THE EFFECTS OF DIGITAL MEDIA ON DESTINATIONS LOYALTY. DMO´S MARKETING STRATEGIES

Arminda Almeida Santana (armindatides@gmail.com)
Sergio Moreno Gil

Instituto TIDES
(Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canarias)

Abstract

Digital media has transformed tourism methods of communication, interaction with social media, and overall tourist behavior concerning information sources. Increasingly DMOs are engaging with consumers through digital media, communicating with them in a long-term relationship. Numerous studies have shown that social media influence the intentions of travelers to visit a destination or another. However, the literature has paid little attention to the relationship between information-seeking behavior and the development of destination loyalty. In that sense, this study analyses how tourists are consulting more digital information, sharing their time within several information sources, that are influencing the time tourists are sharing within a few destinations, becoming more loyal to multiple destinations at the same time (horizontal loyalty). However, this topic has not yet been stressed in the tourism context. Thus, the aim of this study is twofold: 1) to better understand the tourist behavior regarding the use of social media, considering differences by nationalities and socio-demographic characteristics; and 2) to explore the relationship between tourists' information-seeking behavior (traditional and online) and subsequent loyalty (to one single destination and horizontal loyalty) considering both behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. To achieve those goals, a wide survey with 6,964 questionnaires was developed, considering tourists from 17 European countries. Those results are useful in making decisions concerning digital development strategies and loyalty programs to tourist destinations. The practical implications are discussed in this paper.

Keywords: Digital destinations, horizontal loyalty, destination loyalty, relationship marketing, information sources, social media

EFECTOS DE LOS MEDIOS DIGITALES EN LA LEALTAD A LOS DESTINOS. ESTRATEGIAS DE MARKETING DE LAS OMD

Resumen

Los medios digitales han transformado los métodos de comunicación e interacción con los medios sociales, así como el comportamiento general de los turistas en relación con las fuentes de información. Cada vez más las organizaciones de marketing de destino interactúan con los consumidores a través de tales medios, de hecho, numerosos estudios han demostrado la influencia que estos medios poseen sobre las intenciones de visita de los

turistas a un destino, sin embargo, la literatura ha prestado escasa atención a la relación entre el comportamiento de búsqueda de información y el desarrollo de la lealtad los destinos. En este sentido, este trabajo analiza cómo los turistas consultan cada vez más la información digital y comparten su tiempo con innumerables fuentes de información, convirtiéndose más fieles a múltiples destinos al mismo tiempo (lealtad horizontal).

El objetivo de este estudio es doble. En primer lugar trata de comprender el comportamiento del turista en relación con el uso de los medios sociales, considerando diferencias en función de las nacionalidades y otras características socio demográficas. Además, explora la relación entre el comportamiento de búsqueda de información del turista y su posterior lealtad (a un destino o a más). Para alcanzar dicho objetivos se desarrolló un cuestionario que fue utilizado en una muestra de 6.964 turistas de 17 países europeos. Los resultados obtenidos son útiles para la toma de decisiones en torno al desarrollo de estrategias digitales y programas de fidelización para los destinos.

Palabras clave: destinos digitales, lealtad horizontal, lealtad a los destinos, marketing relacional, fuentes de información, medios sociales

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourists search for information that helps them make better decisions when it comes to choosing a holiday destination, and they do so using different channels (Ho, Lin & Chen, 2012) that have evolved over time. The start of the internet and social media has altered the way tourist knowledge spreads, and it has turned into the most commonplace information search (Xiang &Gretzel, 2010). In addition, the content generated by users in those platforms plays a key role in planning trips, including decisions regarding revisiting destinations and loyalty (Litvin, Goldsmith,& Pan, 2008; Yoo & Gretzel, 2011).Understanding how travellers have adapted to these changes is essential in order to identify and develop effective communication strategies (Xiang, Wang, O'Leary,& Fesenmaier, 2014).

Not only have the search methods used by tourists changed, but also the relationship regarding loyalty towards tourist destinations. Nowadays, tourists do not only share their time with different sources of information and specific social media, but also share their holiday time within several destinations at the same time, being able to stay loyal to several of them, which is known as horizontal loyalty (McKercher, Denizci-Guillet & Ng, 2012).

It is subsequently vital to examine the following in depth: a) the difference in behaviour when it comes to the use of the several information sources depending on tourists' profiles (nationality and socio-demographic characteristics) and b) the relationship between the information sources used and loyalty towards destinations. In doing so, a better understanding of how tourists vary their behaviour between the different sources and different destinations is obtained.

On the one hand, the new information sources(YouTube, Facebook, etc.) are a constantly improving strategic factor of tourist destinations, and analysing them is becoming essential in a current society focused on information (Qu, Kim,& Im, 2011; Usoro, Sharratt, Tsui,& Shekhar, 2007). Understanding how tourists access information is important in order to make

marketing choices (Bieger & Laesser, 2004), especially in the tourism industry (Wilkie & Dickson, 1985), depending on the different tourists' profiles (Chiang, King,& Nguyen, 2012; Fodness & Murray, 1999; Gursoy & Chen, 2000; Hyde, 2007; Jun, Vogt,& MacKay, 2007; Luo, Feng & Cai, 2005; Xu, Morgan,& Song, 2009). Nevertheless, the literature available has not focused specifically on how social media influences emotions and attachments to brands, and whether social media-based relationships lead to desired outcomes such as positive word of mouth and different kind of loyalty (Hudson, Roth, Madden, & Hudson, 2015).

On the other hand, numerous studies have shown that the information sources have an influence on the intentions tourists have of visiting a particular destination (Dey & Sarma, 2010), and it is the first step before planning a trip and making decisions. This process has become more complicated with the introduction of new sources of information (Xiang et al., 2014)**.** This paper tries to capture the key aspects of a joint use of the different social media and traditional sources of information when planning a trip, and determine the existing relationship towards loyalty to tourist destinations. In addition, we have considered other key aspects in order to explain loyalty, such as a perceived image and motivations (Sun, Chi & Xu, 2013; Gursoy, Chen & Chi, 2014). An important part of this paper is a segmentation of tourists, using a large sample (6,964) guaranteeing representation in the results, depending on how loyalty to tourist destinations is manifested. Two groups are identified: tourists who are ―loyal to one only destination" (DL), and tourists with ―horizontal loyalty" (HL), meaning that they are loyal to several destinations at one time. We can therefore analyse any possible significant differences between tourist's behaviour when using traditional information sources, and digital channels, in order to find information about destinations for both groups; as well as find out to what extent the sources consulted determine the type of loyalty: attitudinal (A) and behavioural (B). We subsequently analyse the real impact of the sources of information used in the different types of loyalty that tourists display: BDL, BHL, ADL and AHL.

2. LITERATUREREVIEW

When tourists make the decision to travel, they face the possibility of a wide range of alternative destinations (Decrop & Snelders, 2005) and tourists look for information that may help them make a more informed decision when choosing a holiday destination (Urbany, Dickson & Wilkie, 1989). The information available to travellers has a significant impact at different levels of the decision-making process, especially when choosing a destination (Fodness & Murray, 1997; Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998; Jeng & Fesenmaier, 2002; Bieger &Laesser, 2004). However, there is a gap in the existing literature regarding the way in which, information-searching process affects post-trip behaviour; more specifically, the link between the development of loyalty to the different holiday destinations. As a result, it is necessary to take a deeper look and analyse the sources of information, loyalty and its explanatory factors.

2.1 Information sources.

Potential tourists have a wide range of sources of information to check regarding destinations (Sparks & Pan, 2009), as Gartner (1994) described in his seminal paper. However, these sources have changed over time, and new information search channels have emerged (Ho, et al., 2012).

The wide range of sources of information continues to expand with the increasing access to the internet and digital communication (Sparks & Pan, 2009; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Since the mid 90's, the tourist sector has started using the internet as a new distribution channel, as well as an advertising channel (Xiang et al., 2014), radically reshaping the way people plan and book trips (Buhalis & Law, 2008), having tested the literature different patterns depending on the type of tourists (Gretzel, Hwang & Fesenmaier, 2012; Ip, Law & Lee, 2012; Kim, Lehto & Morrison, 2007; Luo et al., 2005).

Recently, there have been an advance in research related to social media and the internet in the destination context and their use when establishing relationships with tourists and loyalty (Kim & Hardin, 2010; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010) and the impact it has when planning a holiday (Gretzel & Yoo, 2008; Sigala, Christou & Gretzel, 2012; Xiang & Gretzel 2010). However, there has not yet been an in-depth study of the influence of the use of the internet, in particular social media, in the development of the different kind of loyalties towards tourist destinations.

2.2 Importance and types of loyalty.

The development of customer loyalty has become an important marketing strategy due to the benefits associated to keeping existing tourists (McMullan & Gilmore, 2008). According to the literature, there are two elements of loyalty (Baloglu, 2002; Kumar, Shah, & Venkatesas, 2006): behavioural and attitudinal. From a behavioural point of view, loyalty can be understood as a revisit to a holiday destination. An attitudinal approach represents the personal attitude and emotions that play a part in showing loyalty to a destination.

On the other hand, previous literature on loyalty has shown that customers may be loyal to more than one brand (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973; Oliver, 1999; Olson & Jacoby, 1974; Brown, 1953; Sharp & Sharp, 1997; Yim & Kannan, 1999; Cunningham, 1956; Dowling & Uncles, 1997). This fact has not been thoroughly studied in the tourist sector, in which tourists can be loyal to several destinations at the one time, which has been referred to as horizontal loyalty in recent studies (McKercher et al., 2012). It is essential to look into the antecedents of loyalty that may explain this process.

Previous literature highlights many factors that encourage people to revisit a destination. Including information sources (traditional and new ways), previously analysed; demographic characteristics, motivations, and perceived image (cognitive, affective and overall) of the destination (Assaker, Vinzi, & O'Connor, 2011; Hudson, Wang & Gil, 2011; McDowall, 2010). However, there is not enough knowledge regarding the relationship between the use of specific sources of information and the development of loyalty of tourists towards holiday destinations, more specifically, the different impact of the information sources on horizontal loyalty and on the loyalty towards one single destination.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The population used for this study consisted of potential tourists, over 16 years of age, both genders, from the main seventeen European countries, travelling to the destination being researched: Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Finland, France, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

The destination under study was the Canary Islands, a preferential destination in Europe, with more than 14 million international tourists a year. The Canary Islands consist of seven islands: Tenerife, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, La Palma, La Gomera and El Hierro, showing an interesting relationship between the horizontal loyalty of their tourists. This study has differentiated between two types of tourists: those displaying a loyal behaviour towards only one destination (BDL) and those showing a horizontal loyal behaviour (BHL). Tourists can be described as BDL, if they pay at least two or more visits to the same island, within the Canary Islands, and no visits to any of the other islands. On the other hand, BHL tourists are those who have visited at least two different islands within the Canary Islands. In addition, we differentiate the groups, taking into account the attitudinal factor of loyalty. In this case, tourists are considered to be ADL if they marked a 6 or 7 out of seven, as the chance they will return to the same destination in the future, and the same applies to AHL tourists.

We used an internet survey (CAWI) to conduct the research. We made a random selection taking into account the stratification variables of the geographic location and province on the one hand, and on the other, gender and age, in order to guarantee the sample's representativeness within each country. The initial sample consisted of 8,500 tourists (500 in each country) and the real final sample, 6,964 tourists, between 400 and 459 tourists per country. In order to reach the set goals, we carried out specific field work using a structured questionnaire that included socio-demographic variables, sources of information, image and loyalty. The questionnaire combined open and closed questions.

Once the field work was completed, and having applied the corresponding quality controls, we proceeded to conduct an analysis of the significant differences using a Chi Square test, among the different groups to analyse the first goal; and a Logit binomial analysis in order to look into the second goal. In this case, we chose the Logit model based on the random use theory.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 summarises significant differences revealed during this study regarding the use of the main digital sources of information consulted when choosing a holiday destination. We can confirm that there are important differences in the use of social media depending on each nationality (see table 2), except when it comes to the use of Flickr. This result makes us think of the possibility of a common pattern in the use of pictorial content in social media regardless of the nationality at hand, as opposed to other contents and formats. This requires further analysis in this regard, in other geographic contexts, adding other photo social networks (Instagram, Pinterest) given the important implications this would have in tourist communication.

If we take the gender of European travellers into account, we can state that there are no differences regarding the use of social media such as TripAdvisor, Facebook and Wikipedia, but there are differences in the rest of networks. The differences in the use of video and photograph content is worth mentioning (YouTube and Flickr), suggesting the need to adapt the content depending on tourists' gender. On the other hand, we can confirm that there are significant differences in the use of different social media depending on the age of the

16

tourists, and younger generations show a more significant use of the media, except when it comes to the use of Wikipedia, where figures are similar for all age groups.

Table 1. Differences in the use of social media

	Nationality		Gender		Age	
	Chi2	Sig	Chi2	Sig	Chi2	Sig
TripAdvisor	415.61	0.000	1.432	0.231	43.859	0.000
Facebook	200.409	0.000	2.217	0.137	121.625	0.000
Flickr	23.425	0.103	11.921	0.001	26.352	0.000
YouTube	174.136	0.000	8.334	0.004	63.709	0.000
Twitter	132.148	0.000	5.386	0.020	28.046	0.000
Wikipedia	303.92	0.000	0.413	0.520	46.067	0.000

Table 2. Differences in the use of social media by nationality

	Tripadvisor	Facebook	Flickr	Youtube	Twitter	Wikipedia
Germany	4,0%	14,7%	2,4%	10,4%	3,3%	17,0%
Austria	2,5%	11,9%	0,0%	8,7%	1,2%	14,6%
Belgium	3,5%	13,9%	1,2%	5,4%	1,0%	12,1%
Denmark	9,1%	12,1%	1,5%	14,8%	1,7%	27,9%
Spain	7,6%	24,6%	2,5%	12,8%	3,7%	19,0%
Finland	6,3%	25,8%	1,5%	15,8%	3,2%	29,9%
France	3,5%	12,7%	1,0%	6,0%	2,7%	8,5%
Holland	3,7%	12,2%	1,5%	12,7%	5,5%	12,9%
Ireland	28,5%	24,1%	1,5%	11,7%	2,5%	15,6%
Italy	15,2%	31,8%	2,7%	18,7%	3,5%	24,4%
Norway	10,3%	28,5%	1,8%	11,0%	2,0%	23,3%
Poland	2,5%	25,4%	1,2%	20,4%	4,0%	29,1%
Portugal	10,7%	24,4%	1,5%	15,5%	1,7%	20,9%
Russia	2,2%	22,5%	1,0%	26,2%	10,9%	40,5%
Sweden	9,3%	28,3%	,9%	15,8%	,7%	29,7%
Switzerland	3,3%	11,3%	,3%	5,3%	,5%	11,0%
UnitedKingdom	17,8%	18,8%	1,2%	10,6%	5,4%	12,6%

Regarding the second and most important goal of this study, the analysis consists of the influence of information sources and their effect on loyalty. Table 3 shows the intensity of the use of the different sources of information, whether traditional or digital, by each of the groups being analysed:DL and HL, differentiating between behaviour (B) and those who also have a favourable attitude (A). As it may be observed, for tourists with a loyal behaviour, the internet seems to be the main source used when choosing a holiday destination like was noted by Stepchenkova, Shichkova, Kim, Pennington-Gray, and Rykhtik (2015). If we analyse the sources used by loyal attitudinal tourists, the internet is still at the head. This first result shows higher involvement in searching by attitudinal loyal tourists, but also an important difference in the type, which helps destinations specify better communication strategies depending on the objective.

There are also significant differences among the sources of information used by BDL and BHL tourists, showing a higher use made by BHL than BDL. This happens with tour

operators' brochures, official websites of the holiday destination and information given by friends and relatives. Tourists who are loyal to one only destination, have already found the holiday destination that meets their needs, and they therefore do not wish to look for so much information, whereas those who change destination are willing to search more information. However, BHL and BDL tourists use the same digital sources in order to obtain information regarding their trip. On the other hand, if we do not only take into account the behavioural element of loyalty, but also the attitudinal element, we will see that there are no significant differences in the use of sources of information and social media used. Thus, the emotional involvement is the factor that equates both groups.

Table 3. Information sources and differences in use between behavioural and attitudinal DL and HL

	BDL%	BHL%	Chi-2	Sig	ADL %	AHL%	Chi-2	Sig
Tour operator's brochures	24.9	31.3	3.86	**0.049**	43.2	48.3	0.69	0.407
Tourist leaflets	13.5	15.0	0.35	0.555	19.8	21.5	0.11	0.737
Holiday guide books	12.2	15.8	1.90	0.168	22.2	24.8	0.23	0.631
News, articles, reports …	16.7	18.5	0.40	0.527	24.7	28.1	0.38	0.538
Destination official website	15.9	22.9	5.81	**0.016**	30.9	40.5	2.54	0.111
Internet, othersources	26.1	28.8	0.76	0.385	44.4	44.7	0.00	0.965
Travel agents	13.9	14.1	0.01	0.942	22.2	23.3	0.04	0.842
Friends and relatives	19.2	24.9	3.55	**0.060**	33.3	35.6	0.15	0.696
None of theabove	8.6	6.9	0.79	0.374	3.7	5.4	0.41	0.525
TripAdvisor	14.7	15.3	0.05	0.824	71.6	61.3	2.96	0.085
Facebook	25.7	23.2	0.64	0.425	21.0	22.1	0.04	0.835
Flickr	2.0	1.9	0.02	0.892	1.2	2.4	0.43	0.514
YouTube	13.5	13.1	0.03	0.863	4.9	3.3	0.48	0.487
Twitter	4.9	4.2	0.16	0.692	6.2	3.6	1.07	0.302
Wikipedia	22.9	23.2	0.01	0.911	7.4	7.3	0.02	0.961
Others	22.4	18.9	1.59	0.207	18.5	23.9	1.06	0.304

Once the first preliminary analysis has taken place regarding the use of sources of information, we will proceed to take a closer look in order to better understand their influence on loyalty, adding other explanatory factors of said behaviour to the sources of information. We have taken four binomial logit regression models, with four different estimations: BDL, BHL, ADL and AHL as dependent variables. As explanatory variables of those models, as well as the sources of information used, cognitive image, overall image and affective image variables, as well as socio-demographic variables such as income and age, and motivations to travel, were also added.

Before conducting the analysis of the considered models, we carried out a factorial analysis using the principal components method in order to examine the dimensions of the cognitive image, as well as affective, and the motivations, aiming to decrease their dimensions and identify determining factors. Using said factorial analysis to analyse the cognitive image of the destination, we identified three dimensions that explain 65.45% of the variance (table 3).

Table 4. Cognitive Image Factorial Analysis

Variables	COG1	COG2	COG3	CA
The destination has good beaches	0.7943	0.2161	0.1159	
The destination is exotic	0.7876	0.1354	0.2196	
The destination has good landscapes and scenery	0.7221	0.2771	0.2851	0.876
The destination has a pleasant climate	0.6925	0.2193	0.1479	
The destination has an attractive life style	0.5800	0.3684	0.4552	
The destination is fashionable	0.5109	0.4231	0.1932	
The destination has good nightlife	0.3095	0.7369	0.1369	
The destination is good for shopping	0.2154	0.7144	0.2999	
The destination has a wider range of leisure facilities on offer	0.4456	0.6805	0.2355	
The destination has a wider range of sports on offer	0.4224	0.6688	0.1969	0.902
The destination has a great level of general infrastructure	0.3423	0.6612	0.3219	
The destination is accessible	-0.0133	0.6549	0.3756	
The destination has good hotels, apartments and chalets	0.5342	0.5877	0.2882	
The destination is not crowded	0.3412	0.1015	0.7376	
The destination offers great personal security	0.2387	0.3606	0.7205	
The destination is clean	0.4782	0.2369	0.6936	0.880
The destination has a good environmental situation	0.4959	0.2129	0.6820	
The destination is cheap for holidays	-0.0204	0.3447	0.6273	
The destination offers great political and social stability	0.1596	0.4834	0.6106	
Cronbach´s alpha				0.945

% Explained variance:65.448

KMO:0.952

Bartlett: 89645.852

Significance: 0.000

Note: COG1: Sun, beach and lifestyle, COG2: Tourist leisure and general infrastructures, COG3: Social status and environmental factors.CA=Cronbach´s alpha

With regard to the affective image (table 5), the factorial analysis summarises the variables used in two factors that explain 70.37% of the variance.

Table 5. Affective Image Factorial Analysis

Variables	IAF1	IAF2	Cronbach´salpha
Sustainabledestination	0.86	0.05	
Authenticdestination	0.83	0.18	0.738
Healthydestination	0.67	0.30	
Happydestination	0.16	0.90	0.806
Stimulatingdestination	0.19	0.89	
Cronbach´s alpha			0.760

% Explained variance: 73.420

KMO: 0.694

Bartlett: 10417.695

Significance: 0.000

Note: IAF1: Healthy and sustainable lifestyle, IAF2: Emotional vibrancy of destination.

In the case of motivations, there are 6 factors which explain 70.37% (table 6).

Table 6. Motivations Factorial Analysis

Variables	MOT1	MOT2	MOT3	MOT4	MOT5	MOT6	Cronbach´s alpha
To relieve stress and tension	0.847	0.120	0.077	0.101	0.101	0.065	
Torest and relax	0.844	0.019	0.062	0.001	0.175	0.042	0.825
To escape from daily routine	0.844	0.130	0.055	0.031	0.170	0.060	
To enjoy family and friends	0.515	0.138	0.240	-0.033	0.213	0.115	
To know different cultures	0.073	0.870	0.024	-0.045	0.127	0.093	
Tobroadenmyhorizons	0.044	0.867	0.068	-0.003	0.109	0.074	
To know different places	0.267	0.749	0.039	-0.067	0.274	0.090	0.819
Toattend cultural events	0.042	0.624	0.227	0.245	0.080	0.210	
To be in contact with nature	0.253	0.431	-0.108	0.346	-0.014	0.417	
To go where my friends went	0.078	0.097	0.763	0.172	0.071	0.200	
To go to fashionable places	0.071	0.008	0.744	0.326	0.104	0.069	0.773
To tell friends	0.129	0.096	0.733	0.149	0.126	0.267	
To go to comfortable places	0.466	0.096	0.560	0.017	0.082	-0.075	
To do watersports	0.112	0.023	0.158	0.822	0.142	0.128	
To do recreational activities	0.072	0.041	0.135	0.805	0.213	0.173	0.783
Toplay golf	-0.126	0.006	0.340	0.714	-0.053	0.028	
To look for adventures	0.157	0.217	0.096	0.126	0.836	0.135	
To do excitingthings	0.211	0.256	0.086	0.089	0.791	0.088	0.826
To look for entertainment	0.361	0.055	0.168	0.134	0.693	0.150	
Tomake new friends	0.058	0.178	0.262	0.185	0.165	0.840	0.896
To mix with other people	0.100	0.207	0.239	0.121	0.198	0.834	
Cronbach´s alpha							0.889

% Explained variance: 0.372
KMO: 0.877
Bartlett: 72078.921
Significance: 0.000

Note: MOT1: Rest and relaxation, MOT 2: Knowledge and culture, MOT3: Prestige and social exhibitionism, MOT4: Sports, MOT5: Entertainment y MOT6: Inter-relationships

The first regression model determined that tour operators' brochures(0.466), the news, articles, (0.780) and travel agents (0.653) have a direct and positive effect on the development of loyal behaviour towards one only destination. In addition, the results of the second analysis show that those variables also determine the BHL: the tour operators' brochures (1.165), the news, articles, documentaries, (0.950) and travel agents (0.403). Although it is true that there are other sources that have an influence on the development of the BHL and not the BDL: travel tour guides (0.577), official websites of the holiday destination (0.925), friends and relatives (1.015). All of them, as it can be observed on the table, have a direct effect on the BHL. However, it can also be observed in all cases, except travel agents, how the use of the different sources of information has more of an influence in the development of the BHL. This may be due to the fact that this later type of tourist decides to visit other destinations, within the competing set, after finding out information using those sources. Nonetheless, those who receive the information through travel agencies, have a higher chance of becoming BDL, due to the fact that travel agents possibly are prescribers that have more of a restricted profile focused on specific destinations.

The third and fourth models estimated try to explain loyalty towards a destination and horizontal loyalty taking into consideration the two main joint loyalty components of loyalty: attitude and behaviour. The third model determined that, as it happened with BDL, the tour operators' brochures have a positive and direct influence on ADL (0.907); however, there does not seem to be a relationship with the use of news, articles and documentaries, or travel agents, as found in the case of behaviour loyal to a destination. The use of the official website of the destination (1.011) and comments of friends and relatives (1.004), having a positive and direct influence on the development of ADL, sources that only influence the BHL when attitude is not taken into account. We can confirm that the official website of the destination and comments of friends and relatives play a role in influencing the attitude of people who wish to revisit a destination. Regarding sources of information that have an influence on the development of the AHL, we may observe that only two of them have an influence on attitude: tour operators' brochures (0.818) and the official website of the destination (0.866). Although all the different sources of information showed an influence in the development of horizontal loyal behaviour, only two of them affect the affective element of loyalty. It is concluded that a greater importance should be given to tour operators' brochures and official websites, as well as travel agencies when it comes to promoting just further visits to a destination, not generating attitude; while using travel guides to develop a change among destinations and HL.

Table7. Logit Binomial Models

	Item	BDL β	BDL e	BHL β	BHL e	ADL β	ADL e	AHL β	AHL e
Social Media	TripAdvisor			0.321	0.141			0.63	0.211
	YouTube			-0.366	0.158	-1.311	0.579		
	Facebook					1.302	0.421		
	Flickr					3.033	1.283		
Traditional	Tour operator'sbrochures	0.466	0.233	1.165	0.15	0.907	0.386	0.818	0.171
	The official website			0.925	0.164	1.011	0.445	0.866	0.183
	Friends and relatives			1.015	0.152	1.004	0.41		
	Holiday guide books			0.577	0.197				
	News, articles, reports	0.78	0.243	0.95	0.181				
	Travelagents	0.653	0.265	0.403	0.202				
CI	Sun, beach and lifestyle	-0.27	0.089	-0.224	0.055			0.484	0.092
	Entertainment and tourism infrastructure							0.276	0.083
	Social and environmental situation							0.331	0.078
AI	Emotionalvibrancy of destination							-0.27	0.091
	Healthy and sustainable lifestyle			0.102	0.045				
OI	OverallImage	0.215	0.076	0.198	0.047	0.794	0.167		
Dem	Income	0.007	0.003	0.012	0.002				
	Age	0.12	0.053	0.238	0.033			0.169	0.051
Mot	Relax			-0.101	0.046	0.437	0.205	0.192	0.085
	Knowledge	-0.211	0.077	-0.143	0.048				
	Status	0.168	0.079						
	Interact with others			-0.098	0.046				

On the other hand, regarding the use of the social media to find information about a travel destination, the suggested models determine that there is no relationship between the use of said media and the development of the BDL. However, we may observe a positive and direct relationship of the use of TripAdvisor (0.321) and the development of the BHL, and a negative relationship between the use of YouTube (-0.366) and the manifestation of BHL. Furthermore, although none of the researched social media have an influence on the development of the BDL, we found that the use of Facebook (3.033), Flickr (1.302) and YouTube (-1.311) does have an influence on the development of the ADL. As it happens with horizontal loyal behaviour, the use of TripAdvisor has a positive influence on attitude (0.63), and the use of YouTube does not seem to show any influence when it comes to this type of loyalty.

We can confirm the importance of TripAdvisor as a global platform to determine horizontal loyalty, forcing the tourists to compare destinations that can be visited in the future, as opposed to YouTube, offering video content, and not comparing destinations but rather focusing on a specific destination search, and in turn having a negative effect on the HL. YouTube does not seem to have an influence when it comes to the ADL. Facebook and Flickr on the other hand, do help develop that positive attitude towards one only destination, becoming referent channels to be used by DMOs.

With regard to the rest of variables introduced in the model, we came across the following results. Concerning the cognitive image, the higher the rating by tourists of the attributes related to the Sun and Beach and life style, the lower the chance of a loyal behaviour to one only destination and horizontally. This could be related to the fact that those cognitive image characteristics are easy to find in other destinations, which makes them easily replaceable. However, the better the ratings given by tourists to this particular characteristic, the higher the chance to develop AHL, which suggests that such positive ratings affect the repetition of the destinations that shared this perception. Other attributes ofthe cognitive image, such as tourist leisure and general infrastructures, and the social status and environmental factors, they also have a positive and direct influence on AHL, being considered as a comparative advantage of the competitive set analysed Vs other different destinations.

When referring to the affective image, the higher the ratings of attributes related to a healthy and sustainable life style, the more tourists tend to become BHL. Whereas the higher the ratings of a vibrant affective image of the destination, the lower the chances of becoming AHL. Therefore, affective image has an influence on shared visits among destinations, where some shared elements among them, such as sustainability and life style, promote this relationship, while other more unique and specific ones of one only destination (vibrant), reduce it. Lastly, the overall image, as could be expected, has a direct effect on almost all types of loyalty.

On the other hand, the older the tourists (0.120) the higher the chance of becoming a BDL, as Chen and Gursoy (2001) already showed, and in addition, we can also confirm the same regarding the BHL and AHL. This may be explained by the likelihood of visits, after having gone on many holidays throughout life, as well as the tendency to become more stable when growing older. Also, the higher the tourists' earning incomes (0.007) the better chance for tourists to show a loyal behaviour, whether that may be to one only destination or horizontally, contradicting the results obtained by Ozdemir et al. (2012), who claimed that tourists with higher income show less of an intention of returning to the same destination.

Furthermore, the motivation of getting to know new and different places, new cultures and life styles, has a negative influence on the BDL (-0.211) and the BHL (-0.143). In both cases, those motivations reduce the development of loyalty. Tourists who decide to visit a destination following such motivations with one only visit probably satisfy their short and long-term needs, and therefore, the probabilities of returning decrease. These results reinforce the ideas claimed by Jang and Feng (2007), saying that tourists who repeat, are travellers who do not tend to look for something new. However, the estimated value of the parameter is lower than in the case of BHL, which may be understood as the fact that horizontality can provide tourists with a certain degree of getting to know something new, whereas when we are considering competing destinations, therefore similar products", it ends up being a factor that reduces the chance of repeating.

However, the higher the motivation of prestige and social exhibitionism, the higher the chances of becoming a BDL (0.168).Which corresponds with the ideas of Antón, Camarero, and Laguna-García (2014), who claimed that tourists who visit a destination due to internal reasons, are more likely to return to the same destination. Although those tourists have already satisfied their short-term needs, they have decided that they have already found a destination that meets their needs. Therefore, any time they need to satisfy those needs, they will return to the same destination, ―This is the place". In addition, when tourists are looking for a place to relax (-0.101), knowledge (-0.143) and meet other people (-0.098) they are less likely to become BHL, as it seems that adding visits to similar destinations does not provide added value to those motivations. To sum up, looking for a place to relax does have a positive influence on ADL and AHL, which can be explained by a true achievement of ―relaxation" associated with the place visited and the competitive set, versus other types of destinations and holidays, suggesting that there is the need to look deeper into the analysis of experiential loyalty.

5. CONCLUSION

The results found in this study, do not only confirm that tourists have included the internet and social media as a critical way of searching information when planning their holidays, but also show the vital importance of these sources in inducing loyalty to destinations at different levels: behavioural and attitudinal loyalty, and towards one only destination or horizontal loyalty. The study explores the differences of the use of online and offline sources of information regarding holiday destinations among the different identified groups of loyal tourists. The results have allowed for marketing managers of destinations to be able to develop better marketing strategies, using conventional communication media as well as social media.

More specifically, the study starts by identifying the significant differences in the use of social media consulted by tourists when it comes to choosing a travel destination, depending on their nationality, gender and age. Therefore, the destination in designing their marketing strategies, must make the most out of this fact, and use the most popular media among the target market, as means of promotion, applying both more generic or global sources (i.e., Wikipedia for all age groups, Flickr for all nationalities), and other more specific ones with differences among segments (i.e., YouTube and Flickr, with differences between gender).

In addition, there are also significant differences in the use of the different traditional sources of information used by BDL and BHL tourists, and no differences between both groups when it comes to using social media. There are no significant differences regarding the use of the different sources of information and social media used by ADL and AHL tourists either. These results are fundamental in order to understand the differences in behaviour regarding the search of information of those segments, without the need for destinations to adapt their social media promotion plan for those goals. However, it is not enough to identify the differences between both segments regarding their behaviour when searching information, it is also necessary to understand whether those sources and media are explanatory factors that induce loyalty.

This study allows us to confirm that the sources of information used by tourists have an influence on the development of tourist loyalty towards their destinations. However, the use

of either type of source of information, determines the kind of loyalty tourists develop. This study shows how the affection factor of loyalty can be affected by the official website of the destination, as well as comments from friends and relatives, and tour operators' brochures, and the use of Facebook, TripAdvisor and Flickr.

It is important to mention the influence that comments made by friends and relatives, whether that happens face to face or via social media (TripAdvisor), have on BHL and HL. These means encourage a horizontal tendency as they compare destinations. However, the use of YouTube, and does not benefit horizontal loyalty. On the other hand, the effect of the perceived image (cognitive, affective and overall), demographic variables, and motivations, have also been known to influence the different types of loyalty.

The results of this study contribute to the existing literature regarding destination marketing, more specifically literature related to information sources, with a special emphasis on digital media, and their influence on destinations loyalty, given the lack of research within this context. In addition, these results are useful to continue advancing in the analysis of brand architecture for destinations that are sharing a series of tourists alternatively.

Finally, future papers should consider and try to explain other manifestations of loyalty, such as vertical and experiential loyalty. Moreover, other additional variables should be added in order to help explain loyalty further. It would also be advisable to expand the number of digital sources of information analysed, introducing new platforms. Lastly, replicate this analysis with different types of competing destinations in other geographic areas.

6. REFERENCES

Antón, C., Camarero, C., & Laguna-García, M. (2014). Towards a new approach of destination loyalty drivers: Satisfaction, visit intensity and tourist motivations. *Current Issues in Tourism,* 1-23. DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2014.936834

Assaker, G., Vinzi, V. E., & O'Connor, P. (2011). Examining the effect of novelty seeking, satisfaction, and destination image on tourists' return pattern: A two factor, non-linear latent growth model. *Tourism Management, 32*(4), 890-901. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2010.08.004

Baloglu, S. (2002). Dimensions of customer loyalty: Separating friends from well wishers. *The Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 43*(1), 47-59. DOI:10.1016/S0010-8804(02)80008-8

Bieger, T., &Laesser, C. (2004). Information sources for travel decisions: Toward a source process model. *Journal of Travel Research, 42*(4), 357-371. DOI:10.1177/0047287504263030

Brown, G. H. (1953). Brand loyalty-fact or fiction. *Trademark Rep., 43*, 251.

Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet—The state of eTourism research. *Tourism Management, 29*(4), 609-623. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2008.01.005

Chen, J. S., &Gursoy, D. (2001). An investigation of tourists' destination loyalty and preferences. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 13*(2), 79-85. DOI: 10.1108/09596110110381870

Chiang, C., King, B. E., & Nguyen, T. (2012). Information searching and the travel behaviours of MICE travellers: A cross-cultural study. *International Journal of Tourism Research, 14*(2), 103-115. DOI: 10.1002/jtr.833

Cunningham, R. M. (1956). Brand loyalty-what, where, how much. *Harvard Business Review, 34*(1), 116-128.

Decrop, A., &Snelders, D. (2005). A grounded typology of vacation decision-making. *Tourism Management, 26*(2), 121-132. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2003.11.011

Dey, B., &Sarma, M. K. (2010). Information source usage among motive-based segments of travelers to newly emerging tourist destinations. *Tourism Management, 31*(3), 341-344. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2009.03.015

Dowling, G. R., & Uncles, M. (1997). Do customer loyalty programs really work?*Sloan Management Review, 38* (4), 71-82

Fodness, D., & Murray, B. (1997). Tourist information search. *Annals of Tourism Research, 24*(3), 503-523. DOI: 10.1016/S0160-7383(97)00009-1

Fodness, D., & Murray, B. (1999). A model of tourist information search behavior. *Journal of Travel Research, 37*(3), 220-230. DOI: 10.1177/004728759903700302

Gartner, W. C. (1994). Image formation process. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 2*(2-3), 191-216.

Gretzel, U., Hwang, Y., &Fesenmaier, D. R. (2012). Informing destination recommender systems design and evaluation through quantitative research. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research, 6*(4), 297-315. DOI: 10.1108/17506181211265040

Gretzel, U., &Yoo, K. H. (2008). Use and impact of online travel reviews. *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2008,* 35-46.

Gursoy, D., & Chen, J. S. (2000). Competitive analysis of cross cultural information search behavior. *Tourism Management, 21*(6), 583-590. DOI: 10.1016/S0261-5177(00)00005-4

Gursoy, D., S. Chen, J., & G. Chi, C. (2014). Theoretical examination of destination loyalty formation. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 26*(5), 809-827. DOI: 10.1108/IJCHM-12-2013-0539

Ho, C., Lin, M., & Chen, H. (2012). Web users' behavioural patterns of tourism information search: From online to offline. *Tourism Management, 33*(6), 1468-1482. DOI:10.1016/j.tourman.2012.01.016

Hudson, S., Roth, M. S., Madden, T. J., & Hudson, R. (2015). The effects of social media on emotions, brand relationship quality, and word of mouth: An empirical study of music festival attendees. *Tourism Management*, 47, 68-76. DOI:10.1016/j.tourman.2014.09.001

Hudson, S., Wang, Y., & Gil, S. M. (2011). The influence of a film on destination image and the desire to travel: A cross-cultural comparison. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 13(2), 177-190. DOI: 10.1002/jtr.808

Hyde, K. F. (2007). Contemporary information search strategies of destination-naïve international vacationers. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 21*(2-3), 63-76. DOI: 10.1300/J073v21n02_05

Ip, C., Law, R., & Lee, H. (2012). The evaluation of hotel website functionality by fuzzy analytic hierarchy process. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 29*(3), 263-278. DOI: 10.1080/10548408.2012.666173

Jacoby, J., &Kyner, D. B. (1973). Brand loyalty vs. repeat purchasing behavior. *Journal of Marketing Research, 10*(1), 1-9.

Jang, S. S., & Feng, R. (2007). Temporal destination revisit intention: The effects of novelty seeking and satisfaction.*Tourism Management, 28*(2), 580-590. DOI:10.1016/j.tourman.2006.04.024

Jeng, J., &Fesenmaier, D. R. (2002). Conceptualizing the travel decision-making hierarchy: A review of recent developments. *Tourism Analysis, 7*(1), 15-32.

Jun, S. H., Vogt, C. A., & MacKay, K. J. (2007). Relationships between travel information search and travel product purchase in pretrip contexts. *Journal of Travel Research, 45*(3), 266-274. DOI: 10.1177/0047287506295945

Kim, D. Y., Lehto, X. Y., & Morrison, A. M. (2007). Gender differences in online travel information search: Implications for marketing communications on the internet. *Tourism Management, 28*(2), 423-433.

Kim, J., & Hardin, A. (2010). The impact of virtual worlds on word-of-mouth: Improving social networking and servicescape in the hospitality industry. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management, 19*(7), 735-753. DOI: 10.1080/19368623.2010.508005

Kumar, V., Shah, D., &Venkatesan, R. (2006). Managing retailer profitability—one customer at a time! *Journal of Retailing, 82*(4), 277-294. DOI: 10.1016/j.jretai.2006.08.002

Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., & Pan, B. (2008). Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. *Tourism Management, 29*(3), 458-468. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2007.05.011

Luo, M., Feng, R., &Cai, L. A. (2005). Information search behavior and tourist characteristics: The internet vis-à-vis other information sources. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 17*(2-3), 15-25. DOI: 10.1300/J073v17n02_02

McDowall, S. (2010). International tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: Bangkok, thailand. *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research, 15*(1), 21-42. DOI:10.1080/10941660903510040

McKercher, B., Denizci-Guillet, B., & Ng, E. (2012). Rethinking loyalty. *Annals of Tourism Research, 39*(2), 708-734. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2011.08.005

McMullan, R., & Gilmore, A. (2008). Customer loyalty: An empirical study. *European Journal of Marketing, 42*(9/10), 1084-1094. DOI: 10.1108/03090560810891154

Oliver, R. L. (1999). Whence consumer loyalty? *The Journal of Marketing, 63*, 33-44.

Olson, J. C., & Jacoby, J. (1974). Measuring multi-brand loyalty. *Advances in Consumer Research, 1*(1), 447-448.

Ozdemir, B., Aksu, A., Ehtiyar, R., Çizel, B., Çizel, R. B., &İçigen, E. T. (2012). Relationships among tourist profile, satisfaction and destination loyalty: Examining empirical evidences in Antalya region of Turkey. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, 21*(5), 506-540. DOI: 10.1080/19368623.2012.626749

Qu, H., Kim, L. H., &Im, H. H. (2011). A model of destination branding: Integrating the concepts of the branding and destination image. *Tourism Management, 32*(3), 465-476. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2010.03.014

Sharp, B., & Sharp, A. (1997). Loyalty programs and their impact on repeat-purchase loyalty patterns. *International Journal of Research in Marketing, 14*(5), 473-486. DOI:10.1016/S0167-8116(97)00022-0

Sigala, M., Christou, E., &Gretzel, U. (2012). *Social media in travel, tourism and hospitality: Theory, practice and cases*Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Sparks, B., & Pan, G. W. (2009). Chinese outbound tourists: Understanding their attitudes, constraints and use of information sources. *Tourism Management, 30*(4), 483-494. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2008.10.014

Sun, X., Chi, C. G., & Xu, H. (2013). Developing destination loyalty: The case of Hainan island. *Annals of Tourism Research, 43*, 547-577. DOI: 10.1016/j.annals.2013.04.006

Urbany, J. E., Dickson, P. R., &Wilkie, W. L. (1989). Buyer uncertainty and information search. *Journal of Consumer Research, 16*(2)*,* 208-215.

Usoro, A., Sharratt, M. W., Tsui, E., &Shekhar, S. (2007). Trust as an antecedent to knowledge sharing in virtual communities of practice. *Knowledge Management Research & Practice, 5*(3), 199-212. DOI: 10.1057/palgrave.kmrp.8500143

Vogt, C. A., &Fesenmaier, D. R. (1998). Expanding the functional information search model. *Annals of Tourism Research, 25*(3), 551-578. DOI: 10.1016/S0160-7383(98)00010

Wilkie, W. L., & Dickson, P. R. (1985). *Shopping for appliances: Consumers' strategies and patterns of information search* Marketing Science Institute.

Xiang, Z., Wang, D., O'Leary, J. T., &Fesenmaier, D. R. (2014). Adapting to the internet: Trends in travelers' use of the web for trip planning. Journal of Travel Research, *54*(4), 511-527. DOI: 10.1177/0047287514522883

Xiang, Z., &Gretzel, U. (2010). Role of social media in online travel information search. *Tourism Management, 31*(2), 179-188. DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2009.02.016

Xu, F., Morgan, M., & Song, P. (2009). Students' travel behaviour: A cross-cultural comparison of UK and china. *International Journal of Tourism Research, 11*(3), 255-268. DOI: 10.1002/jtr.686

Yim, C. K., & Kannan, P. (1999). Consumer behavioral loyalty. *Journal of Business Research, 44*(2), 75-92. DOI: 10.1016/S0148-2963(97)00243-9

Yoo, K., &Gretzel, U. (2011). Influence of personality on travel-related consumer-generated media creation.*Computers in Human Behavior, 27*(2), 609-621. DOI:10.1016/j.chb.2010.05.002