) Reviews and ratings from TripAdvisor are credible and truthful for users and restaurants.

TripAdvisor users are also asked to verify the eighth hypothesis. According to several studies mentioned before, electronic word-of-mouth affects the decision-making process. As a matter of fact, a study made by comScore and The Kelsey Group (2007) revealed that around 79% restaurants' online reviews have impact when customers want to choose a place to eat. The goal is to comprehend if TripAdvisor's content influences customers' choice.

H8) Content from TripAdvisor influences users' process of decision-making in restaurants; online popularity contributes for the decision process.

The last hypothesis concerns, once again, mobile marketing and TripAdvisor's application. It is tested in TripAdvisor users in order to know if they are willing to share information that leads to individual advertisement and if they consider that advertisement appropriate. The aim is to verify how effective mobile marketing is.

H9) Users like to receive TripAdvisor news taking into account personal information previously shared; information received from TripAdvisor is useful.

The following table completes Table 1 by showing the overall methodology structure of this dissertation. It explains the goals by connecting them to the theory from the literature review. It also illustrates the hypotheses generated taking into account the objectives and whether they are tested in users and/or restaurants.

Theoretical Concepts	Goals (Understand the:)	Hypotheses	Survey
Web 2.0	TripAdvisor's power	H1	Restaurants
		H2	
		H3	
User-Generated Content	What drives users participation in TripAdvisor;	H4	Users
	Importance of TripAdvisor's content for restaurants	H5	Restaurants
Mobile Social Network	Utility of TripAdvisor's platform for users in their mobile devices	H6	Users
	TripAdvisor's usefulness to restaurants' promotion	H2	Restaurants
Electronic Worth-of-Mouth	Authenticity of TripAdvisor's ratings and reviews	H7	Users and Restaurants
	TripAdvisor's content influence in customers' choice	H8	Users
Mobile Marketing	Effectiveness of mobile marketing	H6	Users
		H9	

Table 2 - Methodology Structure

4.3 Survey Questions

Taking into consideration the previous section, several questions are raised and divided into hypotheses. These questions aim to generate information that can validate the hypotheses or not.

Thus, primary data is produced through the use of two surveys. One survey is done for restaurants and the other one is elaborated for TripAdvisor users. Although they are presented in English, since this dissertation is focused on the city of Lisbon, both surveys use Portuguese language in order to avoid misunderstandings. In addition, the surveys use mostly close-ended questions (e.g. Likert scale, multiple choice and yes/no questions) because this kind of inquiries provides a straight answer, which facilitates the analysis of the results.

The following tables show the hypotheses and the related questions for each one of them. Furthermore, Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 2 show the full surveys made to restaurants and users.

Hypotheses	Restaurant Questions
H1	Q2. Is your restaurant present in TripAdvisor?
	Q3. If positive, since when do you use TripAdvisor?
	Q35. Why are you not present in TripAdvisor?
	Q7. Do you keep track of the reviews and ratings that clients make about your restaurant?
	Q8. Do you respond to any review to justify a negative review or thank a positive one?
	Q9. How often do you respond to comments made on TripAdvisor?
	Q10. What are the reasons to respond to TripAdvisor's reviews?
	Q11. TripAdvisor for Business is a tool which lets you save your restaurant on TripAdvisor's platform and enhance your business. Is your restaurant registered already?
	Q12. If negative, why not?
	Q13. If positive, do you use the tools that it offers?
	Q14. From the following tools, which ones do you normally use?
	Q15. How often do you use these tools?
	Q17. Have you ever paid for a service in TripAdvisor?
	Q18. If positive, what was the amount spent so far?
	Q19. What made you invest in TripAdvisor?
	Q20. Do you consider that was a good investment?
	Q16. Do you have a sticker from TripAdvisor at your restaurant door?
	Q21. As a partner of BestTables, TripAdvisor allows your restaurant to accept reservations online. Do you provide this tool to your customers?
	Q31. Are you satisfied with TripAdvisor?
	Q32. As a user of TripAdvisor, can it be improved?
	Q33. How?
	Q34. Do you have any suggestions to TripAdvisor?
H2	Q4. What are your reasons to be present in TripAdvisor?
	Q5. On a scale of 1 (does not contribute) to 5 (significantly contributes), how much do you consider that TripAdvisor helps to improve your business?
	Q6. In what aspects did TripAdvisor contributed to improvement?
H3	Q22. Can you identify clients who come to your restaurant through TripAdvisor?
	Q23. Do customers who frequent your establishment via TripAdvisor usually get some sort of different attention?
H5	Q28. Taking into account the reviews and ratings made on TripAdvisor, can you understand how customers evaluate your restaurant?
	Q29. Do you use the reviews and ratings to improve your performance?
	Q30. If positive, how often do you do it?
H8	Q24. Do you think that competitors are making some of the reviews and ratings of your restaurant?
	Q25. Do you think that fake reviews and ratings are arising?
	Q26. Do you agree with your classification in TripAdvisor?
	Q27. Why do you not consider your position fair?

Table 3 - Hypotheses and restaurants survey questions

Hypotheses	Users Questions
H4	Q2. Do you use TripAdvisor?
	Q9. Do you usually comment and rate your experience in TripAdvisor after visiting a restaurant?
	Q12. If negative, why not?
	Q11. If positive, which of the following do you use to tell your experience?
	Q10. Why do you do it?
H6	Q3. Do you have a mobile device (e.g., smartphone, tablet, PDA, MP3 player with Wi-Fi, etc.) that supports TripAdvisor's application?
	Q4. In case of an affirmative answer, do you use TripAdvisor's application on your mobile device to choose a restaurant?
	Q5. When do you use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant?
	Q6. Is TripAdvisor useful for daily choices?
	Q7. How many times per week do you use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant?
	Q8. When do you usually search for a restaurant in TripAdvisor?
H7	Q13. Regarding TripAdvisor reviews and ratings, do you consider them truthful and reliable?
	Q14. Have you ever been asked to review and/or rate a restaurant on TripAdvisor?
H8	Q15. Do you check TripAdvisor's reviews and/or ratings when looking for a restaurant?
	Q16. If positive, how often?
	Q17. When do you want to choose a restaurant, which factors determine it?
	Q18. Why do you read the reviews?
	Q21. When you read a review, is the reviewer profile important?
	Q22. Which are the characteristics that you most value?
	Q23. If you consider a review relevant, do you give feedback through the "helpful vote" tool?
	Q24. As a partner of BestTables, TripAdvisor allows you to do online reservations. Do you use this tool?
	Q25. While choosing a restaurant, do you prefer TripAdvisor to another platform?
	Q26. If positive, why?
	Q27. If negative, what other platforms do you commonly use?
	Q19. Is the time of your decision making process downsized by reviews/ratings?
	Q20. Does the more reviews a restaurant has and the best rated it is on TripAdvisor influence how faster you choose it?
H9	Q28. Do you like receiving e-mails from TripAdvisor?
	Q29. Do you consider TripAdvisor's e-mails useful?
	Q30. In 2010, TripAdvisor announced the integration of its platform with Facebook. Do you have TripAdvisor integrated with your Facebook account?
	Q31. What motivated this integration?
	Q32. Do you have any suggestions to TripAdvisor?

Table 4 - Hypotheses and users survey questions

4.4 Summary

This chapter starts by presenting the dissertation model created to answer the research question. From the concepts explained in the literature review, the model is built and goals are set and explained.

Taking into consideration the Web 2.0. concept, the goal is to understand the power of TripAdvisor in the restaurant industry. On the other hand, through user-generated content, the purpose is to find out what drives users into participating in TripAdvisor, verify the authenticity of TripAdvisor's ratings and reviews for both restaurants and users and understands the importance of TripAdvisor's content for restaurants. The third notion, mobile social network, aims to comprehend the utility of TripAdvisor's platform when users are exploiting their mobile devices. Additionally, this theory wants to recognize TripAdvisor's usefulness to restaurants' promotion. Electronic word-of-mouth wants to comprehend if TripAdvisor's content influences customers' choice. The last theory, mobile marketing, wishes to understand how effective is TripAdvisor when users want to choose a restaurant to go.

From the goals previously showed, nine hypotheses are created and divided into two groups: restaurants and/or TripAdvisor users. In order to accept or reject these hypotheses to subsequent achieve the answer to the research question, surveys are developed and conducted through the creation of numerous questions for each hypothesis.

At the end of each subtopic of the current chapter there is a table that aims to summarize the information.

The next chapter presents the validation of the exposed hypotheses through the analysis of the gathered data from surveys performed to both restaurants and users.

5 DISCUSSION

This chapter aims to present the intermediary conclusions taking into consideration the analysis to the data collected from both surveys. Given this, the nine hypotheses previously made are discussed and the results are presented, showing if they are validated or not.

This section starts by presenting a survey pre-test in order to get insights that can help to correct possible gaps.

5.1 Survey Pre-Test

Before launching both surveys, a pre-test was done in order to identify inaccuracies that could interfere with data collection.

The pre-test surveys were done to 10 people: 5 users and 5 restaurants. From their feedback, questions' structure was reformulated (e.g. open questions were substitute by close-ended questions), making it easier to understand and avoid bias answers.

In addition, the questions' order was re-defined in order to increase the surveys' flow and decrease their duration time. By doing this, it was possible to decrease the number of unfinished surveys and to collect as much information as possible.

After fixed all inaccuracies, both surveys were officially launched.

5.2 Restaurants Survey

5.2.1 Sample

TripAdvisor has 7934 restaurants listed in Portugal with around 159000 reviews (TripAdvisor 2013). Lisbon is the city that accounts with more restaurants in Portugal: 1503 establishments, counting with around 42000 reviews (TripAdvisor 2013).

**Q2. Is your restaurant present in TripAdvisor?**

- Yes
- No

13

51
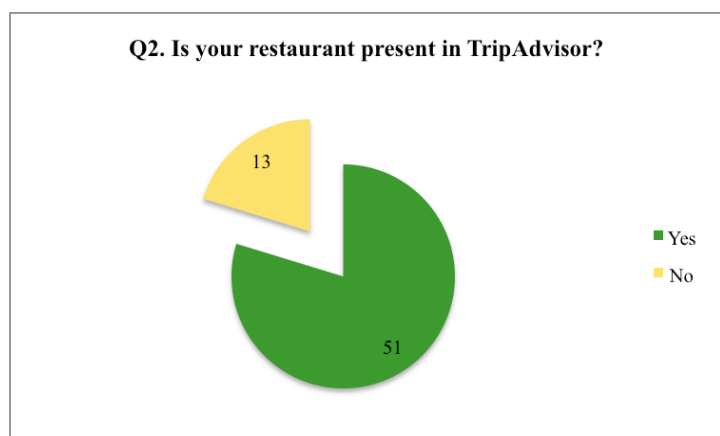
The restaurants survey was made to 64 restaurants in the city of Lisbon. From this number, 51 are present in TripAdvisor (Q2).

In this survey, from the restaurants present in TripAdvisor, the two oldest are using it since 2008. Yet, it is between 2010 and 2012 that the number of listed establishments increases - 74,5% - being 2012 the one exhibiting the highest number of registrations: 14 restaurants (Q3, Exhibit 3.1).

5.2.2   Hypotheses Discussion

H1) Restaurants are aware of TripAdvisor influence and use its database and platform; Restaurants are investing in TripAdvisor marketing tools.

Aiming to corroborate this hypothesis, several questions were asked. Being so, when asked if they are conscious of the impact of reviews and ratings about their establishment, the number of restaurants that answered positively is high: 44 restaurants (Q7, Exhibit 3.2.1). Therefore, they are aware that TripAdvisor has an impact when a client wants to choose a place to eat. However, only 17 restaurants answer reviews to justify a negative comment or thank a positive one (Q8, Exhibit 3.2.1), which means that restaurants do not interact that much with their clients afterwards.
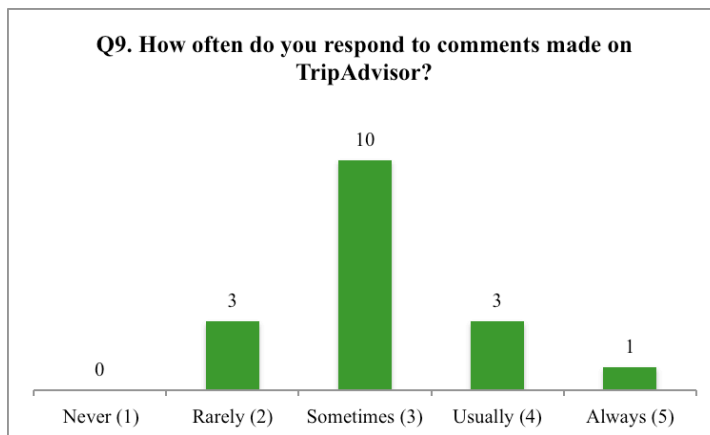
To understand how often a restaurant responds to a review made on TripAdvisor (Q9), a Likert scale was used, where the average was 3.12 and the standard deviation 0.49. This reveals that restaurants answer to the customer through TripAdvisor but they only do it sometimes.
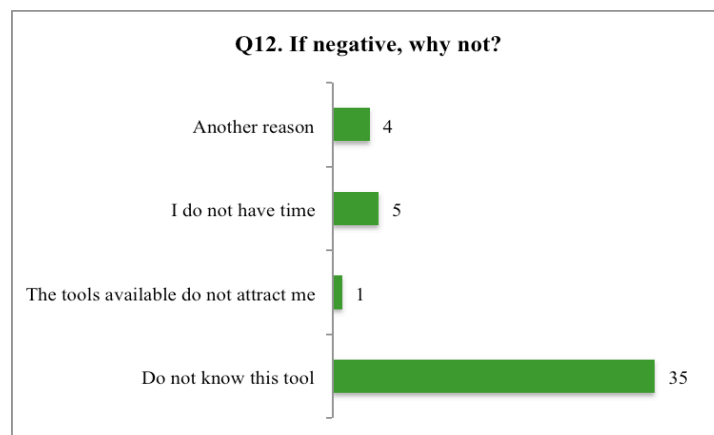

Taking into consideration Q10, the main reason that makes restaurants respond to their reviews is to clarify misunderstandings, which can affect negatively the decision of other people. Since the information is easier to access (O'Connor 2010) and it is the user

who controls it by creating and sharing new content (Laudon & Traver 2011; O'Connor 2010), establishments want to justify what went wrong in order to prevent the rise of bad reputation and, consequently, a fall in the ranking. Restaurants are loosing control of the information (Kiryakova et al. 2011).

However, 7 restaurants answered in the survey that they wanted to create a close relationship with their customers. They see on TripAdvisor a way to contact their clients – relationship development.

In addition, and aligned with Kiryakova et al. 2011 that mentioned that companies are using the content created by users to become more efficient, 6 restaurants said that constructive reviews have more impact than positive ones, since they can realize what is wrong and change it.

Regarding the use of TripAdvisor's platform by restaurants, when asked if they are using TripAdvisor for Business and its tools to boost their businesses, 80% of the answers were negative (Q11, Exhibit 3.2.1). Restaurants are not using it because they do not know the existence of such services (Q12, Exhibit 3.2.1). Hence, the interviewed establishments are not taking all the advantages that TripAdvisor offers with these tools.

Q12. If negative, why not?

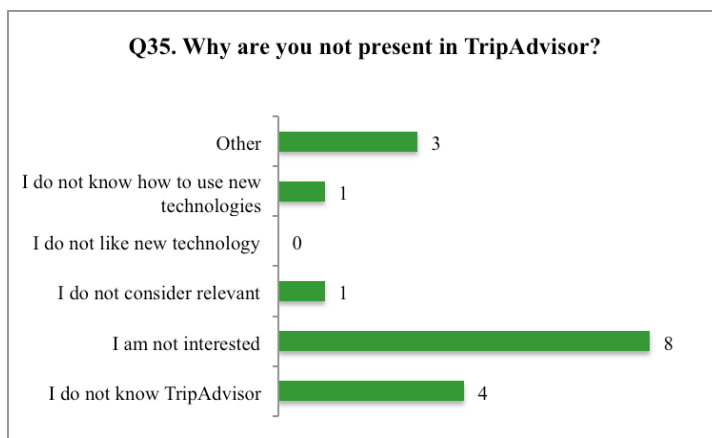| Category	Value
Another reason	4
I do not have time	5
The tools available do not attract me	1
Do not know this tool	35

From the ones that do use TripAdvisor for Business, 70% utilize its tools (Q13, Exhibit 3.2.1). From the tools available, comment managing and TripAdvisor page are the most used, followed by marketing tools like widgets to increase comments and ratings or integrate TripAdvisor on restaurant Facebook page.

In addition, by being listed on TripAdvisor for Business, it is possible to order a sticker to put at the restaurant door. However, from the information collected, it is known that TripAdvisor, between 2010 and 2011, sent a sticker to all the restaurants listed. Therefore, 37 restaurants have a sticker on their door (Q16, Exhibit 3.2.1). Furthermore, TripAdvisor also sends, every year, a certificate to the best-positioned restaurants in Lisbon. Regarding the

restaurants that do not have a sticker, from the gathered data, they do not know what the procedures to order one are.

As it can be seen through the survey analysis, generally, restaurants do not use TripAdvisor for Business. And from the ones who use it, only a few are exploring and investing money. For instance, just two restaurants have invested in TripAdvisor with values of €11 and €97 (Q17 and Q18, Exhibit 3.2.1). However, only one of them is satisfied with the investment (Q20, Exhibit 3.2.1).

Concerning online reservation, about 39% (20 restaurants) is available to accept it (Q21, Exhibit 3.2.1). In all Lisbon area, there are 206 restaurants accepting online reservation in association with BestTables.

Q35. Why are you not present in TripAdvisor?

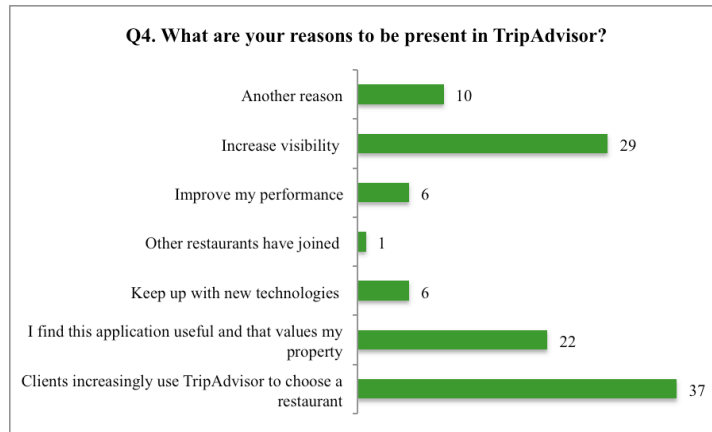| Category	Value
Other	3
I do not know how to use new technologies	1
I do not like new technology	0
I do not consider relevant	1
I am not interested	8
I do not know TripAdvisor	4

From the remaining 13 restaurants that are not present in TripAdvisor (Q35, Exhibit 3.2.1), this happens because of the lack of interest, even knowing what TripAdvisor is. Only one restaurant answered that it does not know how to use new technologies. Another one considers that TripAdvisor is not relevant.

From the observed data, it is possible to conclude that restaurants are conscious of TripAdvisor's influence in the consumer decision process and that are using TripAdvisor database from previous clients to fix errors and avoid future problems/bad reputation. However, they are not using the platform for their own benefit nor investing in its marketing tools to improve their performances. Given this, **H1 does not hold**.

H2) Restaurants are listed in TripAdvisor in order to promote their business and increase brand awareness.

Willing to validate or not H2, it is necessary to analyse some questions of the survey. From the question "Q4. What are your reasons to be present in TripAdvisor?" (Exhibit 3.2.2) the result shows that from the seven motives presented, three of them have the highest impact.
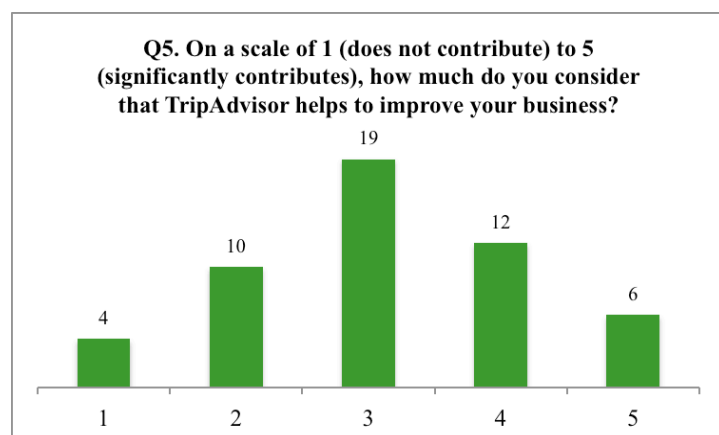
Q4. What are your reasons to be present in TripAdvisor?

Reason	Value
Another reason	10
Increase visibility	29
Improve my performance	6
Other restaurants have joined	1
Keep up with new technologies	6
I find this application useful and that values my property	22
Clients increasingly use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant	37

This shows that restaurants are following these new applications and, at the same time, realize that TripAdvisor is changing the way people choose a restaurant.

From the gathered information, restaurants realize that users (mainly tourists) play an important role, which means that restaurants need to adapt themselves taking into account these technologies (Kiryakova et al. 2011). Thus, and as referred by Kaplan & Haenlein (2010), establishments realize that TripAdvisor is a tool that is helping them promoting their businesses or building a brand community with no associated costs.

From the same question, it is now known that several restaurants are present in TripAdvisor through their clients, i.e. in order to rate and generate reviews about a particular establishment, costumers themselves registered it on TripAdvisor. Given this, various restaurants do not know that they are present in the TripAdvisor platform and, therefore, they do not know what clients are saying about them. Restaurants need to follow these social networks platforms very closely since they are more exposed and the information changes quickly (Kaplan & Haenlein 2010).

When restaurants were asked if TripAdvisor is contributing to improve their businesses, from a 1-5 scale, the average is 3.12 and the standard deviation is 1.11 (high variability), which means that it is not gathering a consensus (Q5). Although there are restaurants that consider TripAdvisor is contributing for their business, it does not have a relevant impact in the overall business.

Q5. On a scale of 1 (does not contribute) to 5 (significantly contributes), how much do you consider that TripAdvisor helps to improve your business?

Scale	Value
1	4
2	10
3	19
4	12
5	6

Regarding the aspects that have contributed to improve their business (Q6, Exhibit 3.2.2), there is a pattern: TripAdvisor has helped restaurants attracting new customers and has increased visibility. For instance, *Bica e Água* restaurant responded that has started to work with tourists, which did not happen in the past. With TripAdvisor, restaurants are creating new opportunities and new markets (Kiryakova et al. 2011) since it is more interactive and reaches large audiences (Laudon & Traver 2011).

Therefore, **H2 is verified**.

H3) Restaurants are capable of identifying TripAdvisor customers from regular ones; restaurants are dealing with TripAdvisor customers in a different way.

In order to validate H3 or not, two questions were made to restaurants: "Q22. Can you identify clients who come to your restaurant through TripAdvisor?" and "Q23. Do customers who frequent your establishment via TripAdvisor usually get some sort of different attention?".

Given this and analysing Q22, from the five options available, the average answer is 2.73 and the standard deviation is 1.17. Therefore, the accordance level is low. Usually, and from the information collected, these clients introduce themselves telling that they chose the restaurant through TripAdvisor. In some other cases, customers ask for the name of employees to later make an even more customized review or ask for a picture to post on TripAdvisor.
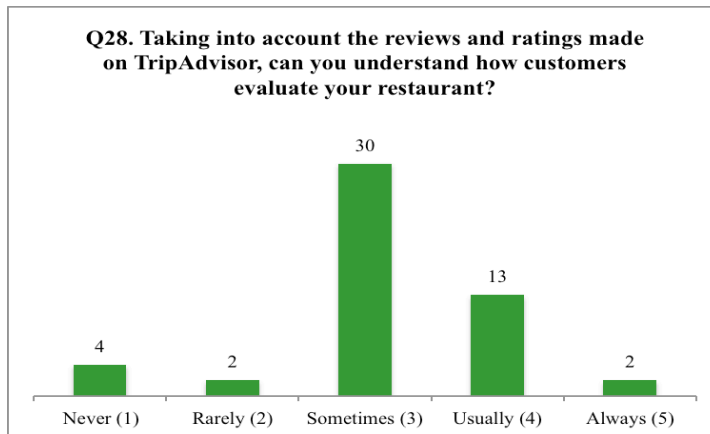

Regarding the question whether or not restaurants treat TripAdvisor clients differently, the answer is very clear: 100% said no (Q23, Exhibit 3.2.3). For the restaurants, all the clients are equal. TripAdvisor does not influence the way restaurants treat their customers.

Then, from the data analysed, **H3 is not validated**.

H5) TripAdvisor's reviews and ratings allow restaurants to understand customers' preferences; restaurants owners believe that user-generated content can lead to better performances.

Hypothesis five aims to show if restaurants understand customers' preferences and if they believe in a better performance through the use of ratings and reviews.

In order to collect data to verify this hypothesis, three questions were asked.

Q28. Taking into account the reviews and ratings made on TripAdvisor, can you understand how customers evaluate your restaurant?

Therefore, in Q28, 30 out of 51 restaurants answered that they only understand how customers evaluate the establishment sometimes. The answers demonstrate an average of 3.14 (with a standard deviation of 0.87) using a Likert scale.

As demonstrated in Q7 (Exhibit 3.2.1), restaurants are updated about the reviews and ratings that clients make. So, when asked if they use the reviews and ratings to improve the performance (Q29, Exhibit 3.2.4), a similar number answer positively: 37 restaurants.

The last question (Q30) is about how often restaurants use reviews and ratings. From the 51 responses collected, all the restaurants are using ratings and reviews to their own benefit. Using a Likert scale, the average is 3.92 and standard deviation is 0.76).


Q30. If positive, how often do you do it?
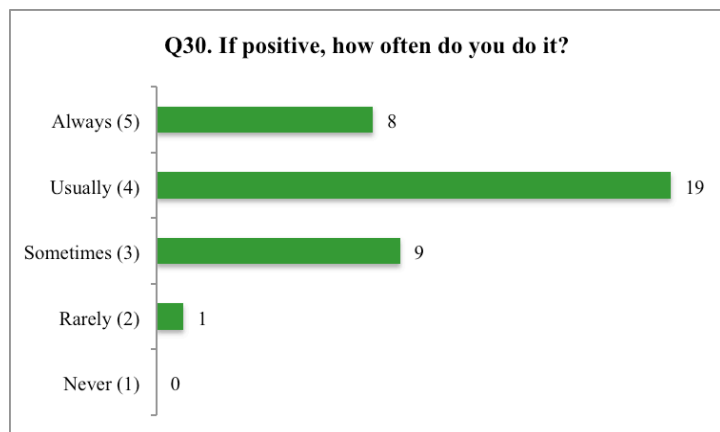
Thus, and as it was pointed out in the user-generated content section, reviews and ratings are becoming a formidable source to restaurants since they are exploring customers experience to understand what they need to improve and without any associated costs. (Balasubramaniam 2009). Restaurants are aware of how important and helpful TripAdvisor content is. For instance, as the manager of *Bela Ipanema* restaurant stated about a bad review made to an employee: "It was possible to alert him by showing the text that mentioned him and saying that I wouldn't tolerate that type of attitude again. Currently, the employee is no longer working with us".

Given the answers to these three questions, **H5 is verified**.

H7) Reviews and ratings from TripAdvisor are credible and truthful for users and restaurants.

Since Internet brought the opportunity to users interact and share their opinions about a product or a service (Zhang et la. 2010), the purpose of this seventh hypothesis is to find out if restaurants believe in TripAdvisor's ratings and reviews.

When restaurants were asked if competitors are rating and reviewing their establishments (Q24), the answer was not consistent.

Q24. Do you think that competitors are making some of the reviews and ratings of your restaurant?

22

29

■ Yes
■ No
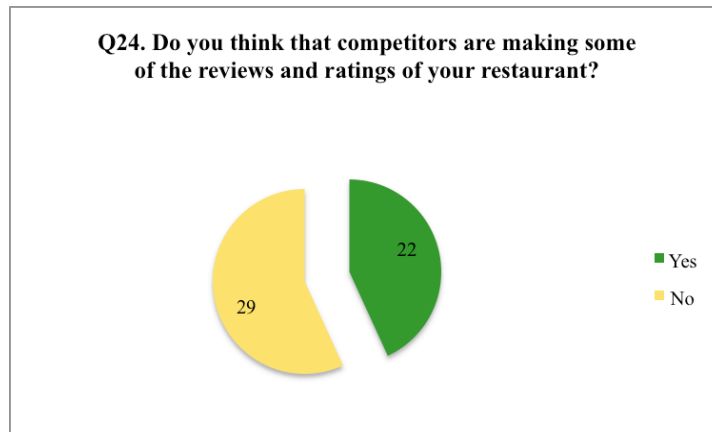
From the data collected, it can be seen that restaurants have doubts regarding TripAdvisor's content. Indeed, some restaurants answered that they knew about establishments that were creating fake profiles to write excellent reviews saying good thing about themselves and bad ones about competitors. For instance, the manager of *Momenti* restaurant believed that his competitors had written fake reviews and ratings about its restaurant since every time his restaurant was in top 10 TripAdvisor raking in Lisbon, a bad review was done and, subsequently, it dropped in the ranking. Taking into account O'Connor (2010) (quoting Keates 2007), a fake review can be identified when it is different from the average.

However, restaurants do not consider that fake reviews and ratings are increasing (Q25, Exhibit 3.2.5). These false comments are done occasionally.

The results from both questions are aligned with O'Connor (2010) when he said that companies could write their own reviews to have better results or, alternatively, depreciate their competitors. Yet, these results are not aligned with TripAdvisor's policy about fake reviews, even with the obligation to agree with the terms and conditions.

As matter of fact, when the interviewed restaurants were asked if they agree with their classification in TripAdvisor (Q26 and Q27, Exhibit 3.2.5), 10 restaurants disagree with their position, mainly because of the fake reviews and how difficult it is to control them. Other

restaurants do not agree because they are competing with enterprises that have other core business (Ex. Wine Bars, Ice Cream Shops and Bakeries).

However, from the 51 answers, most of the restaurants agree or neither agree nor disagree. Using a Likert scale, the average is around 3.29 and the standard deviation is 0.92.

Even though some credibility issues regarding TripAdvisor content arise, restaurants still rely on it.

Thus, **H7 is validated**.
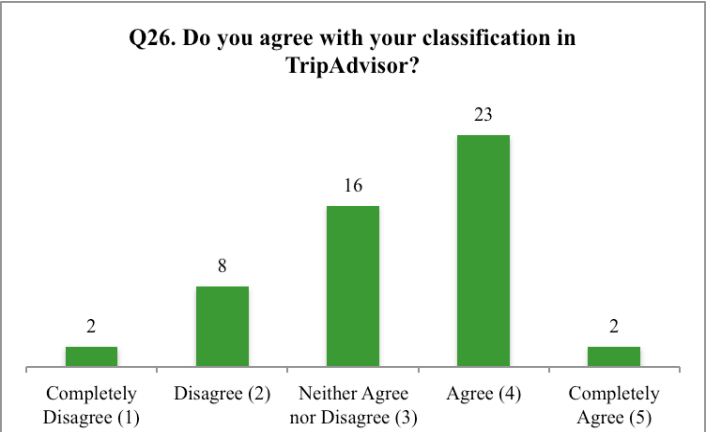
5.3 Users Survey

5.3.1 Sample

This survey reached 131 people living currently in Lisbon area, from which 75 were females (Q33, Exhibit 4.1). The majority (80%) has between 18 and 25 years old, 17% has between 26 and 34 and the remaining has more than 35 (Q34, Exhibit 4.1). Concerning education, from the total of 131, 78 have a Master, 46 a Bachelor, 4 completed high school and the remaining 3 have a PhD (Q35, Exhibit 4.1).

From the total of individuals interviewed, only 57 use TripAdvisor, being the remaining questions of the survey only conducted to this number (Q2).
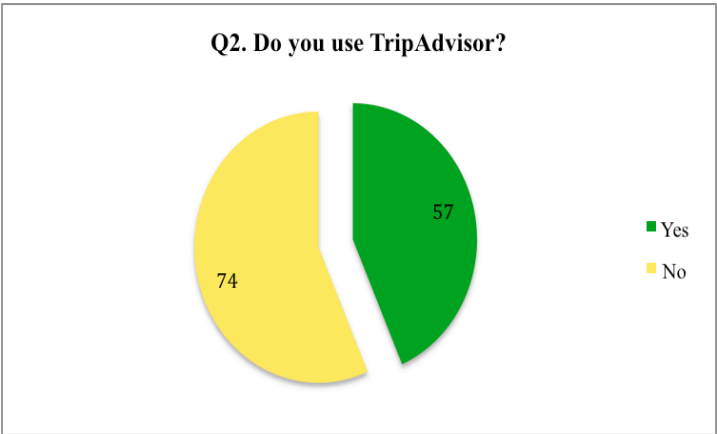
5.3.2 Hypotheses Discussion

H4) Users are contributing with opinions to TripAdvisor database; reputation, communication and self-expression drive the participation in TripAdvisor.

The goal in H4 is to understand if users are participating in TripAdvisor and, if so, what drives this participation.

From the results obtained in Q2, only 44% of the sample uses TripAdvisor. However, this number decreases even more when the users were asked if they usually review and rate their experience in TripAdvisor after visiting a restaurant (Q9).

Q9. Do you usually review and rate your experience in TripAdvisor after visiting a restaurant?

Q10 shows the main reasons for the participation of users. By analyzing the answers it can be seen that "Reputation" or "I like to review and rate" were not selected, which means

Q10. If positive, why do you do it?
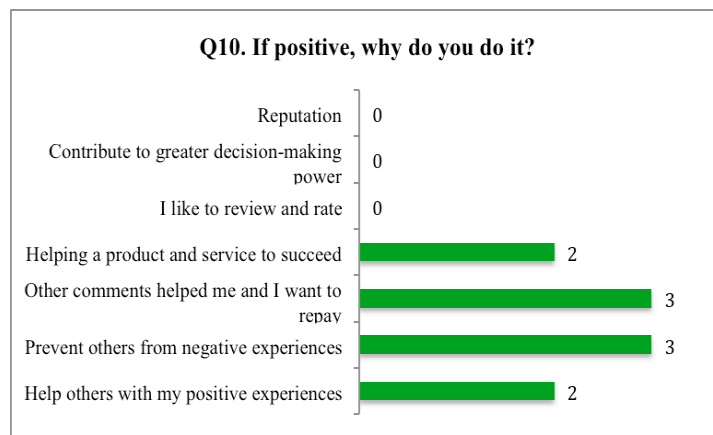
that motives supported by OECD (2007) regarding user participation in user-generated content platforms are not validated. People are not participating to express their ideas or create a reputation. When asked which tool they use to tell their experiences, all of the respondents answered both reviews and ratings (Q11, Exhibit 4.2.1).

From the remaining 53 TripAdvisor users that do not make reviews or ratings, 39 answered that they do not think about it and 20 reported the lack of incentives. Lack of time is another reason that is pointed out – 14 answers (Q12, Exhibit 4.2.1).

Moreover, since the majority of the respondents have between 18 and 25 years, this information shows that young people are not persuaded to create content or participate. Given this, Balasubramaniam (2009) and OECD (2007) studies are not alligned with the answers obtained in this survey: they claim that young generation is the one driving the user-generated content.

From the data collected in these four questions, **H4 does not hold**.

H6) Users are exploring TripAdvisor location-based service on their mobile devices in a daily basis to find out the best restaurant that fits their needs.

Aiming to understand the utility of TripAdvisor's platform in mobile devices, six questions were done to TripAdvisor users.

By Q3 (Exhibit 4.2.2), it is known that 47 of the TripAdvisor users have a mobile device that supports the applications.

However, even having a mobile device, users rarely choose a restaurant using TripAdvisor's application. Therefore, and using a Likert scale, the average of the answers is 2.23 and the standard deviation is 0.91 (Q4).

Q4. In case of an affirmative answer, do you use TripAdvisor's application on your mobile device to choose a restaurant?
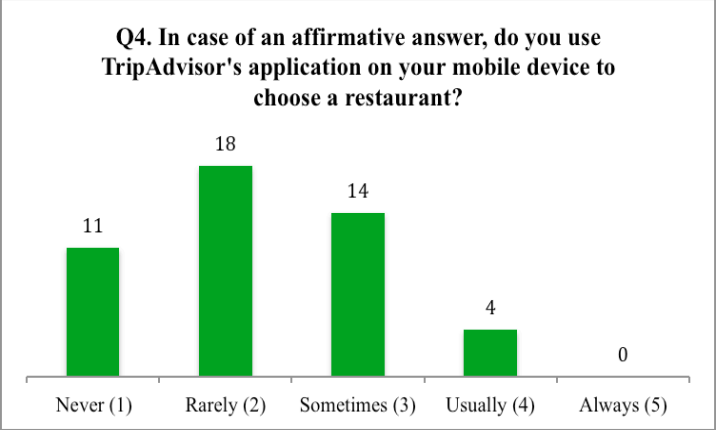
From the 36 users that have TripAdvisor's application in their mobile devices, 27 answered that they use it when they are travelling and 11 answered that they use it in a daily basis (Q5, Exhibit 4.2.2). Thus, people use TripAdvisor mainly while travelling since it can help them find a place to eat in unknown cities and reduce the risk of choosing a bad place.

Given this, users are not using TripAdvisor's mobile application everyday. However, they consider TripAdvisor a useful tool to choose a restaurant in a daily basis as it can be seen in Q6.

Q6. Is TripAdvisor useful for daily choices?
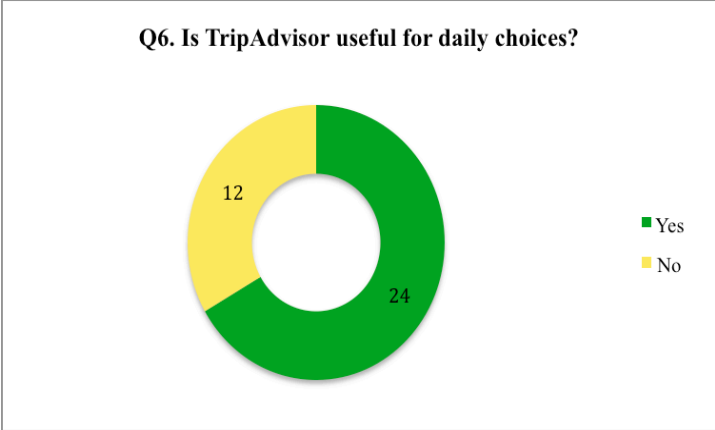
From this 24 users, 20 use this platform less than 2 times per week when they want to choose a restaurant and only 4 uses between 3-5 times. No one of the inquired utilizes TripAdvisor's mobile application more than 5 times per week (Q7, Exhibit 4.2.2).

Therefore, **H6 is not validated** since it is concluded from the results above that customers, in a daily basis, do not use TripAdvisor's mobile application.

H7) Reviews and ratings from TripAdvisor are credible and truthful for users and restaurants.

Willing to verify hypothesis number seven taking into account users information, two questions were made.

The first question is related with the truthfulness of TripAdvisor's reviews and ratings.
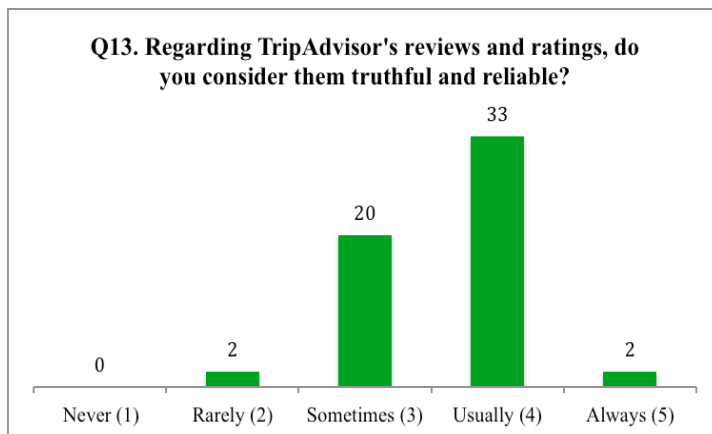
Using a Likert scale to understand if users consider TripAdvisor content truthful and reliable (Q13), the average of the answers is 3.61 with a standard deviation of 0.62. Thus, users usually believe in TripAdvisor. In addition, and since the standard deviation is low, the data collected is close to the average (low variability). Indeed, it can be seen that from 57 answers, 33 users answered that usually believe and 20 answered "sometimes".

The second question (Q14) is inquiring whether or not users have been asked to review and/or rate a restaurant. From the results obtained, only 14 out of 57 users answered positively. Being so, it can be affirmed that users are not that influenced and encouraged by restaurants to write or rate their establishments.
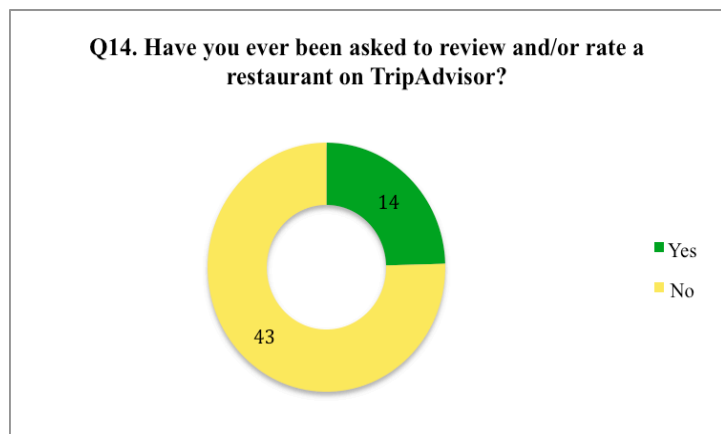
With this information, it can be concluded that there are not credibility issues regarding TripAdvisor's content, even when users are the ones creating the information. Therefore, users do not believe that others are making reviews or ratings to improve results or to decrease restaurants' reputation.

Taking into consideration the information collected in the restaurants survey, when asked if restaurants reply to TripAdvisor reviews, some establishments answered that they do not respond since they do not want to interfere. For them, TripAdvisor is an application made

for users to users. In this case, restaurants want to have a neutral position. Taking a look at the responses to these two questions, restaurants are succeeding in it since users believe in TripAdvisor's content.

Then, from the information analysed, the authenticity of TripAdvisor content is confirmed. **H7 is validated**.

H8) Content from TripAdvisor influences users' process of decision-making in restaurants; online popularity contributes for the decision process.

In order to validate or not H8, survey information is analyzed and explained. Therefore, the next paragraphs describe the questions asked.
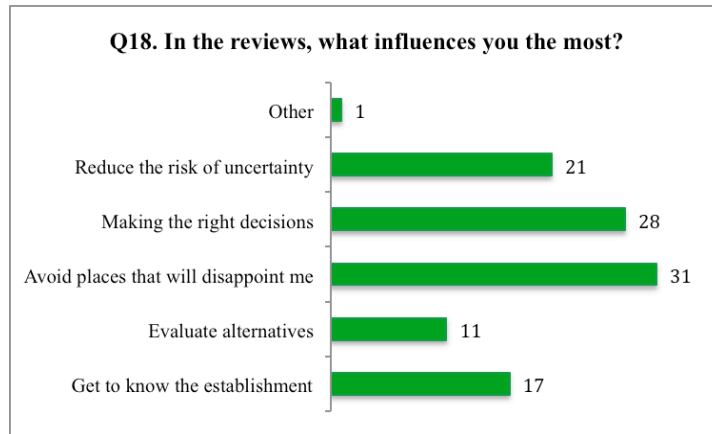
Since Internet is nowadays seen as a source and a channel for word-of-mouth (Gruen et al. 2006), users now have the opportunity to interact and share information with others regarding a product or a service (Zhang et al. 2010). Therefore, when users were asked if they are checking reviews and ratings made on TripAdvisor while choosing a restaurant, the results are enlightening: 52 out of 57 answers are positive (Q15, Exhibit 4.2.3).

Q16. If positive, how often?
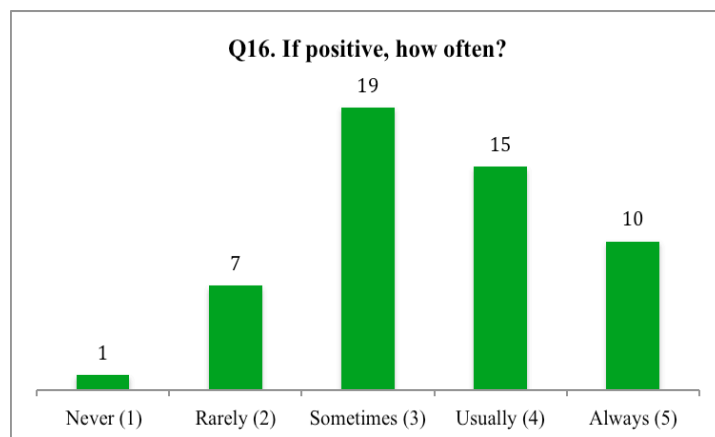
Using a Likert scale to analyse the results, the average is 3.5 and the standard deviation is 1.02 (Q16). Being so, it is concluded that TripAdvisor's information influences users' choices.

As a matter of fact, both reviews and ratings and price are the factors that determine the most the process of choosing a restaurant - 43 answers. However, "Acceptance of online reservation" and " Pro-activity of the restaurant to respond" do not influence users at all. Both of them only had 2 responses (Q17, Exhibit 4.2.3).

In Q18 (Exhibit 4.2.3), when users were asked why they read the reviews, the options "avoid places that will disappoint" and "making the right decisions" are the most answered. In addition, users also consider that reviews are important to reduce the risk of uncertainty. As it was mentioned by O'Connor (2010) and Zhang et al. (2010), reviews offers precise and complete information that help users to reduce insecurity. The knowledge about a restaurant increases and good choices are done.

Q18. In the reviews, what influences you the most?

| Category	Value
Other	1
Reduce the risk of uncertainty	21
Making the right decisions	28
Avoid places that will disappoint me	31
Evaluate alternatives	11
Get to know the establishment	17

Since reviews play an important role regarding restaurants choice, when questioned about the importance of the reviewer profile, users are divided: 26 answered positively and 26 negatively (Q21, Exhibit 4.2.3). For the ones that consider the reviewer profile important, "experience", "similar tastes" and "similar age and gender" are the reasons that users most value. On the other hand, "It seems like a good person" and "Helpful votes" are the ones that less matters for users (Q22, Exhibit 4.2.3). "Helpful votes" are not that significant since it is a tool that users do not know and the ones who know it, do not use it (Q23, Exhibit 4.2.3).

Taking into consideration Zhang et al. (2010), the more online popularity a product or service has, the more success it has since the reviews are quickly spread and easiest accessed by others. Subsequently, the more online popularity it has, the more the process of decision-making is influenced (Doh & Hwang 2009). Thus, the more reviews and the best ranking a restaurant has on

Q20. Does the more reviews a restaurant has and the best rated it is on TripAdvisor influence how faster you choose it?

- Yes 48
- No 4

TripAdvisor, the faster it is for users to choose it (Q20).
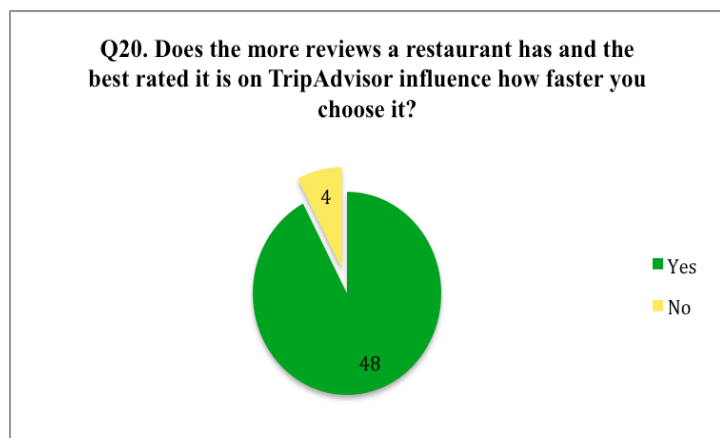
Given this, in Q19 (Exhibit 4.2.3), almost all of the respondents that use TripAdvisor recognize that ratings and reviews help them to reduce the process of decision-making time when they want to choose a restaurant.

From results above, it can be seen that ratings and reviews from TripAdvisor are used in the process of decision-making. When the sample individuals were asked why they prefer TripAdvisor instead of other platforms, "Credibility" and "Updated information" are the main reasons (Q26, Exhibit 4.2.3).

Q26. If positive, why?
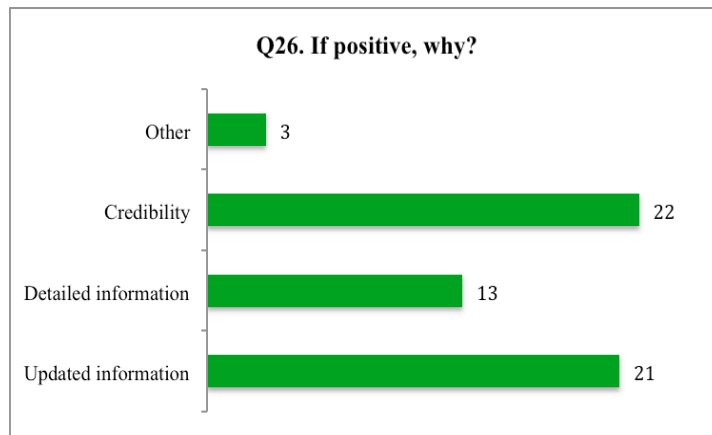
The 24 users that do not prefer TripAdvisor to search for restaurants (Q25, Exhibit 4.2.3) use platforms like Facebook, iGoGo, Forretas or BestTables. Other ones prefer to use websites like Lifecooler or Google to find the restaurant that best fits their needs. Moreover, old habits like asking friends and family, phone calls or magazines are also used as well. However, there is not a common pattern, or in this case, a common platform. The results vary (Q27, Exhibit 4.2.3).

Given the information collected, **H8 is verified**.

H9) Users like to receive TripAdvisor's news taking into account personal information previously shared; information received from TripAdvisor is useful.

In order to verify H9, the remaining questions must be considered to understand if TripAdvisor's information is useful and if users like to share personal information and, therefore, receiving customized content.
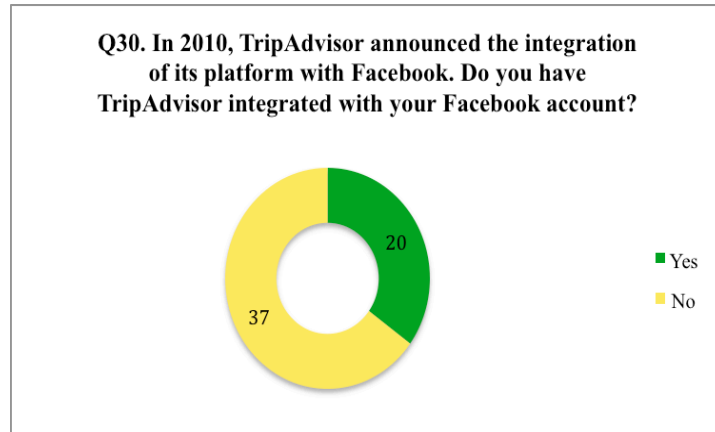
Starting by asking if they like to receive e-mails from TripAdvisor, 44 answers were negative (Q28).

Q28. Do you like receiving e-mails from TripAdvisor?
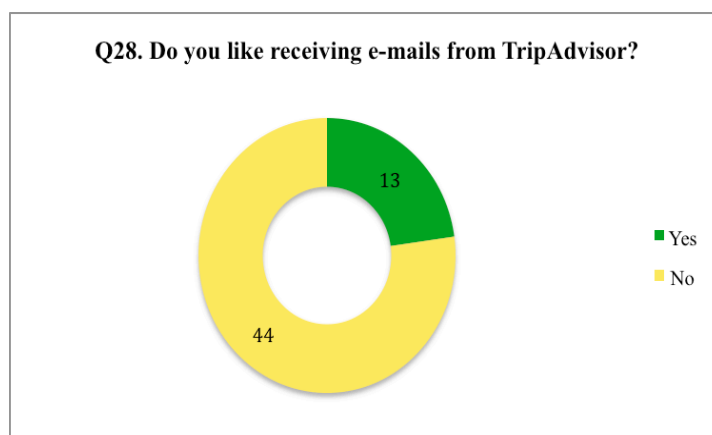
Likewise, when asked if they consider TripAdvisor's e-mails useful, 38 users answered negatively (Q29, Exhibit 4.2.4). Even though they dislike receiving TripAdvisor

advertising, 6 users acknowledge that the content is aligned with their tastes and needs (previously searched). Still, this is a low value when compared with the overall result.

Taking this information into account it is acceptable to conclude that users do not like TripAdvisor's e-mails and they do not consider the content useful.

Q30. In 2010, TripAdvisor announced the integration of its platform with Facebook. Do you have TripAdvisor integrated with your Facebook account?

20

37

■ Yes
■ No

When asked if they have TripAdvisor integrated with their Facebook account, only 20 users answered positively (Q30). The reasons are associated with the easier login and their will to share experiences with friends. Only 4 answered that are integrated in order to receive TripAdvisor news in their wall, which means that the majority do not like to receive news about TripAdvisor even when they share personal information (Q31, Exhibit 4.2.4).

Despite of its huge database, that increased with Facebook's partnership, TripAdvisor is not using it properly. TripAdvisor is not taking advantage from marketing research or company-to-consumer commnunication as it was supposed to (Kaplan 2012) because users do not consider the information valuable.

Therefore, **H9 does not hold**.

5.4   Summary

This chapter sets to identify the gaps that both restaurants and users survey had by realizing a survey pre-test. After correcting them, the surveys were ready to be launch.

Restaurant survey collected around 64 answers, and from this number, 51 are present in TripAdvisor. On the other hand, 131 respond to users survey. However, only around 44% use TripAdvisor.

Considering the results from the restaurants survey, the five hypotheses generated are discussed and the intermediary conclusions are presented. Therefore, the following table shows all the restaurant hypotheses and if they are validated taking into account the information collected.

Hypotheses	Validation
H1) Restaurants are aware of TripAdvisor influence and use its database and platform; Restaurants are investing in TripAdvisor marketing tools.	Not Verified
H2) Restaurants are listed in TripAdvisor in order to promote their business and increase brand awareness.	Verified
H3) Restaurants are capable of identifying TripAdvisor customers from regular ones; restaurants are dealing with TripAdvisor customers in a different way.	Not Verified
H5) TripAdvisor's reviews and ratings allow restaurants to understand customers' preferences; restaurants owners believe that user-generated content can lead to better performances.	Verified
H7) Reviews and ratings from TripAdvisor are credible and truthful for users and restaurants.	Verified

Table 5 - Validation of restaurants hypotheses

Regarding the results from the users survey, Table 6 presents a summary of the users hypotheses and its respective validation accordingly to the content created through the surveys.

Users Hypotheses	Validation
H4) Users are contributing with opinions to TripAdvisor database; reputation, communication and self-expression drive the participation in TripAdvisor.	Not Verified
H6) Users are exploring TripAdvisor location-based service on their mobile devices in a daily basis to find out the best restaurant that fit their needs.	Not Verified
H7) Reviews and ratings from TripAdvisor are credible and truthful for users and restaurants.	Verified
H8) Content from TripAdvisor influences users' process of decision-making in restaurants; online popularity contributes for the decision process.	Verified
H9) Users like to receive TripAdvisor news taking into account personal information previously shared; information received from TripAdvisor is useful.	Not Verified

Table 5 - Validation of users hypothesis

Conclusions are drawn in chapter 6,. Both restaurant and user answers to the research question are presented. In addition, the limitations experienced during this dissertation are stated and future research is suggested.

6 CONCLUSION

This chapter aims to answer the research question bearing in mind the intermediary conclusions that were made in the previous chapter.

Since the research question is the same for both restaurants and users, two different answers are given.

Limitations that emerged during the development of this dissertation are presented and possible studies are disclosed in the future research subtopic.

6.1 Research Question's Answer

Surveys were generated and launched so that the information could be collected after explaining the theoretical concepts and the creation of the dissertation model that originated the research hypotheses. With this, intermediary conclusions were made through the hypotheses' validation.

Since all the data is pulled together, the answer to the research question **"Are Lisbon restaurants and customers of TripAdvisor taking advantage of its platform?"** can now be answered. The next two subsections aim to answer it taking into consideration the intermediary conclusions and considering both restaurants' and users' side.

6.1.1 Restaurant Research Question's Conclusion

Do restaurants recognize that TripAdvisor is a powerful platform?

According to H1 discussion, TripAdvisor is helping restaurants improving their businesses since it is "the world's largest travel site" (TripAdvisor 2013) and, therefore, makes restaurants reach large audiences without monetary investment. Restaurant owners are using TripAdvisor's information in order to better understand what clients expect from them since 44 out of 51 restaurants affirmed that they are conscious of TripAdvisor's reviews and ratings impact.

Regarding TripAdvisor for Business, results show that out of the 51 interviewed restaurants, 10 use its tools. This value derives from the fact that out of the remaining 41 restaurants, 35 are not aware of its existence.

Considering that 29 out of 51 establishments acknowledge that TripAdvisor creates value by increasing the visibility and brings more clients (mostly tourists), it is sustainable to affirm that restaurants are listed in TripAdvisor in order to promote their business and increase brand awareness. At the same time, restaurants are conscious that users are choosing restaurants through this platform, since 37 restaurants stated that in the survey, which was discussed in H2.

From the data collected in the discussion concerning H3, all of the interviewed restaurants said that they treat every client equally. Even when they notice that a client comes thanks to TripAdvisor, they do not treat him any differently, concerned about what he might write afterwards.

Thus, restaurants recognize that TripAdvisor is a powerful platform as observed in the results obtained in the previously discussed hypotheses.

Is the content of this platform helpful for the restaurant industry?

Regarding TripAdvisor's content, 37 out of 51 restaurants are using it on a regular basis in order to improve their performance. Likewise, this information also helps them in identifying their strengths and possible opportunities to enhance their service. Bearing in mind H5 discussion, restaurants are aware that TripAdvisor's reviews and ratings are helping them realise what they are doing incorrectly and focus on it.

Do restaurants believe in TripAdvisor's content?

Since TripAdvisor's content influences the process of decision-making, restaurants know that ratings and reviews play a major role when users want to choose a place to eat. Therefore, 22 out of 51 restaurants believe that competitors are fabricating some of the information in order to damage others restaurants' reputation or to be better positioned in the TripAdvisor ranking. However, most of them agree that fake reviews are being done occasionally and are not a growing concern as demonstrated in H7 discussion. This means that restaurants still believe in TripAdvisor's raking since only 10 out of 51 disagree with their classification.

In conclusion, since H2, H5 and H7 are verified and H1 and H3 are not, it is observed that restaurants are not using all the free services that TripAdvisor has to offer. Although not to its full extent, Lisbon restaurants are taking advantage from TripAdvisor services, which means that the answer to the research question is positive.

6.1.2 Users Research Question's Conclusion

What makes people participate in these platforms?

TripAdvisor is a platform that is being used by 57 out of 131 people interviewed. However, only 4 out of these 57 Lisbon citizens are contributing to increase the database and, consequently, contributing to help others. "I do not think about it" and "Lack of Incentives" are the reasons for not contributing. The ones who do create content are doing it because they want to return the favour and help others to avoid negative experiences as it is demonstrated in H4 discussion.

Do customers use TripAdvisor's mobile application?

According to H6 discussion, when using TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant, the majority of the sample (18 out of 47) rarely utilizes its mobile application to do so. There are only 11 people using it on a daily basis. Despite not using TripAdvisor's mobile application to choose a restaurant regularly, 24 users consider that TripAdvisor is useful for daily choices in order to find the restaurant that best fit their needs.

Taking into consideration H6 discussion, it can be concluded that the ones who do use TripAdvisor's mobile application do it mainly while travelling given the fact that they want to avoid restaurants that can disappoint them in unknown places.

Do regular users believe in TripAdvisor's content?

Concerning TripAdvisor's credibility, H7 discussion shows that users consider TripAdvisor's content truthful and reliable, even though customers are the ones creating the information.

Does TripAdvisor's content influence customers' choice?

Regarding H8 discussion, although the amount of people that uses TripAdvisor is small, the ones that do check it regularly when they want to choose a place to eat – 52 out of 57 interviewed individuals confirmed it. Thus, TripAdvisor's content, previously made by other people, influences the process of decision-making.

With 43 out of 52 people pointing them, factors like reviews, ratings and price are the ones that influence the most when users are looking for a restaurant. Therefore, customers do not consider it relevant if restaurants respond to reviews or not.

Furthermore, 31 out of 52 costumers check TripAdvisor's database to decrease the probability of choosing a bad restaurant and, consequently, being disappointed with their decision. Users are reducing the risk of uncertainty through the usage of TripAdvisor.

Additionally, popularity is also contributing for the process of decision-making, since 48 out of 52 customers recognize that the more online reputation a restaurant has, the more attractive it becomes. According to the collected data in H8, people are choosing restaurants that are better positioned on TripAdvisor.

Considering user preferences in using TripAdvisor instead of another platform to choose a restaurant, credibility and the constant access to updated information are the main reasons, with 22 and 21 out of 33 answers respectively, since it was possible to choose more than one option.

Is TripAdvisor's mobile marketing effective?

Regarding TripAdvisor's e-mails to users and the usefulness of its information, from the gathered data in H9 discussion, only 13 out of 57 users like to receive e-mails. In addition, they do not consider the communications useful taking into consideration their personal tastes and the information previously shared. Given this, TripAdvisor's mobile marketing is not being effective due to the background of the interviewed.

Broadening the results of the users' survey to Lisbon's population, and bearing in mind that H7 and H8 are verified and H4, H6 and H9 are not, it can be seen that TripAdvisor is only being used by small part of the population. Therefore, from the data collected it cannot be concluded that Lisbon users are taking advantage from TripAdvisor, since the people interviewed are not using TripAdvisor platform in Lisbon.

This means that in this regard the research question is only partly confirmed.

Gathering restaurant and user conclusions, the answer to the research question: **"Are Lisbon restaurants and customers of TripAdvisor taking advantage of its platform?"** is positive for restaurants and negative for users. Lisbon citizens are using TripAdvisor while travelling and tourists are using this platform to find the best restaurant that suits their needs in Lisbon. This means that the restaurants interviewed are taking advantage of TripAdvisor but not from Lisbon users.

6.2 Limitations

During this dissertation, several limitations emerged making it more difficult to achieve the main purpose: answering the research question.

The first drawback relates to the literature review. Despite having access to a huge database accessible over the Internet, in certain topics it was difficult to choose the proper information. For instance, in the subject of user-generated content or in the mobile marketing concept there are many articles but with different definitions. Thus, selecting the right one is a complex task. It was difficult to find a standard definition.

Besides, restaurants did not cooperate as expected. It was necessary to contact more than 130 establishments in order to collect 64 answers. Only 50% of the inquired establishments answered to the survey.

It was also challenging to achieve an acceptable number of answers in the users' survey, given the fact that only Lisbon citizens could answer. It was more complicated to spread the survey and, therefore, collect enough data to make the results consistent.

Furthermore, even though the survey was pre-tested, the obtained results show that the interpretations of some questions were not aligned with what was meant to reach.

6.3 Future Research

Having answered the research question, there is still room for future research, which can lead to the improvement of several topics.

Since this disseration was focused on Lisbon, a future analysis could include a study of the same industry somewhere else in Portugal such as Madeira or Porto, respectively the second and third places with more listed restaurants on TripAdvisor, and a comparison could be done. Additionally, future studies regarding other countries could also be made.

A future research could incorporate a detailed study about the platform of TripAdvisor. Since some restaurants answered that some improvements could be done (e.g. create loyalty programs; revise and clarify rating methods and improve the performance of the application) - Q32 and Q33 (Exhibit 5) - it could be interesting to examine if TripAdvisor is aware of this complaints and, if so, which solutions would they be working on. Interviews to social network specialists could also be conducted in order to explain the success of TripAdvisor and find what could be done to improve the platform.

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EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1 – Questions Restaurant Survey

In the context of my dissertation at Católica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics, this survey aims to find out if the restaurants in the city of Lisbon are using the platform TripAdvisor, and if so, what use they are making.

The restaurants are chosen randomly, while your data is stored confidentially. This questionnaire takes about 10 minutes to complete.

Thank you in advance.

Q2. Is your restaurant present in TripAdvisor?

- Yes
- No

Q3. If positive, since when do you use TripAdvisor?

Q4. What are your reasons to be present in TripAdvisor?

- Clients increasingly use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant
- I find this application useful and that values my property
- Keep up with new technologies
- Other restaurants have joined
- Improve my performance
- Increase visibility
- Another reason

Q5. On a scale of 1 (does not contribute) to 5 (significantly contributes), how much do you consider that TripAdvisor helps to improve your business?

	1	2	3	4	5
Contribution level					

Q6. In what aspects did TripAdvisor contributed to improvement?

- Visibility

- Attracted new costumers

- Best performances

- Credibility

- Other

Q7. Do you keep track of the reviews and ratings that clients make about your restaurant?

- Yes

- No

Q8. Do you respond to any review to justify a negative review or thank a positive one?

- Yes

- No

Q9. How often do you respond to comments made on TripAdvisor?

	Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Usually**	**Always**
Frequency level					

Q10. What are the reasons to respond to TripAdvisor's reviews?

- Clarify misunderstandings

- Thank a negative review

- Justify what went wrong

- Build a close relationship with customers

- Another reason

Q11. TripAdvisor for Business is a tool which lets you save your restaurant on TripAdvisor's platform and enhance your business. Is your restaurant registered already?

- Yes

- No

Q12. If negative, why not?

- Do not know this tool

- The tools available do not attract me

- I do not have time

- Another reason

Q13. If positive, do you use the tools that it offers?

- Yes

- No

Q14. From the following tools, which ones do you normally use?

	Yes	No
Manage TripAdvisor page (change and add restaurant data; upload photos and videos, share the exact location of the restaurant on the map, data about its performance, etc.).		
Marketing Tools (increase comments and ratings; promote your area, show comments and ratings on your website and have a direct link to the restaurant website on TripAdvisor; integrate TripAdvisor on your Facebook page, etc.)		
Manage comments (new comment notification; respond to a review and report a comment that you do not agree; encourage new comments, etc.)		
Comments urgent (reminding them to comment and rate their experience)		
TripAdvisor Business cards and flyers (have you ever ordered?)		
Webinars (online seminars that explain how to use TripAdvisor to boost your business)		

Q15. How often do you use these tools?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Manage TripAdvisor page					
Marketing Tools					
Manage comments					
TripAdvisor Business cards and flyers					
Comments urgent					
Webinars					

Q16. Do you have a sticker from TripAdvisor at your restaurant door?

- Yes
- No

Q17. Have you ever paid for a service in TripAdvisor?

- Yes
- No

Q18. If positive, what was the amount spent so far?

Q19. What made you invest in TripAdvisor?

- Improve my performance
- Increase visibility
- Attracting new customers
- To distinguish myself from the other restaurants
- Understand the tastes of my customers
- Other

Q20. Do you consider that was a good investment?

- Yes
- No

Q21. As a partner of BestTables, TripAdvisor allows your restaurant to accept reservations online. Do you provide this tool to your customers?

- Yes
- No

Q22. Can you identify clients who come to your restaurant through TripAdvisor?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Customers identification					

Q23. Do customers who frequent your establishment via TripAdvisor usually get some sort of different attention?

- Yes
- No

Q24. Do you think that competitors are making some of the reviews and ratings of your restaurant?

- Yes
- No

Q25. Do you think that fake reviews and ratings are arising?

- Yes
- No

Q26. Do you agree with your classification in TripAdvisor?

	Completely Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Completely Agree
Agreement level					

Q27. Why do you not consider your position fair?

Q28. Taking into account the reviews and ratings made on TripAdvisor, can you understand how customers evaluate your restaurant?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Rating of the restaurant through reviews and ratings					

Q29. Do you use the reviews and ratings to improve your performance?

- Yes
- No

Q30. If positive, how often do you do it?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Utilization of the reviews and ratings					

Q31. Are you satisfied with TripAdvisor?

	Unsatisfied	Not Very Satisfied	Indifferent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
Satisfaction level					

Q32. As a user of TripAdvisor, can it be improved?

- Yes
- No

Q33. How?

Q34. Do you have any suggestions to TripAdvisor?

Q35. Why are you not present in TripAdvisor?

- I do not know TripAdvisor
- Not interested
- I do not consider relevant
- I do not like new technology
- Do not know how to use new technologies
- Other

Q36. Beginning of the activity

Exhibit 2 - Questions Users Survey

In the context of my dissertation at Católica-Lisbon School of Business and Economics, this survey aims to find out if the citizens of Lisbon are using the platform TripAdvisor, when they want to choose a restaurant.

Users are chosen randomly, while your data will be stored confidentially. This questionnaire takes approximately 5 minutes to respond.

Thank you in advance.

Q2. Do you use TripAdvisor?

- Yes
- No

Q3. Do you have a mobile device (e.g., smartphone, tablet, PDA, MP3 player with Wi-Fi, etc.) that supports TripAdvisor's application?

- Yes
- No

Q4. In case of an affirmative answer, do you use TripAdvisor's application on your mobile device to choose a restaurant?

	Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Usually**	**Always**
Utilization level					

Q5. When do you use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant?

- Travelling
- Daily Basis
- Other

Q6. Is TripAdvisor useful for daily choices?

- Yes
- No

Q7. How many times per week do you use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant?

- < 2 times per week
- 3-5 times per week
- 5-7 times per week
- 8 or more times per week

Q8. When do you usually search for a restaurant in TripAdvisor?

- Before leaving the home / hotel
- When I want to have lunch/dinner
- When I am planning my day
- Other

Q9. Do you usually comment and rate your experience in TripAdvisor after visiting a restaurant?

- Yes
- No

Q10. Why do you do it?

- Help others with my positive experiences
- Prevent others from negative experiences
- Other comments helped me and I want to repay
- Helping a product and service to succeed
- I like to review and rate
- Contribute to greater decision-making power
- Reputation
- Other Reason

Q11. If positive, which of the following do you use to tell your experience?

- Review
- Rating
- Both

Q12. If negative, why not?

- Lack of time

- Lack of confidence to write

- I do not think about it

- Internet problems

- Lack of incentives

- Another reason

Q13. Regarding TripAdvisor reviews and ratings, do you consider them truthful and reliable?

	Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Usually**	**Always**
True and reliable reviews and ratings					

Q14. Have you ever been asked to review and/or rate a restaurant on TripAdvisor?

- Yes

- No

Q15. Do you check TripAdvisor's reviews and/or ratings when looking for a restaurant?

- Yes

- No

Q16. If positive, how often?

	Never	**Rarely**	**Sometimes**	**Usually**	**Always**
Frequency level					

Q17. When do you want to choose a restaurant, which factors determine it?

- Rating

- Review

- Type of cuisine

- Price

- Photos and videos available

- Pro-activity of the restaurant to respond to previous comments

- Acceptance of online reservation
- Other

Q18. Why do you read the reviews?
- Get to know the establishment
- Evaluate alternatives
- Avoid places that will disappoint me
- Making the right decisions
- Reduce the risk of uncertainty
- Other

Q19. Is the time of your decision making process downsized by reviews/ratings?
- Yes
- No

Q20. Does the more reviews a restaurant has and the best rated it is on TripAdvisor influence how faster you choose it?
- Yes
- No

Q21. When you read a review, is the reviewer profile important?
- Yes
- No

Q22. Which are the characteristics that you most value?
- Experience
- Similar tastes
- Writing skills
- Similar age and gender
- "Helpful votes"
- It seems to be a good person
- Another reason

Q23. If you consider a review relevant, do you give feeedback through the "helpful vote" tool?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know this tool

Q24. As a partner of BestTables, TripAdvisor allows you to do online reservations. Do you use this tool?

- Yes
- No

Q25. While choosing a restaurant, do you prefer TripAdvisor to another platform?

- Yes
- No

Q26. If positive, why?

- Updated information
- Detailed information
- Credibility
- Another reason

Q27. If negative, what other platforms do you commonly use?

Q28. Do you like receiving e-mails from TripAdvisor?

- Yes
- No

Q29. Do you consider TripAdvisor's e-mails useful?

- Yes
- No

Q30. In 2010, TripAdvisor announced the integration of its platform with Facebook. Do you have TripAdvisor integrated with your Facebook account?

- Yes
- No

Q31. What motivated this integration?

- Easy login
- Receive TripAdvisor news on my wall
- Share experiences with my friends
- Share with my friends what I plan to do
- Knowing the opinion of my friends
- Know what my friends plan to do
- Other

Q32. Do you have any suggestions to TripAdvisor?

Q33. Gender

- Male
- Female

Q34. Age

- < 17 years old
- 18-25 years old
- 26-34 years old
- 35-49 years old
- 50-64 years old
- > 65 years old

Q35. Education

- Elementary School
- High School
- Bachelor
- Master

Exhibit 3 – Restaurants Survey's Results

Exhibit 3.1 – Sample
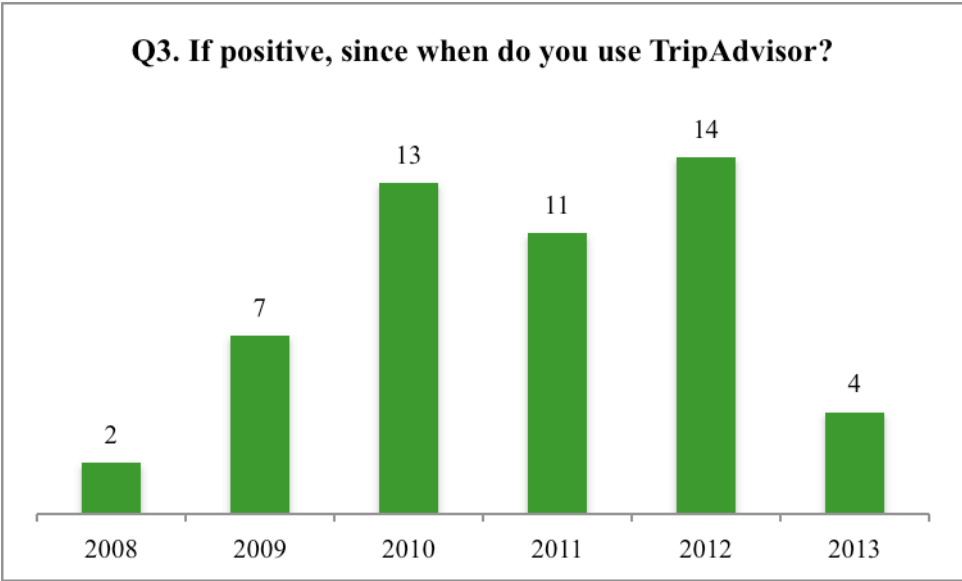
Exhibit 3.2 – Hypotheses Conclusions

Exhibit 3.2.1 – H1
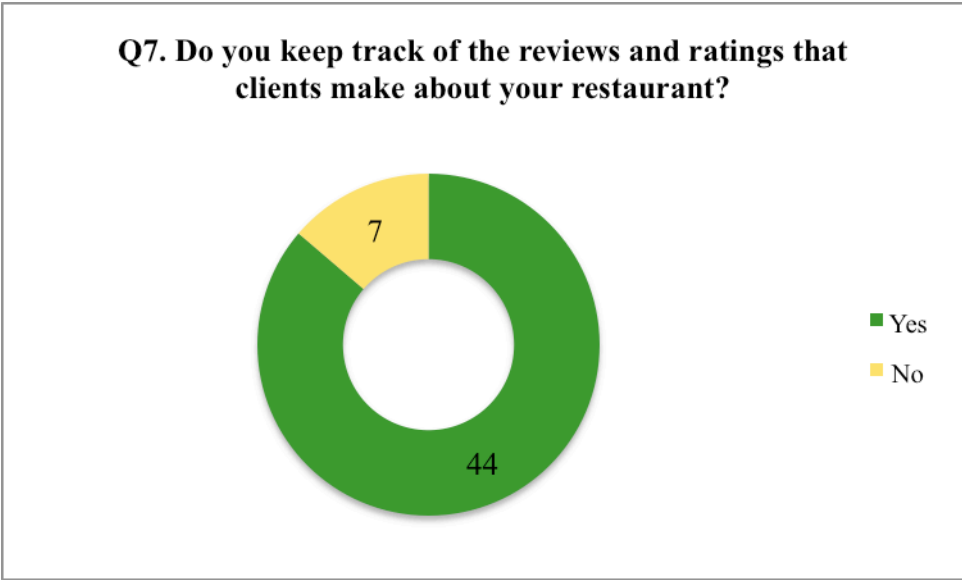
Q8. Do you respond to any review to justify a negative review or thank a positive one?

17 — Yes
27 — No
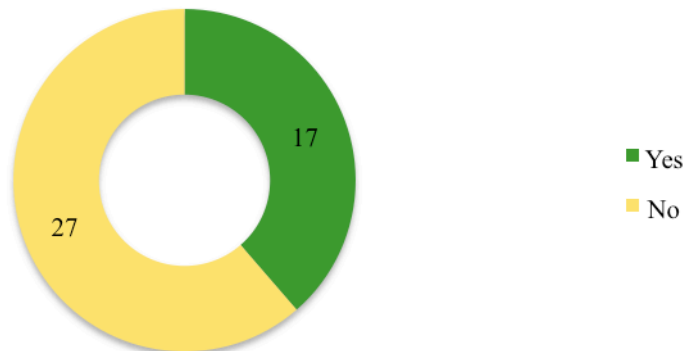
Q10. Another Reason Answers
Help future costumers to understand our concept
Respond to some negative critics
Thank a good review
Respond to unfair critics
Thank a constructive feedback

Q11. TripAdvisor for Business is a tool which lets you save your restaurant on TripAdvisor's platform and enhance your business. Is your restaurant registered already?

10 — Yes
41 — No

Q12. Another Reason Answers
Lack of time
I was not aware of this tool
I do not think it is relevant
I did not have the time to check its advantages, but I hope to do it soon

Q13. If positive, do you use the tools that it offers?
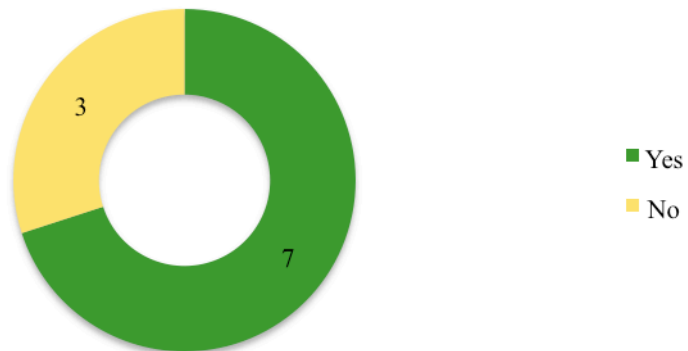
- Yes
- No

Q16. Do you have a sticker from TripAdvisor at your restaurant door?

- Yes
- No

Q17. Have you ever paid for a service in TripAdvisor?

- Yes
- No
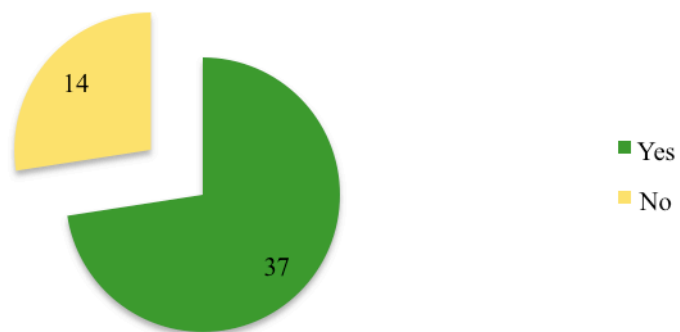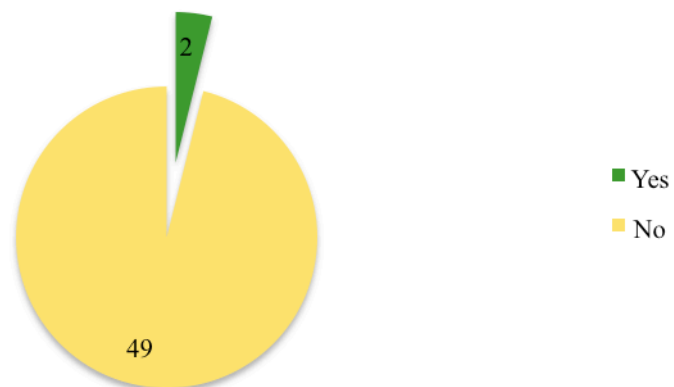
Q18. If positive, what was the amount spent so far?
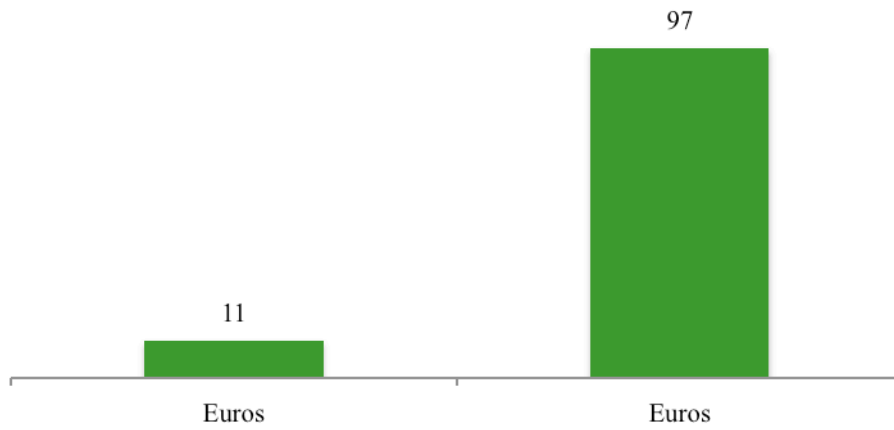
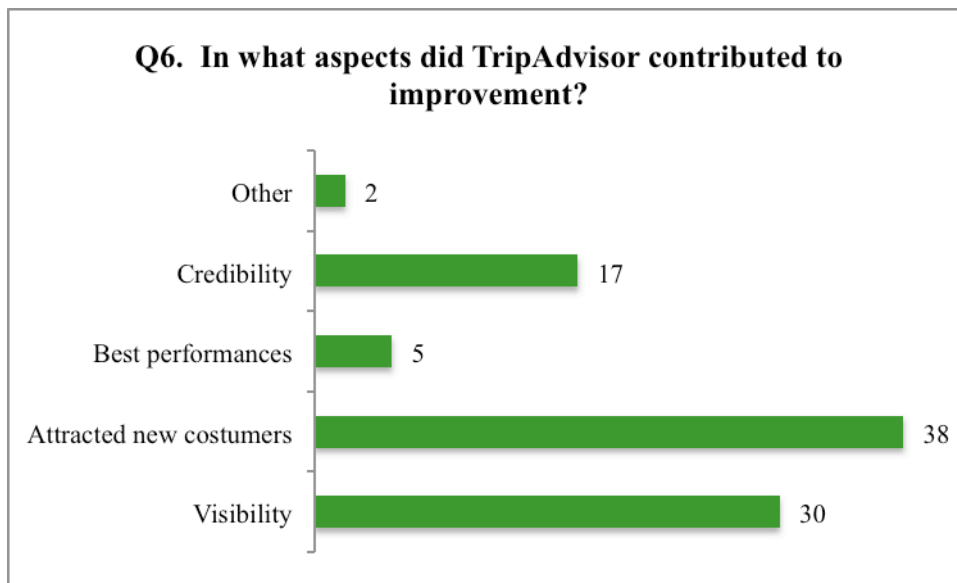

Q20. Do you consider that was a good investment?
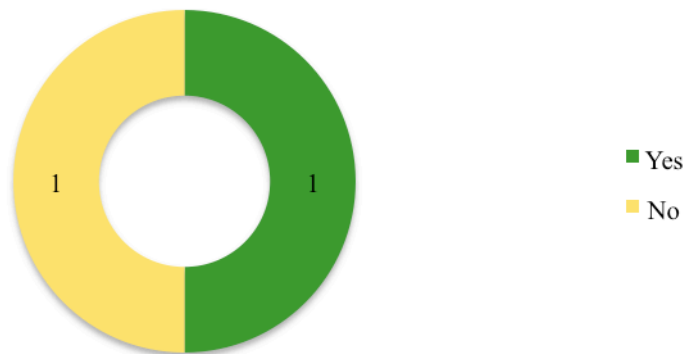
Q21. As a partner of BestTables, TripAdvisor allows your restaurant to accept reservations online. Do you provide this tool to your customers?
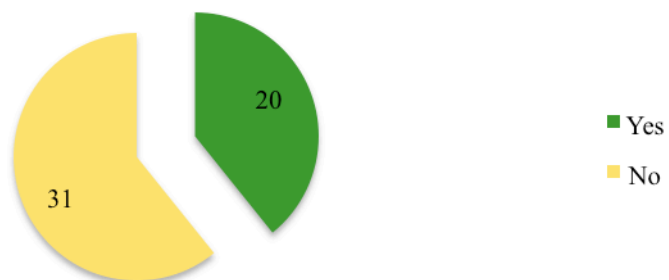
Q35. Other Answers
I did not have time to register yet
I do not think about it
Bad reviews had a great impact

Exhibit 3.2.2 – H2

Q4. Another Reason Answers
TripAdvisor contacted me
Somebody else did it for me (6 answers)
To know what costumers think about our restaurant
The platform has a great asset as a tool for customer: how customers view us
It is important for me to know what customers think about our service and products
Mainly to attract tourists

Q6. In what aspects did TripAdvisor contributed to improvement?

- Other: 2
- Credibility: 17
- Best performances: 5
- Attracted new costumers: 38
- Visibility: 30

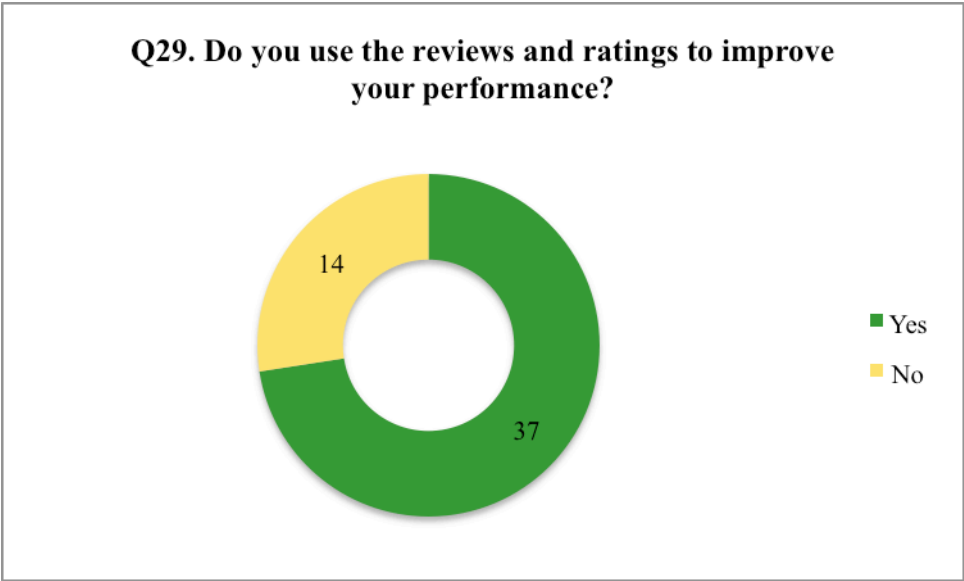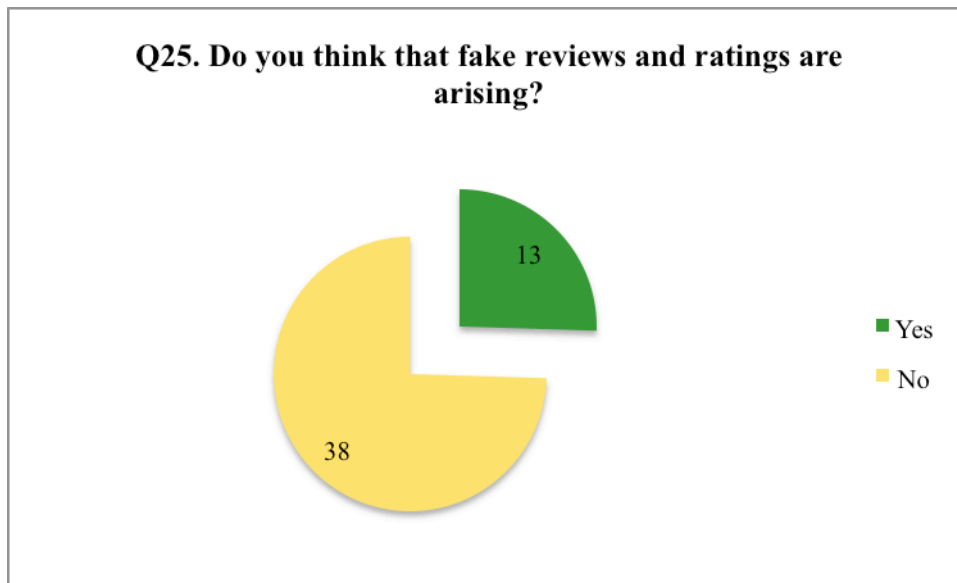| Q6. Another Reason Answers |
| --- |
| We started to work with tourists, which did not happen before |
| It leads us to continuous improvement |

Exhibit 3.2.3 – H3

Q23. Do customers who frequent your establishment via TripAdvisor usually get some sort of different attention?

No

51

Exhibit 3.2.4 – H5

Q29. Do you use the reviews and ratings to improve your performance?

14

Yes

No

37

Exhibit 3.2.5 – H7

Q25. Do you think that fake reviews and ratings are arising?

Pie chart:
- Yes: 13 (green)
- No: 38 (yellow)
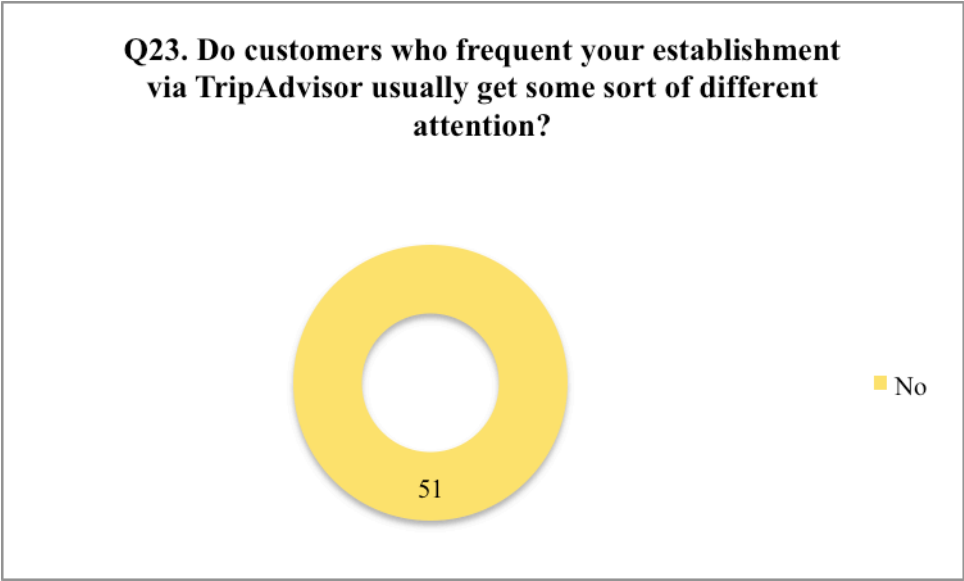
Q27. Why do you not consider your position fair?
Fake reviews made our position fall
Our target is different
I just do not agree
The more critics a restaurant has, the more difficult it is to maintain a position
TripAdvisor's platform management
My restaurant is better
We do not know who writes the reviews
Ranking not organized by categories: it has restaurants, coffee houses, bakery shops, etc. (2 answers)
Fake reviews

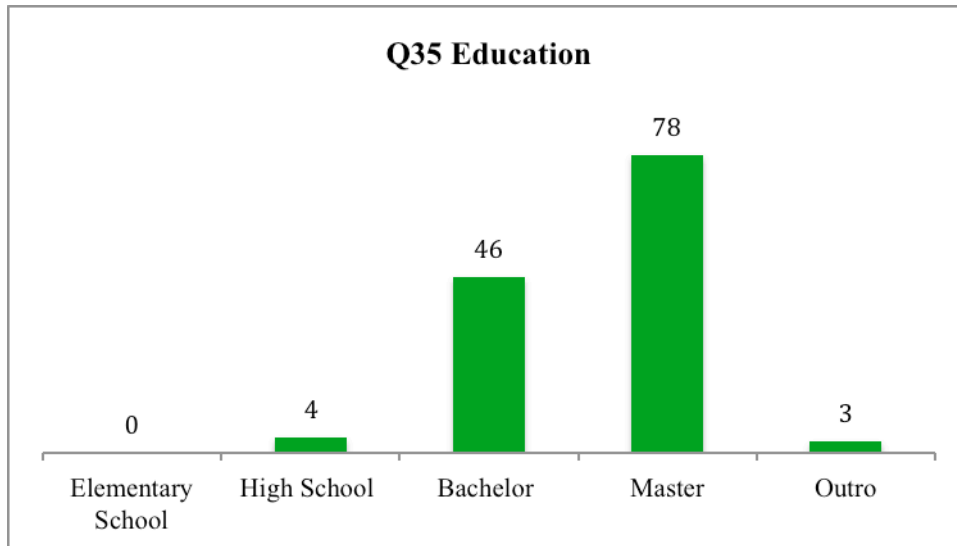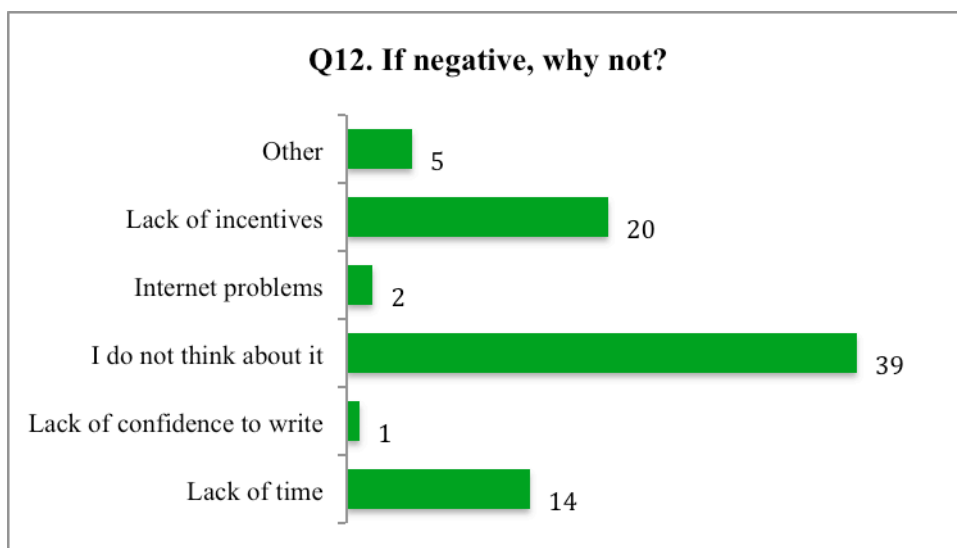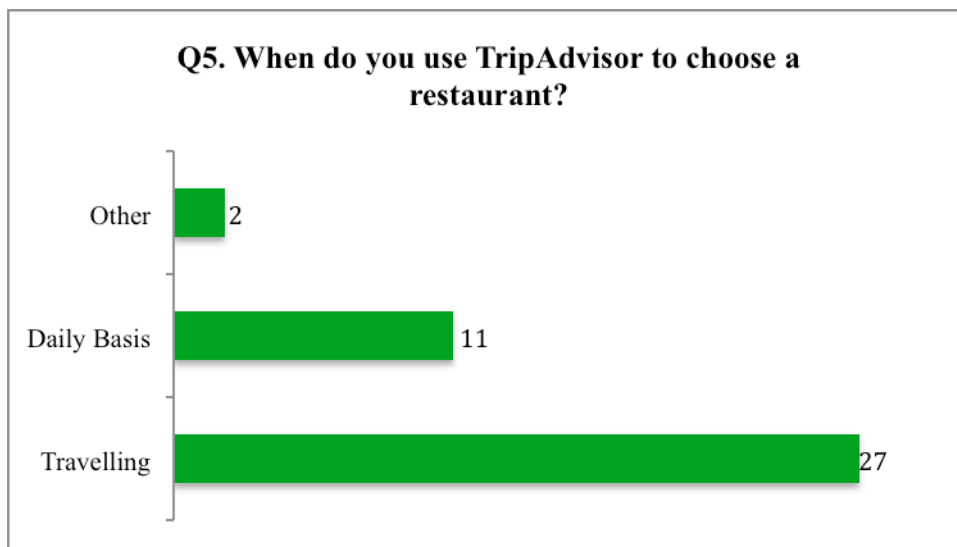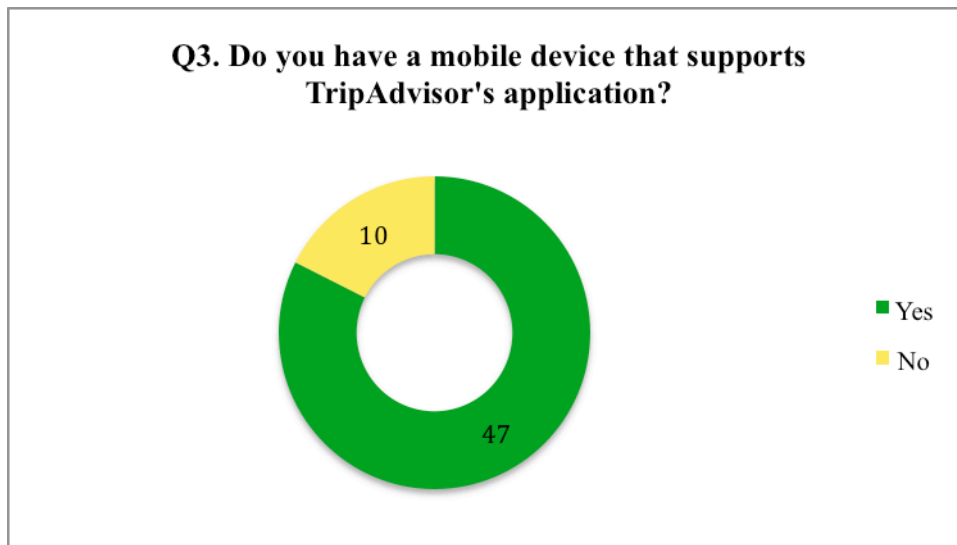# Exhibit 4 – Users Survey's Results

Exhibit 4.1 – Sample

Q35 Education
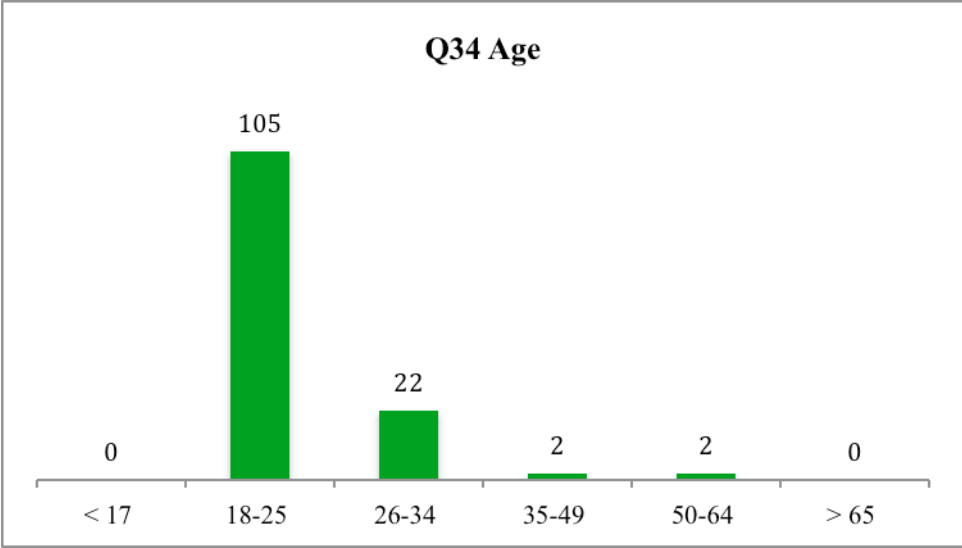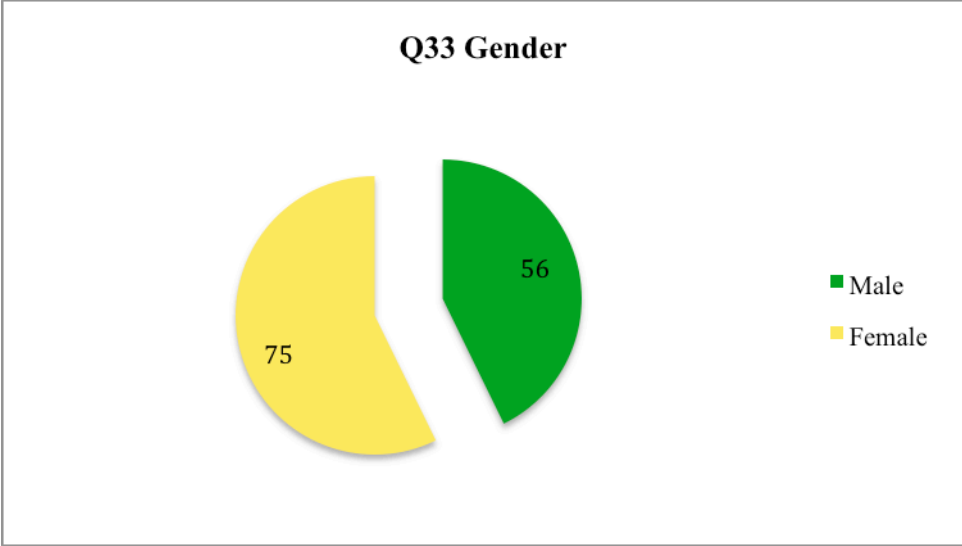
Exhibit 4.2 – Hypotheses Conclusion

Exhibit 4.2.1 – H4

Q11. If positive, which of the following do you use to tell your experience?

Q12. If negative, why not?

Q12. Other Answers
I do not have a smartphone
It is not worth it
Because I do not want
I never had the incentive to try it
I use other platforms (BestTables)

Exhibit 4.2.2 – H6

Q3. Do you have a mobile device that supports TripAdvisor's application?

- 10 — No
- 47 — Yes

Q5. When do you use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant?

- Other: 2
- Daily Basis: 11
- Travelling: 27

Q5. Other Answers
When I look for some specific restaurant
When I want to go to a different and special place

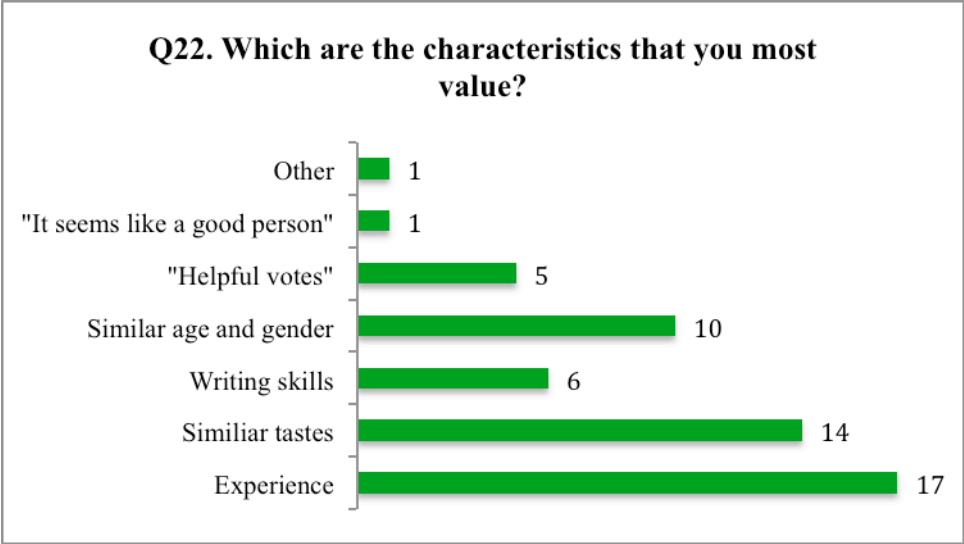**Q7. How many times per week do you use TripAdvisor to choose a restaurant?**

Category	Value
< 2 times	20
3-5 times	4
5-7 times	0
> 8 times	0

Exhibit 4.2.3 – H8

Q15. Do you check TripAdvisor's reviews and/or ratings when looking for a restaurant?

- Yes: 52
- No: 5

Q17. When do you want to choose a restaurant, which factors determine it?

Factor	Value
Acceptance of online reservation	2
Pro-activity of the restaurant to respond	2
Photos and videos available	19
Price	43
Type of cuisine	21
Reviews	43
Rating	43

Q18. Other Answers
Reviews that I consider too bad

Q21. When you read a review, is the reviewer profile important?

26   26

- ■ Yes
- ■ No

Q22. Which are the characteristics that you most value?

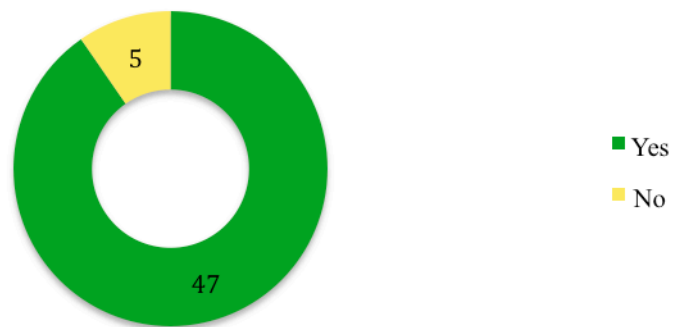| Characteristic	Value
Other	1
"It seems like a good person"	1
"Helpful votes"	5
Similar age and gender	10
Writing skills	6
Similiar tastes	14
Experience	17
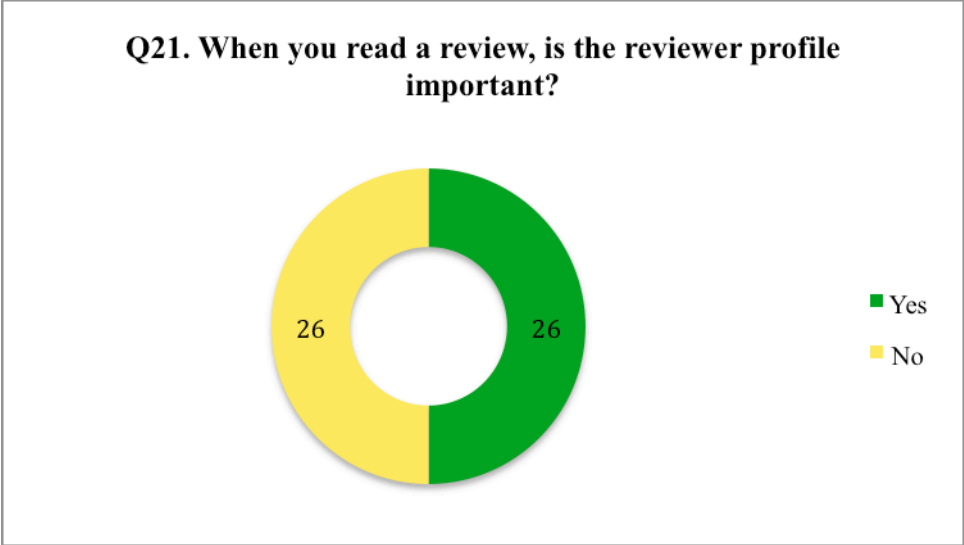
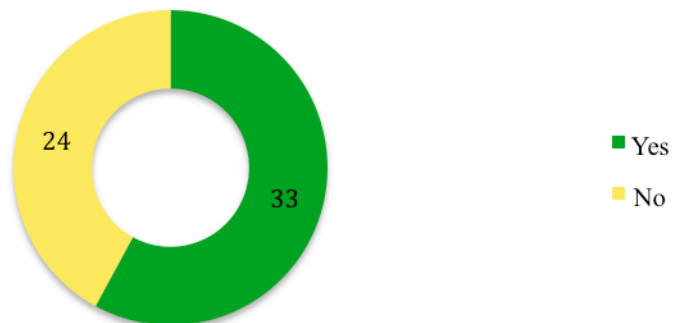| **Q22. Other Answers** |
|---|
| Writing skills |

Q23. If you consider a review relevant, do you give feeedback through the "helpful vote" tool?
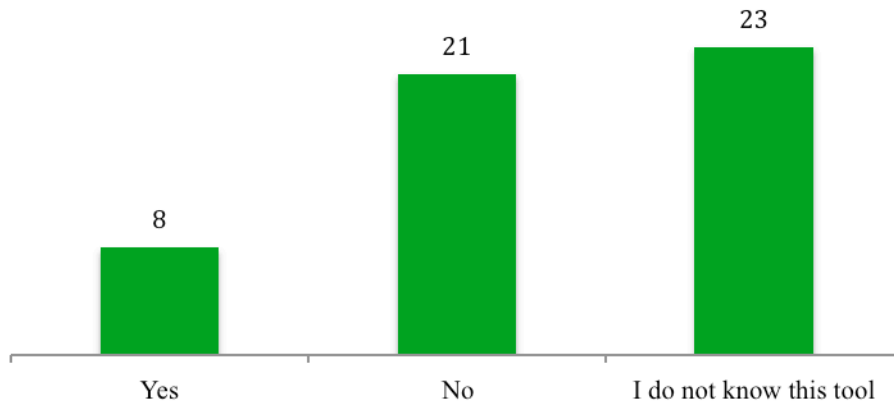
Q19 Is the time of your decision making process downsized by reviews/ratings?

Q25. While choosing a restaurant, do you prefer TripAdvisor to another platform?

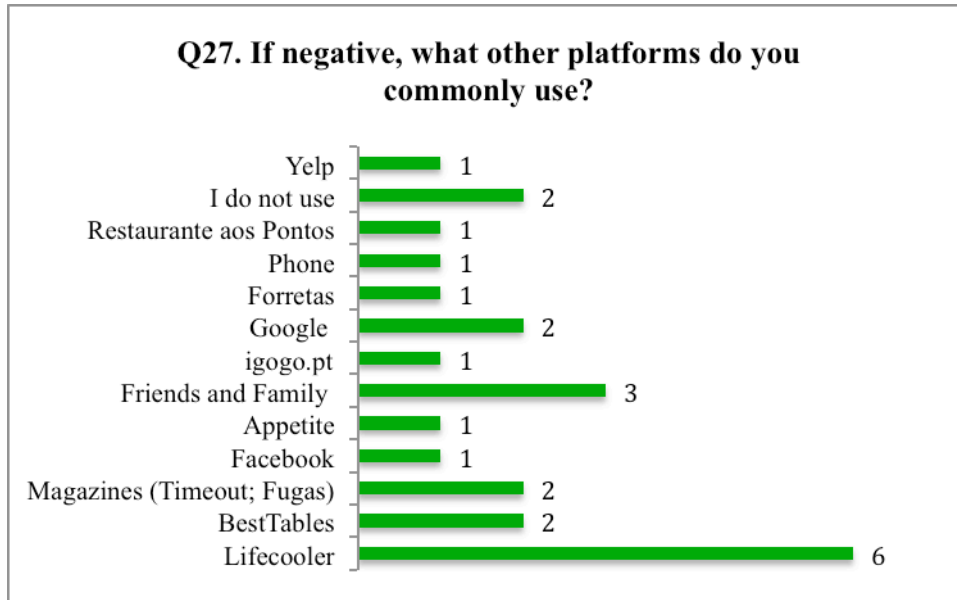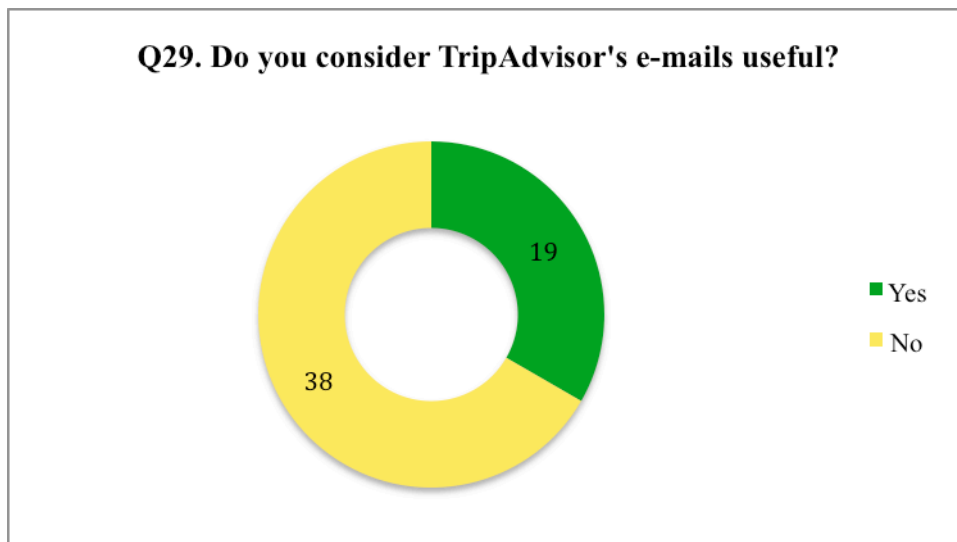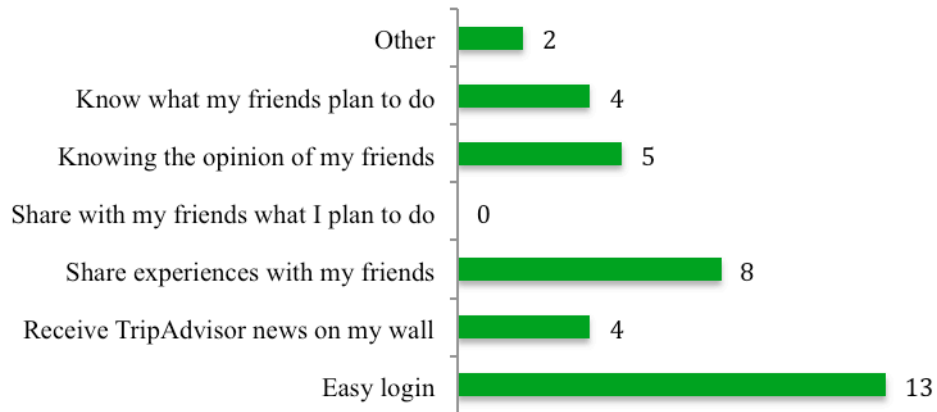| Q26. Other Answers |
| --- |
| I do not know many others |
| Never thought about it |
| International platform |

Q27. If negative, what other platforms do you commonly use?

Platform	Count
Yelp	1
I do not use	2
Restaurante aos Pontos	1
Phone	1
Forretas	1
Google	2
igogo.pt	1
Friends and Family	3
Appetite	1
Facebook	1
Magazines (Timeout; Fugas)	2
BestTables	2
Lifecooler	6

Exhibit 4.2.4 – H9

Q29. Do you consider TripAdvisor's e-mails useful?

- Yes: 19
- No: 38

Q31. What motivated this integration?

Answer	Count
Other	2
Know what my friends plan to do	4
Knowing the opinion of my friends	5
Share with my friends what I plan to do	0
Share experiences with my friends	8
Receive TripAdvisor news on my wall	4
Easy login	13

Q31. Other Answers
When I travel
Check the spots where I have been

Exhibit 5 – TripAdvisor's Improvements
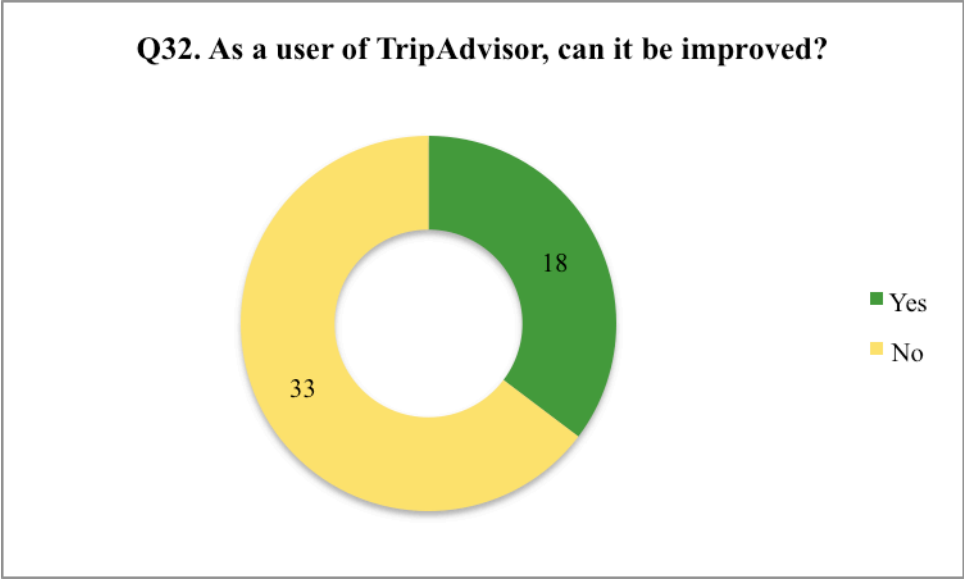
Q33. How?
Comments control
Create loyalty programs
Revise evaluation system
Clarify evaluation methods
Create an association with Google Maps so that costumers can obtain direction easily
Increase marketing campaigns
Create categories
Improve the profile page with photos and video
Prohibit anonymous reviews