5 The Role of Digital Media in Responsible Tourism Marketing

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This chapter critically evaluates the roles of digital media in responsible tourism marketing, focusing on its ability to address social, ethical, and ecological concerns through sustainable practices. Unlike traditional customer-centric strategies, responsible marketing aims to meet consumer needs while positively impacting communities and the environment. Key elements include ethical operations, building customer trust, and attracting socially conscious consumers. Digital media significantly shapes how destinations are marketed and how travelers engage with brands. By leveraging these platforms, tourism businesses can promote sustainable practices and enhance community involvement, ultimately contributing to a more sustainable tourism industry that benefits local communities and cultural heritage.

Introduction

Tourism can be defined as "*a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure*" (UN Tourism, 2024). Tourism involves various activities which contribute to the social, environmental, and economic aspects, both positively and negatively. Some of the positive impacts of tourism include jobs and business opportunities, cultural exchange, knowledge transfer, and many more, which ultimately contribute to poverty reduction and economic growth. The stakeholders, including the public sector and private sector have the responsibility to ensure that every tourism development is balanced with the concept of sustainable development by emphasizing all the positive impacts and reducing the negative impacts (Hysa *et al.*, 2021).