Viewing a destinations Facebook page using a smartphone: The influence of posted media content

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Abstract

Mobile technology and social media outlets have been impacting the tourism industry for several years now. Using both, this study explores the influence of media content on narrative transportation. The study was based at a southwestern university and used a fictitious island destination. A 2 (narrative text vs. descriptive text) x 2 (short, fast-paced video vs. long, slow-paced video) experimental design was constructed to examine how text and video on the destination’s Facebook page, when viewed on a smartphone, influences participants’ narrative transportation and subsequent mental imagery processing. Participant responses were analyzed using structural equation modeling. Results revealed that form of text is a significant predictor of narrative transportation. Specifically, narrative text significantly and positively influenced narrative transportation. Interestingly, neither video nor the interaction of text and video significantly influenced narrative transportation. A second result revealed that narrative transportation significantly influenced mental imagery. Implications of these findings are discussed.

Keywords: mental imagery, narrative transportation, smartphones, social media