USING SOCIAL NETWORKS TO CHOOSE

A TOURIST DESTINATION: FACTORS

THAT DRIVE USAGE BEHAVIOUR.

BY

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this thesis is to consolidate the use of social networks in tourism context and to identify the factors that drive tourist behavior on using social networks to choose a tourist destination.

The researcher is used Malaysian private university (UCSI University) as research scope to evaluate the social networks potential as a main tool to choose a tourist destination. There were 240 questionnaires which distributed among UCSI students in order to analyze their usage behavior of social networks on choosing a tourist destination. Two psychological theories (Technology acceptance model and attribution) are used to model the conceptual frame work presented in this thesis. Four factors identified by combining these two psychological theories that drive social networks usage behavior and fifteen hypothesis is testified empirically to evaluate the direct and indirect relations on proposed frame work.

The research is providing good findings for marketing and communication managers in tourism industry by presenting theoretical, managerial, policy and methodological contributions.

Also, this thesis is conducting fifteen hypotheses including seven direct effects and eight indirect effects (mediating role) to examine the social networks usage behavior. Analyzed data in this thesis, indicates that all hypotheses are significant and proven which consolidates the proposed conceptual frame work.

The result of this thesis indicates that social networks have perfect potential among tourist to be consider as a main tool for acquiring knowledge and information about tourist destinations and different companies and organizations can benefit from contributions of this thesis to shape their marketing and communication strategies. Also, the contribution of this thesis is useful for researchers by providing a new testified frame work for predicting the user acceptance of a new technology. Beside this, the new direct relation among attitude towards use and usage behavior is assessed for the first time on social networks context and other researchers may use the unique conceptual frame work of this thesis to evaluate the usage behavior of other new technologies.

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