At what extent social media marketing influence on brand loyalty? Evidence from Hotel Industry

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I hereby declare that the work submitted is mine and that where I have made use of another’s work, I have attributed the source(s) according to the Regulations set in the Student’s Handbook.

Dedication

First and foremost I dedicate this work to my family for their priceless help during the months I ran this project. Secondly I want to thank Dr Manto Gotsi and Dr Lyda Kyrgidou for their valuable help.
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ABSTRACT

This research addressed social media marketing issues and especially the case of the Hotel industry. It provides a systematic overview of the existing literature regarding the social media marketing and the brand loyalty mainly in the hotel sector. The research question concern investigation of the extent that social media marketing influences on the brand loyalty of a hotel. In order to cover the research question there are some research objectives that are fulfilled. These are the documentation of the importance of brand loyalty in the hotel industry, the ways that social media marketing is implemented in the hotel industry and the significance of the online reviews as a marketing mean.

The primary research is focused on a part of the online marketing which is the online reviews and their influence on consumers’ decisions. The primary research was conducted with questionnaires and had as a sample 130 consumers that use social media platforms which publish online reviews differing in age, level of education and yearly income.

The results of the primary research highlight the significance of social media marketing. This can be concluded by the fact that almost 70% of the responders independently their technology expertise stated that they take into account the opinions from online reviews as they advise them much before they form final opinion. Moreover, the consequences of the anonymity in an online review are highlighted as the last majority of the responders consider an anonymous online review incredible.

The research concluded in the need for every hotel to focus on the implementation of an appropriate online review management which has as a result the customer satisfaction and finally the desirable brand loyalty.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The proliferation in the usage of internet as a mean of marketing is a phenomenon that has been documented in a large number of researches. An industry that has been influenced at a great extent by this phenomenon is the hotel industry. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to document the ways that a brand name of a hotel can be affected by the social media marketing and how this type of marketing can increase the brand loyalty. These are the principal goals of this project which are fulfilled during this project both through the literature review and the primary research.

The abovementioned goals will be achieved only when the main set of research objectives will be fulfilled. The first objective of the project is to highlight the importance of brand loyalty in the hotel industry and what are the factors that affect it. Secondly, it is critical to document the role of the social media platforms in order to enhance the brand name of the hotel. Moreover, given that the online reviews constitute a significant part of the social media marketing for the hotels, their influence on consumers’ final opinion is examined in depth in the primary research. In order to reach in a trustworthy conclusion several features both of online reviews (such as platform that it is published) and of the reviewers (such as personal characteristics disclosure) are examined through the questionnaire.

In order to answer the research question covering all the project objectives, two different types of research methods are used. Firstly, some objectives are fulfilled using secondary research that is available data from sources like journals, books and articles. Moreover, a large part of the objectives are covered by the results of the conducted primary research. The necessary data, in this stage, is provided through interviews with formed questionnaire of 130 consumers who belong to several sociodemographic groups.

Regarding the structure of the study, in the second Chapter all the literature regarding the social media marketing and the brand loyalty is quoted. In the third chapter all the hypotheses are developed based on which the questionnaire is formed. Also, there an analysis of the sample of the research based on the sociodemographic characteristics that are received through the primary research. In the next chapter all the results are presented using all the necessary diagrams. These results are analytically discussed in the Chapter 5 in order to draw the final conclusions and the practical implication that this study has to the hotel industry. In the last chapter the limitations of this research and all the tests that are conducted in order to eliminate these limitations are mentioned.
Chapter 2. Literature review

2.1 Basic Definitions

There are some basic terms such as social media, social media marketing, brand loyalty and brand equity that are fundamental and should be comprehended completely in order to be progressed the research smoothly. As a result, it is necessary to give their most acknowledged definitions and meanings.

2.1.1 Social Media

As social media is a popular subject among the existing literature there are many definitions. As Dong-Hun (2010) noted social media is a space where consumers’ opinion can be freely expressed, they can find out what the brands of their interest are doing and generally consumers can be up-to-date about them. Several sources (Patterson 2012, Khan and Khan 2012) defined social media as a tool which help customers share information about a brand, new products and services, discuss with peers about them and speak with the brand through compliments, complains and questions.

Although there are a large variety of definitions for social media, this concept is often used synonymously with Web 2.0. Therefore it is useful to differentiate them from each other. Kaplan, A. M. & Haenlein, M. (2010) defined Web 2.0 as technologies that enable users to communicate, create content and share it with each other via communities, social networks and virtual worlds, making it easier than before.

In the same time, Khan and Khan (2012) noted that social media is a space that is used from a large number of brands independent of the size company and it is included in the marketing and promotional strategy as a key element. This fact is explained by Khan and Khan (2012) as the information gets passed on by a company's followers to their followers, creating a multiplier effect which increases audience.

2.1.2 Social Media Marketing

Another key term for this project is the Social Media Marketing. Weinberg (2009) defines Social Media Marketing as a process in which companies can promote their products and converse with customers using some websites as environment. As
Keller (2008) notified this process is extremely beneficial for every company as it helps them to maintain the brand loyalty.

Neti (2011) gives the most holistic definition of this term pointing out that Social Media Marketing is a company’s attempt to persuade consumers that its products and services are worthwhile using means such as online communities social networks and blogs. The result of this attempt is the establishment of the company’s influence reputation and brand within communities of readers and supporters who are potential customers.

2.1.2.1 Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

A term that is directly connected with the Social Media Marketing and analyzed in depth by the existing literature is the Electronic Word Of Mouth (eWOM). Therefore it is significant to note the most holistic definitions.

The dominant definition of eWOM is given by Hennig-Thurau et. Al (2004) who point out that eWOM is any (positive or negative) statement made by potential, actual or former consumers about a product or service, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the social media. Several other sources (Goldsmith, 2006, Westbrook 1987) defined the Electronic Word Of Mouth as informal communications between consumers through internet-based technology in order to influence the consumer behavior and their purchase intention. (Hsin-Chih Kuo et. Al 2013).

This term is significant for this project as a number of sources connect it with social media. Specifically, Chu (2011) and Jansen et al (2009) concluded that Social Media can be important sources for marketing activities because spreading the word through positive Electronic Word Of Mouth by companies and consumers.

2.1.3 Brand Loyalty

As this project explores the relationship between social media marketing and brand loyalty it is fundamental to mention the most dominant definitions for brand loyalty.

A large number of sources (Reichheld and Schechter 2000, Reichheld 2003, Aaker 1991) define brand loyalty as the attachment that a customer has to a particular brand. That is, loyal customers will continue to use products of a specific brand even if the quality of the provided products does not fulfill their needs. On the other hand, Tepeci (1999) pointed out that repurchase is not sufficient evidence about brand loyalty. He highlighted that brand loyalty is a commitment toward the quality of a brand which include not only the repetitive purchases but positive attitudes as well.
An extremely interesting definition is given by Brady et al (2008) defined brand loyalty as a behavioral construct relating to intentions towards repeat purchase. These behavioural intentions are only a consequence in the case of brand equity which is their main difference (Brady et al 2008). Also, Brakus et al (2008) pointed out that brand loyalty is the basis of brand equity which effect on brand loyalty can only be measured when consumers direct experience with brands.

2.1.4 Hotel Industry

As the primary research of this project is focused on the hotel industry it is essential to point out some initial conclusions about the relationship between hotel industry, brand loyalty and the social media.

The hotel Industry is a broad category of fields within the hospitality industry and additional fields within the tourism industry. Exploring the nature of the services of this industry it is observable that there is a significant challenge which should be faced by every hotel: hotel guests leave a hotel with only, something intangible, the memories of their experiences. As Berry (1986) noted the biggest challenge for hotel industry today is “tangibilizing the intangible hotel experience”. Berry (1986) conclude that there is only one way in order to overcome this challenge. Every hotel should create a strong brand, which represents the hotel services and appears to customer’s tangible characteristics of an actual product.

Regarding the relationship between hotel industry and social media Collins (2010) noted that hotels are unwilling to adopt technological advances and to gain momentum towards technology. Therefore internet related marketing is not in their initiatives in their marketing strategies. More specifically, regarding the usage of social media the hotel industry fears them because they think that it could be detrimental to employee productivity or even fears that social media has the potential to damage the company’s reputation.

2.2 Social Media Platforms

2.2.1 An overview

The term social media includes a large range of different types of forums. In the existing literature many different ways about how these forums are categorized are pointed out.

Gamboa and Goncalves (2014) classified social media in 5 different categories: The first category is Blogs which are online journals that can combine content with audio
and video. The second type is Social networks which are applications that allow users to create personal pages accessible to others for the exchange of information. The third class of social media is the online Communities which are sites that organize and share particular content. Another type of social media based on this classification is the Forums that are sites to exchange ideas and information. Last but not least is the Content aggregators which are applications that allow customization by users.

However the most holistic framework for this classification is provided by Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) who highlighted six different categories of social media as they are presented in the Appendices I.

Gofman (1959) gives a very significant dimension of social media pointing out that in any type of social interaction people want to control the impressions that others form of them. Another significant dimension is highlighted by Shau and Gilly (2003) which is the fact that people make a personal webpage because of the desire to present themselves. Based on these two dimensions Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) classified the before mentioned social media category as it is observable in Table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Presentation</th>
<th>Social Presence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Blogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Collaborative projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Networks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Content Communities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Virtual social worlds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virtual Game Worlds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1. Social media categories based on Kaplan and Haenlein

2.2.2 Social Media and the Hotel Industry

Regardless of which classification of the social media is more acceptable in the literature review, it is generally admitted that there are some social media platforms which are used in greater extent in the hotel industry. According to Chan and Guillet’s (2011) research these social networks are the following
In some of these social media platforms is observed a proliferation in their usage generally and not only in the hospitality industry (such as Facebook, Twitter). On the other hand, some others are addressed exclusively to the hotel industry (Booking, TripAdvisor). As these social media platforms and the influence of their online reviews on customers are the subject in the primary research, it is crucial to mention some significant evidences for them.

2.2.2.1 TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor is a social media platform that has influence only on hotel industry. It is the largest travel related website and its goal is “enabling travelers to plan and have the perfect trip” (TripAdvisor 2014).

TripAdvisor have changed the marketing strategy of every hotel because it provides more than 15,000,000 traveler-generated reviews, pictures and comments about practically every hotel. As a result no hotel marketer should attempt today to promote his services by showing beautiful pictures of his hotel rooms or beautiful surroundings or make claims about the hotel services that have nothing to do with reality. (E. Constantinides, 2014). Its power also is understandable by a number of researches. For example a survey by Market Metrix highlighted that the majority of hotel managers listed TripAdvisor as the most influential of all review sites .In the same time Market Matrix Hospitality Index (MMHI, 2011) concluded that the opinion that TripAdvisor’s reports are false or worthless is both wrong and evidence of a careless and potentially very damaging attitude to monitoring customer satisfaction.
2.2.2.2 Booking

Booking.com belongs to the category of the online travel agencies (A. Inversini and L. Masiero, 2014) in which simultaneously online reviews are published. Yacouel and Fleischer (2011) pointed out the importance of this social media platform in building hotel reputation and encourage managers of the hotels to put effort in developing the quality of the services. It is, also, pointed out (N. Yacouel and A. Fleischer, 2011) that information which is supplied by past guests through the online travel agencies generates a price premium for hotels with good reputations.

2.3 Social Media Marketing in the Hotel Industry

Every company in order to stay competitive in today’s fast moving business landscape requires a solid social media strategy as a part of their marketing strategy (Erdoğmuş, Çiçek, 2012). This fact, as Coon (2010) explained, has a consequence the companies to hire social media experts and consultants to decide on content and characteristics of their offers and activities in social media environments which will result in brand loyalty. However, in this job, marketers are influenced by trends such as the willingness of customers to get actively involved in the process of product development which are increasing (Prahalad D.K., Ramaswamy V., 2004; Kim J.H., Bae Z., 2008) and have to affect their marketing practices in the appropriate way. (Thomas, 2007)

2.3.1 Strategies

Field evidence and a large number of researches (Deighton and Konrfield, 2009; Prahalad and Krishnan, 2008) provide a picture of patterns emerging the social media in the marketing strategy. These patterns are summarized in two basic strategies: Passive and Active.

The Passive Way or Listening-In Strategy

Social media can be a useful source of market information and customer voice by using platforms such as blogs, podcasts, forums, and online communities where the customers can share their reviews and recommendations of brands, products and services. The individuals opinion are analyzed by the marketers for marketing purposes rendering the social media an inexpensive source of market intelligence which can be used to track problems and market opportunities. The importance of customers’ voice is vital and can lead to success or failure of the product or brand as Gillin (2007, 2009) pointed out. The negative publicity and consequently the failure is
a result of ignoring what in the social media are written while if action is taken can prevent reputation damage leading to success.

**The Active approaches**

Except from the usage as public relations and direct marketing tools, social media can be used also as communication channels and customer engagement tools (Constantinides et al 2008). This usage is the active approach and it is classified in four sub-categories (Constantinides 2014, Constantinides et al 2008) as they are presented in the Table 3.3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-categories of active approach</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using Web 2.0 as PR and direct marketing tool</td>
<td>Corporate blogs, web site forums and company-sponsored communities are introduced allowing corporate executives to attract the dialog in their own quarters, moderate comments and most importantly directly react to customers’ concerns or questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage personalities to influence customers</td>
<td>Next to traditional experts, personalities of social media ensure that the message reaches to customers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Social Media for personalizing the customer’s online experience and allowing product customization</td>
<td>Customers personalize their online experience or customize products they buy allowing customers to adapt parts of their web sites to their specific needs or preferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer is a part of product reviews, advertising concepts and innovation process</td>
<td>Companies through their sites allow customer to provide product reviews and ratings which are more reliable than product reviews written by product experts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.3 Sub-categories of Active approach

**2.3.2 Benefits of Social Media Marketing**

Social Media is a marketing tool that its use results in several benefits for every brand. The existing literature analyzes in depth these benefits both generally for every brand and specifically for the hotel industry.

A research conducted by Social Media Marketing Industry Report (2015) has pointed out that the most significant benefit from social media usage for the marketers is the exposure of the brand in a large number of potential customers. In the same time, this research highlighted as extremely crucial, benefits such as the increased traffic
and the development of brand loyalty. All the results of this research are depicted in the picture below.

**Picture 3.4 Benefits from social media marketing usage**

Social Media platforms are a very beneficial marketing tool for Hotel industry because as Lim (2010) stated it can provide a good ROI (return on investment) for a hotel given that it is a low cost investment providing so many benefits. Woodcock et. al (2011) pointed out that a hotel brand can obtain several financial benefits from the usage of social media as a marketing tool. These benefits are fundamental to driving business performance and they apply across the customer lifecycle, in acquisition, retention, value development and managing cost to serve (Woodcock et. al, 2011; Litvin et al. 2008).

A number of researchers (Lim 2010; Murphy et al., 2003) highlighted the contribution of social media marketing in the increased exposure of the hotel brand and the development of loyal customers. As Lim (2010) stated in todays’ digital world, social media platforms are a necessary tool in order to build relationships with both new and loyal customers and increase brand awareness. In the same time, Buhalis and Law (2008) emphasize the role of social media in strengthening the relationship between hotel and customers. As it is explained, social media help hotels learn more about their customers while consumers can be informed about the new products or offerings of the hotel.

A critical point that is stressed by Kierzkowski et al. (1996) is the need for every hotel to update their social media page frequently because in this way the customers are
kept loyal to their site. As it is pointed out by a large number of researches (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Xiang & Gretzel, 2009) if the hotel consider social media simply as a advertising channel the customer loyalty is harmed. Last but not least, Stringam & Gerdes Jr. (2010) realized a critical benefit of social media marketing in the fact that the reviews and ratings exist in platforms (such as Tripadvisor) can be a powerful tool and a wealth of data to hotel management.

2.4 Brand loyalty and the Hotel Industry

2.4.1 Importance of Brand Loyalty in the Hotel Industry

One of the most significant purposes of marketing through social media is to develop loyalty customers to the brand. (Sumitha 2014). This fact stems from the multifarious benefits a hotel brand obtain developing brand loyalty. These benefits are analyzed in depth in the existing literature and they are presented below.

First of all a large number of sources emphasize a great number of financial benefits that a company gains from the brand loyalty. Singh (2012) pointed out that brand loyalty in long-term basis results in cumulative profits which are increased as the customer remains loyal. In the same time brand loyalty plays a crucial role for the hotel to growth or at least maintain themselves in the marketplace as a loyal customer allocate proportionally more of their budget to their “first choice” brand which means that the volume sales of the hotel are increased. (Giddens and Hofmann, 2002; Knox and Denison, 2000; Mokhtar, et al. 2000; Keller 2008).

Singh (2012) and Giddens and Hofmann (2002) stated that brand loyalty results in decreased advertising and marketing costs as a loyal customer is less sensitive to competitors’ services. As a consequence competitors are discouraged from spending their time and money in order to attract already satisfied customers (Aaker 1991). Moreover, Singh (2012) perceive a chance through brand loyalty to decrease the operating cost of the hotel as for a loyal customer, the front desk clerk does not need to spend time entering data into the computer as the existent data is retrieved.

Another cardinal benefit from brand loyalty is the increased price premium (Mattila, 2001). This means that loyal customers are willing to pay more for a brand because they perceive some special and unique value that no other competitor can provide (Singh, 2012). Furthermore, Giddens and Hofmann (2002) pointed out that a satisfied customer is less sensitive in price changes than a customer that is not loyal. On top of that, brand loyal customers are less prone to chase after discounts.
Wong et al., (2009) highlighted the fact that a loyal customer can give some feedback to the hotel in order to enhance its services accordingly to the consumers’ wishes. Last but not least, a number of sources (Mokhtar, et al. 2000; Singh 2012; Mattila, 2001) marked the fact that a satisfied customer recommend the hotel’s services to friends and others while they are more willing to forgive a failure that happened in the services.

2.4.2 Factors affecting brand Loyalty

There is agreement among brand researchers that one of the most beneficial results of building and enhancing brand communities and consumer experience within the context of brand community is to develop brand loyalty. (McAlexander et al., 2002; Muniz & O’Guinn 2001). A extensively analyzed subject in the existing literature is the factors that affects the customer loyalty in a brand. In this research we adopt as a reference the model developed by Johnson et al (2001), also known as the Norwegian Customer Satisfaction Barometer (Figure 3.5).

![Diagram 3.5 Norwegian Customer Satisfaction Barometer](image)

As it is easily observable by the model the key determinant of brand loyalty is the customer satisfaction as if a customer is satisfied by the hotel services tend to use them more and comment positively about them. Customer satisfaction is defined by Lin and Lauren (2003) as an emotional response relates to the comparison between service performance and customer’s expectations. By the model we can conclude that customer satisfaction depends on: quality of the service, price and handling of complaints, factors that analyzed below.
First of all, Gommans et al (2001) pointed out that the quality is determined by the benefits the customer gains from hotel’s services comparing with what they expect. Therefore the quality of services is tied with customer satisfaction and as a result it affects the brand loyalty directly.

Secondly, complaints management is also an extremely significant factor influence brand loyalty providing a chance for inside service improvement Boshoff (1997). Customer who complaints is more likely to prefer the hotel services again (Eccles and Durand, 1998) in contrast with the emotionally bonded customers who have a limited zone of tolerance once failures occur (Zeithaml et al., 1993).

Thirdly, the role of price in the process of developing a loyal customer is ambiguous in the existing literature. As we observe in the used model, the price of the services is a decisive factor in building brand loyalty as it affects directly the customer satisfaction. On the other hand, Dimitriades (2006) concluded that the price affect only the dissatisfied customers as satisfied consumers is less price sensitive and willing to pay more for the hotel services.

As we can see in the model the image of the hotel brand and the commitment that is built to the customer is factors that affected by the customer satisfaction and influence on the brand loyalty. The term image includes the Word of Mouth (WOM) and the Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) through recommendations and exerts a positive effect on the brand loyalty (Shi Na, 2011). Image’s significance is marked by Luceiro and Miranda (2008) stating that image is one of the factors that affect the trust toward a hotel which influences loyalty (Loureiro, S.M.C., González, F.J.M., 2008.)

Moreover, brand loyalty is increased when commitment of the customer is increased. Commitment is defined as customers’ confidence that the functional and affective benefits from maintaining these relationships are greater than the benefits from ending them and as a result they are loyal to the brand (Geyskens et al., 1996). In the given model, two of its components are reported: the affective commitment and the calculative commitment (Tommy Roxenhall and Edith Andrésen, 2012). Affective commitment influence the brand loyalty as the committed person does not correctly see the economic and rational advantages of the relationship, finds it difficult to value its effects through economic calculations and as a result it feels right to become involved in the relationship (Gilliland & Bello, 2002). On the other hand calculated commitment influence the customer loyalty as the committed person feels that there are locked-in and future values or that there is a lack of alternative relationship partners and as result it has the intention to prefer the services again (Bansal, Irving and Taylor, 2004).
As we before mention this subject is analyzed in depth as a result there are some others factors that affect brand loyalty and they are not mentioned in the used model. For instance, Kalwani and Narayandas (2011) highlighted the importance of long-term relationship in enhancing customer loyalty while Mustafa (2011) point out the significant role of trust in this process which represents a set of beliefs concerning the integrity, benevolence, competence, and predictability of a service provider. Last but not least, Morgan and Dev (1994) concluded in the direct influence that customer background has on the brand loyalty. That is as their income is higher the less switching is expected as they prefer a premium brand expecting to have a contribution to their social status.

2.4.3 Impact of social media on brand loyalty in Hotel industry

A large number of sources confirm that the brand communities and the social media communities are able to build brand loyalty (Hudson et al 2012; Won-Moon Hur et al 2011; Erdoğanuş and Çiçek 2012). This phenomenon is observed intensely in the hospitality sector which is influenced strongly by Electronic Word of Mouth (eWom) (Serra Cantallops and Salvi, 2014) even stronger than the WOM (Ogut and Tas, 2012). In the hospitality sector the used means of eWom are mainly platforms, discussion forums, boycott websites or sites allowing communications between consumers (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004).

In recent years the most widespread mean of the before mentioned means of eWom are the opinion platforms (for instance TripAdvisor) offering consumer online reviews or product ratings which have been created by customers with hotel-stay experience. Online reviews represent a type of user-generated content, and the adoption of such reviews by travelers is constantly growing. As the significance of online reviews on a traveler’s decision is increasing, businesses are interested in gaining a better understanding of the factors that strongly predict travelers’ e-WOM behavior (Filieri and McLeay, 2014). A number of sources (Sparks and Browning, 2011; Dickinger, 2011) explained the continuous increase of the online reviews’ popularity demonstrating that they are used by the customers to reduce risk and uncertainty related to the booking situation.

There are differences between the online reviews both in their content (detailed or short comments) and in their polarity (negative or positive comments). Regarding the latter segmentation Sparks and Browning, 2011 pointed out that positive evaluations feature pleasant and vivid experiences while the negative ones include mainly complaints. Their influence on sales is an ambiguous subject as a large number of studies (Duverger, 2013; Mauri and Minazzi, 2013; Vermeulen and
Seegers, 2009; Ye et al., 2011) confirm that favorable reviews concerning a hotel increase the likelihood of booking and room sales while some others (Park and Lee, 2009; Chiou and Cheng, 2003) supported that negative opinions have a larger effect on hotel brand.

Independently of the category from the above mentioned that an online review belongs to, there are specific elements that are highlighted in the existing literature which influence the impact of the content. Schindler and Bickart (2005) pointed out that the credibility of an online review is directly influenced by the presence of details and the description of an actual experience. As a number of reviews stated (Lee et al., 2007; Park et al., 2007) the quantity of the information is not enough for an online review to be considered credible because the quality of the contained arguments is also crucial.

The response of the hotel to the online reviews is an extensively analyzed subject in the existing literature. A large number of researchers (Casarez, 2002; Clark, 2001; Homburg & Fürst, 2007) agree that the proactive and timely response to online complaints may be critical to the companies, in order to avoid unnecessary attacks from other consumers. In general, the handling of the online reviews is an extremely significant subject for every hotel as the exposure to these opinions improves hotel awareness and hotel consideration (Vermeulen and Seegers, 2009). Based on some others researches (Kim et al. 2015; Xie et al 2014) the online reviews management is even more important as they as a careful handling can enhance the hotel performance.
CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH APPROACH

3.1 Hypotheses development

3.1.1 The role of the reviewer’s anonymity on the credibility of the online review.

Anonymity is a common issue for websites with online reviews as the only identity of the reviewer commonly shown on an online review is an online nickname, while the real name is not available. However, a large number of researches show that the identity of the reviewer is one of the most significant factors that determine the credibility of an online review (Mudambi & Schuff 2010, Park et al 2013, Rains and Scott, 2007). As Hochmeister et al (2013) the importance of reviewer’s identity is revealed by the fact that the reviews of destination experts whose identity is disclosed is more helpful to other community members than ordinary members’ reviews. Drawing on the previous empirical support the following hypothesis is formulated:

*H1: The impersonal online reviews have lower credibility than the personal.*

3.1.2 Difference in the travelers’ likelihood to adopt information from online reviews in e-merchants and independent websites.

Based on Filieri and McLeay (2009) model all the Internet consumer opinion portals (COPs) are separated in two categories: e-merchants (for example TripAdvisor) and independent websites (for example Booking.com). The difference between these websites is that E-merchants publish online reviews written only by travelers who have previously stayed in the hotel, while in an independent website travelers only need a valid email address to publish a review (Filieri and McLeay, 2009). Despite Lee and Youn (2009) found no difference in the influence that branded review websites and independent COPs exercise on travelers’ WOM recommendations, travelers may believe that the accuracy of information provided in independent COPs may be higher than the information provided in brand websites.

*H2: The type of the website that the online review is posted affects customer evaluations*

3.1.3 Information issued from online reviews is interpreted differently by travelers in relation to their reason of stay.

The existing literature (Dolnicar, 2002; O’Connor, 2008) distinguishes the travelers in five different categories based on their reason of stay. These categories are namely: business, couple, family, friend and solo and there is a significant difference in their expectation (Keates, 2007). Therefore, it is possible, a hotel to cover a solo traveler’s
needs without necessarily meeting the expectation of those travelling with family (Weaver & Oh, 1993; Choi & Chu, 2001; Wu et al., 2010). Given the differences in expectations and purposes, the category in which every consumer belongs may influence the interpretation of an online review at great extent.

**H3: The travelers’ reason of stay leads to different interpretation of the online reviews**

3.1.4 Information issued from online reviews is interpreted differently by travelers in relation to their technological competence.

The readers of online reviews expect from their reason to stay at a hotel can be categorized based on their technological competence. Consumer access and use of the web grows continuously giving the chance to every possible customer to confirm every information come from online reviews.

**H4: Different levels of consumers’ technological competence have as a result a different pre-decisional disposition based on the read online reviews.**

3.1.5 The relationship between the strategy used by the hotel to answer to the online reviews and their influence on customer preferences

Davidow (2003) highlighted the significance of hotel response strategy to online reviews pointing out that appropriate choice is necessary to protect or improve the company’s reputation. Based on the existing literature (Coombs, 1999; Marcus & Goodman, 1991; Smith, 2002) every hotel has three different strategy choices which are: defensive, no action, and accommodative. Accommodative strategy can reduce feeling of aggression (Carnevale & Isen, 1986; Conlon & Murray, 1996) and is expected when the hotel was accountable for the negative event (Coombs, 1999). On the other hand, defensive strategy include actions such as denying responsibility for negative events or taking an attack on the accuser (Coombs, 1999). Last but not least, “No action” strategy refers to companies that simply attempt to separate themselves from the negative events by remaining silent in the online sites (Lee, 2004, Smith, 2002). Based on the existing literature (Smith, 2002) such strategic silence is most likely to be acceptable only by people who have strongly favorable feelings of the company. The hotel’s choice between the above mentioned strategies may affect directly the customer’s preferences.

**H5: The used strategy by the hotel in order to answer to the online reviews affect directly the customers’ preferences.**

3.1.6 The relationship between the influence that an online review has on the reader and the tone that it is written.
With the term tone of the review the existing literature means the review’s style in terms of the specific choices of words (slang, first-person pronouns, emotion words, humor) made within each of the review’s statements. The use of slang and humor may evoke an informal tone that would help the reader feel a connection with the reviewer (Fraley and Aron 2004). Moreover, the use of emotion-laden words may convey excitement and enthusiasm (or disdain and dissatisfaction) about the experience in the hotel, which could simplify the decision process. Also, with the use of first-person pronouns the reviewer wants to lead the reader to feel a greater confidence about the provided information (Schindler and Bickard 2012).

**H6: The tone that the review is written related with the influence that online reviews has on the customers.**

### 3.1.7 The relationship between the extent to which readers are influenced by an online review and the 5-star hotel classification.

In the hotel industry worldwide there are many classification systems from which the most common one includes a 5-star rating. The categories in this system are Tourist (*), Standard (**), Comfort (***) , First Class (****) and Luxury (*****). Based on the comforts that are provided to the customers. Given that hotels from all these categories are reviewed in the web, it is interesting to explore if the online reviews can influence the customers independently the rating of the hotel in the 5-star classification. For example, to explore if a negative review regarding a three star hotel has the same influence on consumers with the same negative review regarding a four star hotel.

**H7: The online reviews affect customers in the same way independently the 5-star hotel classification.**

### 3.1.8 Vividness of information (provided pictures or videos of the hotel by the reviewer) influence the reliability of the online review

Vividness of information is defined by Nisbett and Ross (1980) as the capacity to attract and hold attention to excite imagination. Many researchers (Hayne, Pollard, & Rice, 2003; Kim, Kardes, & Herr, 1991; Nisbett & Ross, 1980, Block and Keller 1997) pointed out the significance for the online review to be vivid in order to persuade the consumers’ attitudinal judgment and to produce emotionally arousing responses.

**H8: There is a positive relationship between the vividness of an online review and the reliability of the online review.**
3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 Measures

The items that were used to measure the constructs in this study are displayed in the following tables. In the Table 4.4 the socio-demographic features are presented as they are used in previous information systems and e-WOM researches (Wixom and Todd 2005; Park et al. 2007; Cheung et al. 2008).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>18-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>46-55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&gt;55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 Items of the Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

In the Table 4.1 all the items of the used variables are presented. First of all, consumer information adoption was measured by a scale used in previous studies (Cheung et al. 2009, Sussman and Siegal 2003). Moreover, pre-decisional disposition was measured with a 9-point scale (Russo et al., 1998): “Based on all the information you’ve seen so far, are you leaning toward or away from booking this hotel”? Regarding the source credibility, it was measured by a scale developed by Ohanian (1990) containing four different items. Another used variable is the trust in the hotel was measured using a nine-item scale adapted from Sichtmann (2007). A last used variable is the technological competence of the sample for which a 7-items scale is used (HH Publishing, 2015).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items used in this Study</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Items</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Source Credibility (Ohanian, 1990)                           |                                    | The reviewers were credible  
The reviewers were experienced  
The reviewers were trustworthy  
The reviewers were reliable |
| Information Adoption (Cheung et al., 2009; Sussman & Siegal, 2003) |                                    | Review made it easier for me to make purchase decision. (e.g., purchase or not purchase).  
Online reviews have enhanced my effectiveness in making purchase decision  
Online reviews have motivated me to make a purchase decision  
The last time I read online reviews I adopted consumers’ recommendations and purchased (or not purchased) the recommended product/service |
| Trust (Sichtmann, 2007)                                      |                                    | I think this hotel would have high integrity  
I would warn others against dealing with this hotel (R)  
I believe this hotel would be trustworthy  
I believe this hotel would be dependable  
I believe this hotel would be reliable  
I believe this hotel would be responsible If I was to discuss this hotel with others (friends, family, work associates)  
I would probably say positive things  
I would have confidence in this hotel This seems like a good quality hotel |
| Pre-decisional disposition (HH Publishing, 2015)             |                                    | Leaning away from booking  
Not leaning either way  
Leaning toward booking |

Table 4.2 Items used in the variables of the study

3.2.2 Sample Profile

The size of the sample of the primary research is relatively large (130 responders). It is primarily composed from of individual aged 26-45 (73% of the sample, as it is observable by Figure 1) from Greece. This sample composition may result from the questionnaire which was available only in Greek and as a result the participation of non-Greek speakers’ responders was impossible.
Regarding other sociodemographic characteristics that are demanded from the responders it is observable that the difference between the number of men (61) and the number of women (69) is not significant (Figure 2) while the large majority of the responders (86.9% of the sample) have as a minimum level of education the University degree (Figure 3).
The last separation that was made to the sample based on sociodemographic criteria is based on their yearly income. As it is observable by Figure 4 the majority of the responders belong to the category with a yearly income smaller than 10000 €.
CHAPTER 4. Analysis of the results

The questionnaire is formed in order to give answers to all hypotheses that are developed in the previous chapter. Based on this, the first factor whose influence is examined in this study is the anonymity of the online review. As we can conclude by the diagram 5.1, 90 out of 130 responders (a percentage of 69%) answer that when the identity of the reviewer does not revealed, the online review is considered (completely) incredible.

![Diagram 5.1: Relationship between anonymity of the online review and its credibility](image)

Examining the sample in its different sociodemographic segments this percentage is not differentiated at great extent. For example, we can point out that the opinion about anonymous online reviews in every sex separately is not extremely different as the 73% of the responded men (45 out of 61) and the 65% of the responded women (45 out of 69) consider an anonymous online review (completely) unreliable (Diagrams 5.2 and 5.3)
Another crucial influential factor that is introduced in this study is the reason of stay in the hotel that the online review is about. The large majority of the responders pointed out that this is a (extremely) significant factor that is taken into account in order to adapt or not the information of the online review. This fact is interpreted numerically with a 79% (103 out of 130) of the total sample pointing out the significance of the reason of stay as it is observable in the Diagram 5.4.

Considering the results of the individual sociodemographic segments we can see that the responders with a yearly income between 15000€ and 25000€ is the segment that is influenced at greater extent compare with the others. More specifically, 16 out of 17 (94%) of the responders that belongs to this category, stated that it is of
utmost importance for them the reason of stay in the hotel before they adopt information about it (Diagram 5.5).

![Diagram 5.5: In this scale 1=not important and 4=extremely important](image)

Another examined variable of this study is the vividness of information provided in an online review and the extent that its credibility is influenced by this variable. As it is known from the literature the vividness of information increased as the number of existing photos and videos is increased (Nisbett and Ross, 1980). The great majority of the responders (114 out of 130, that is a 88% of the total sample) highlighted the importance of their existence in an online review stated that they render the online review more credible. (Diagram 5.6)

![Diagram 5.6 In this scale 1=not important and 4=extremely important](image)
Examining the sociodemographic segments separately we can conclude that the segment which influenced at greater extent by the vividness is the responders with a yearly income of 10000-15000€. (Diagram 5.7). This result can be composed by two different facts. Firstly the majority of the responders who stated that it is extremely significant (Item 4) for them the vividness of information emanate from this segment (22 out of 39). Secondly only one from the 28 responders that belong to this category considers the photos and the videos as an insignificant feature for an online review.

![Diagram 5.7](image)

Except from the vividness of information another variable that concerns the content of the online review is its tone (potential usage of first-person pronouns and humor) and is also examined in this study. The before mentioned features are examined separately at what extent they influence the consumers in the process of adopting (or not) the included in the online review information. As it is easily perceptible by the Diagrams 5.8 and 5.9 the results for the whole sample are not differentiated substantially.

The variety of the responds shows that the consumers are ambivalent if the existence of humor or first-person pronouns give credence to an online review. More specifically 73 out of 130 (56% of the whole sample) stated that an online review with humor is more credible compared with another with no humor while for the others (57 out of 130) this is an insignificant element for the reviews.
The results are similar regarding the usage of first-person pronouns where 72 out of 130 (55% of the whole sample) stated that this is an element that gives credence to the reviews while the others 58 ignore it in the process of adopting (or not) the included in the online review information.

The importance of the tone of the online review becomes more debatable as we observe the results in every sociodemographic segment separately. A large percentage of the responders (52%) that belong to the age-category 18-25 pointed out that humor is not an element which helps them to adopt an information existing in an online review (Diagram 5.10). Examining the results regarding the usage of first-person pronouns in the age-category 36-45 we get an even more indicative picture. More specifically, 61% (19 out of 31) of the responders stated that they are
not interested in a potential usage of first-person pronouns in the online review. (Diagram 5.11).

Diagram 5.10: Importance of humor in the age group 18-25. 1=not important and 4=extremely important

Diagram 5.11: Importance of first-person pronouns in the age group 36-45. 1=not important and 4=extremely important

As we refer in the previous chapter a large part of the literature review is focused on the significance of the online review management. This study cover a space in the existing literature which is about the way that the hotel answer to an online review and the strategy that is followed.

First of all, the research discloses the urgency of the online review management. This can be concluded from the fact that the 78% of the responders (101 out of 130) stated that they form a negative opinion for a hotel that does not answer to an online review. In opposition, only 22% of the responders pointed out that their trust in the hotel does not influenced by this fact. (Diagram 5.12)
Examining the results separately for every sociodemographic segment we can observe one noticeable fact. The most negative opinion about a hotel that does not answer to an online review is formed by those who belong to 36-45 age group where 28 out of 31 (90%) consider the hotel untrustworthy as it is depicted in the Diagram 5.13.

Through this research the significance of the way that a hotel answer to an online review is also depicted. As it is expected, the results disclose the importance of the correct application of the online review management. The 80% (104 out of 130) of the responders they pointed out that their trust to a hotel is influenced not only by a potential answer to an online review but also by the way that this answer is expressed. (Diagram 5.14). The before mentioned percentage is even larger in the group of the responders with a yearly income of 10000-15000 € where the 93% of responds (26 out of 28) highlighted the importance of a suitable online review management (Diagram 5.15).
The last finding about the online review management concerns the strategy that a hotel should follow as they expressed in the literature (Coombs, 1999; Marcus & Goodman, 1991; Smith, 2002). The results in this case are unambiguous as the vast majority (95%, that is 124 out of 130) of the responders pointed out that the hotel should follow the accommodative strategy especially after an unlucky event (Diagram 5.16). As it is expected, the same vast majority in favor of accommodative strategy exists in all the sociodemographic groups.
Another cardinal part of this research is associated with the two different types of platforms that publish online review as they are expressed by Filieri and McLeay (2009) and the different influence that have on the consumers. The results prove that consumers consider the online reviews that are published in independent websites more credible than those that exist in the e-merchants. More specifically, 109 out of 130 responders (84%) stated that they consider (completely) credible the independent websites’ online reviews while the equivalent percentage for the e-merchants is only 50% (65 out of 130). (Diagrams 5.17 and 5.18)
Another objective of this research is to find out if the consumers are influenced the same independently the provisions of the hotel and its thesis in the 5-star classification. Based on the results we can draw the conclusion that the consumers are influenced by an online review in smaller extent if the hotel is luxurious (5-star or 4-star) than if the hotel has a low thesis in this classification. As it is observable by the Diagram 5.19, only 34 out of 130 (26%) stated that they are unaffected by the hotel’s luxuries while the others admitted that the opinions in online reviews are a factor that is taken into account only for not luxurious hotels.

The importance of the 5-star classification in the extent that the customers influenced by an online review

Diagram 5.19: 1=Uninterested about luxuries 4=Luxuries are extremely important
The last objective of this research is to observe if separating the sample in different categories regarding their technological competence, the extent of influence from an online review is changing in every group. The before-mentioned separation is made in 7 different groups and as it is expected the majority of the sample stated that they are (extremely) familiar with technologies. More specifically 81% of the whole sample (105 out of 130) pointed out that they are (extremely) familiar with technologies while the opposite is expressed only by the 29% (Diagram 5.20).

![Diagram 5.20 In this scale: 1=not familiar at all 7=extremely familiar](image)

The outcome is also the expected distinguishing the sample based on the sociodemographic groups as we can see that the larger percentage of those who stated extremely familiar with technologies belongs to the age-group 26-35.

![Diagram 5.21. In this scale 1=26-35 2=46-55 3=36-45 4=18-25](image)
In order to conclude to the influence the online reviews have to the different technological competences groups we separate the whole sample in two different groups and we examine each group separately. The first group includes the responders that stated that they are technological competence (105 responds based on Diagram 5.20).

![Diagram 5.22](image)

Diagram 5.22 In this scale: 1=Have made opinion 9=I am far from forming any fixed opinion

As we can conclude from the Diagram 5.22, only the 27% (Items 1 and 2 in the Diagram 5.22) of those who stated familiar with the technologies pointed out that they read the online reviews when they have made an opinion about the hotel. Therefore we conclude that online reviews are evidences which are taken into account by the majority of people who are familiar with technology before their fixed opinion are formed.

The outcome is similar if we examine the responders that they have stated unfamiliar with technology. We can observe that 33% (Items 1 and 2 in the Diagram 5.23) pointed out that they read the online reviews when they have made an opinion about the hotel. Therefore we can conclude that online reviews are a significant element for this group of people, as well, before the fixed opinion is formed.
Diagram 5.23 In this scale: 1=Have made opinion 9=I am far from forming any fixed opinion
CHAPTER 5: Discussion and Practical Implications

A large number of the existing researches suggested that influence of online reviews on consumers’ purchase intention depends on a number of antecedents such as quality of information (Park et al, 2007), overall product ranking and customer ranking (Filieri, 2015). However this study discloses that the credibility of information of an online review is directly connected with a number of other determinants. Firstly it is proved that an anonymous online review that does not influence at great extent the consumers’ opinion about the hotel. On the contrary, in cases when the identity of the reviewer is revealed affect the persuasiveness of the online review and lead to consumer initial trust development in the travel services being reviewed. Moreover, we demonstrate that the credibility of information is positively affected by its vividness. That is, the presence of videos and photos in the online review is a strong predictor of information diagnosticity. On the other hand, based on this research’s outcomes, insignificant is the role of the review’s tone. The usage of humor and first-person pronouns do not have on the consumers the necessary influence in order to stipulate their purchase intention.

The investigation of the reason of stay’s role before a traveler adopt (or not) a piece of information from an online review is another crucial finding of this study which cover a space in the existing literature as no previous study has investigated this relationship. Based on the results, it is observable that this antecedent is taken into account by the consumer before they draw any conclusion for the hotel. That means that online reviews sometimes cover the consumer’s needs and sometimes they are not taken into account because of the differences in the reason of stay.

Furthermore, the present study used the existing model (Filieri and McLeay, 2015) regarding the two different types of consumer opinion portals (e-merchants and independent websites) and document the consumers’ opinion regarding the credibility of their published online reviews. Outcome discloses that the e-merchants where online reviews written only by travelers who have previously stayed in the hotel regarded as very credible source of reviews. In the same time reviews from independent websites where travelers only need a valid email address to publish a review are considered incredible.

A major part of the project concerns the online review management and the most efficient way to handle the consumers’ complain as they are expressed through social media platforms. From the research’s results we can conclude that is of great
importance for the hotel brand name to answer in every judicial review because in any different case it unlikely to retain disgruntled customers. However as the findings of the study disclose, only to answer to the online reviews is not enough for an effective complaints management. As can be concluded by other researches, as well, (Miller et al., 2000; Park and Allen, 2013) the latter requires a prompt response containing an empathizing and apologetic message because this is the only way to quickly and efficiently resolve customer complaints.

A last very crucial result of the present research is the documentation of the influence that online reviews has on the different groups of consumers based on their technological competence. We found that independently of their expertise with technologies the travelers read online reviews (much) before they form the final opinion about the hotel and therefore the significance of other consumers’ opinion for them is large. Therefore, taking into account a number of other studies (Filiery and McLeay, 2015; Mauri and Minazzi, 2013) we can easily conclude that this kind of marketing has influence in the majority of consumers independently of their age, nationality, technological competence. As some previous studies (Sigala et al, 2012; Senecal and Nantel 2004) pointed out hotel managers should be aware that through online reviews travelers may become co-marketers by producing reviews that influence other travelers’ decisions more strongly than traditional marketing communications.

The managerial implications of this study include offering hotel companies the benefits of better ways to respond to online reviews in order to enhance customer experiences. This can be achieved only by indicate stuff that will be focused on the part of online complaints handling which will result in customer satisfaction. As we analyzed in the literature review customer satisfaction is the first step in order to build brand loyalty. Moreover, as Chan and Guillet (2011) pointed out suitable responses to online reviews make the travelers feel important to the firm which will have as a consequence building brand loyalty.
CHAPTER 6. LIMITATIONS

One of the most significant problems in the researches is the validity of their questionnaire and therefore of their results. That is, before the interviewed were asked to complete the questionnaire, a group of experts as similar as possible to the final sample population made comments about it and it was confirmed that every question was completely understandable by the responders. Moreover, in this way the reliability of the questionnaire was checked as the responses of the pilot test’s sample were compared.

In order to confirm the validity of the current questionnaire, pilot test was conducted. In this test was observed a problem in the questionnaire which is related to the comprehension of a question (Question 3) and it is corrected afterwards. Firstly, a clarification about the meaning of the 5-star classification was necessary in order to ensure that with this term all the provisions and the luxuries of the hotel are implied.

Despite the above conducted pilot test which confirms the validity of the questionnaires, there are some limitations that identify potential weaknesses of the study. One significant limitation is that the sample is not balanced regarding its structure. For example the number of the responders who are >46 is not enough in order to be drawn trustworthy conclusions. Also the sample is not representative regarding the nationality as all the responders are Greek. Another limitation of this study is that numerous other variables that have not been included in this study may influence the dependent variables (for instance the website design and number of the reviews that the reviewer has written).
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Internet

H&H Publishing   http://www.hhpublishing.com/_assessments/TIA/scales.html#UOT
(Accessed 29/10/2015)
1. Social Media categories based on by Kaplan and Haenlein classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative blogs or projects</td>
<td>participants are allowed to work on the same project and all can edit the content at any time they want</td>
<td>Wikis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs, Microblogs and Internet forums</td>
<td>personal pages where individuals can communicate with others through texts, videos and pictures</td>
<td>Yahoo!Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Communities</td>
<td>main function is sharing media content such videos and pictures between users</td>
<td>Youtube, Slideshare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Networks</td>
<td>allow the users to make personal accounts, invite others to join the site, access the profiles of other users, share information and send emails as well as instant messages to each other</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Game Worlds</td>
<td>users participate in games in virtual world using avatars</td>
<td>Second Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virtual Social Worlds</td>
<td>users select their avatars, their behavior their lives and act in similar way compare with real lives</td>
<td>World of Warcraft</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Questionnaire**

1. Κατά πόσο είστε εξοικειωμένος με την τεχνολογία? *

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

   Καθόλου ● ● ● ● ● ● ● Εξαιρετικά

2. Μετά από όλες τις αξιολογήσεις που βλέπετε για ένα ξενοδοχείο πόσο απέχετε από το να επιλέξετε αυτό το ξενοδοχείο? *

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

   Έχει διαμορφωθεί ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● Απεχω απτο να διαμορφωσω η τελική μου άποψη

3. Το πόσες παροχές προσφέρει το ξενοδοχείο (4άστερο ή 5άστερο) παίζει σημαντικό ρόλο στην υιοθέτηση (ή μη) των πληροφοριών μιας αξιολόγησης? *

   Αδιάφορο το πόσο 1 2 3 4 Εξαιρετικά σημαντικό

poliutelés είναι ● ● ● ●

4. Ο λόγος διαμονής σε ένα ξενοδοχείο παίζει σημαντικό ρόλο στην υιοθέτηση (ή μη) των πληροφοριών που μια αξιολόγηση περιέχει? *Με τον λόγο διαμονής εννοούνται τα ταξίδια με φίλους, ταξίδια ζευγαριού, επαγγελματικό ταξίδι κτλ

   Αδιάφορος 1 2 3 4 Εξαιρετικά σημαντικός

   ● ● ● ●

5. Αν ένα κείμενο αξιολόγησης είναι ανώνυμο τότε τι συμπέρασμα βγάζετε για την φερεγγυότητά του? *

   Φερέγγυο 1 2 3 4 Αφερέγγυο

   ● ● ● ●

6. Κατά πόσο η ύπαρξη φωτογραφιών/βίντεο σε μια αξιολόγηση παίζει ρόλο στην υιοθέτηση (ή μη) των πληροφοριών που αυτή περιέχει? *

   Αδιάφορη η ύπαρξη 1 2 3 4 Εξαιρετικά σημαντική η παρουσία τους

   φώτο/βίντεο ● ● ● ●

7. Κατά πόσο ο τρόπος απάντησης του ξενοδοχείου σε μια αξιολόγηση επηρεάζει την εικόνα που έχετε για αυτό? *

   Καθόλου 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Σίγουρα
8. Τι εικόνα σχηματίζετε για ένα ξενοδοχείο το οποίο δεν απαντά σε μια αξιολόγηση μετά από ένα αρνητικό συμβάν; *

Ανάξιο προτίμησης  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  Αξίζει να προτιμηθεί

9. Μετά από ένα ατυχές/αρνητικό συμβάν ποια θα ήταν κατά την γνώμη σας η καλύτερη στρατηγική για το ξενοδοχείο? *

- Απολογιτική/παραδοχή του λάθους
- Σιωπή/Κανένας σχολιασμός
- Άρνηση οποιασδήποτε ευθύνης

10. Κατά πόσο η υπάρξη στοιχείων χιούμορ σε μια αξιολόγηση παίζει ρόλο στην υιοθέτηση (ή μη) των πληροφοριών που αυτή περιέχει; *

Αδιάφορη η ύπαρξή τους  1  2  3  4  Εξαιρετικά σημαντικά

11. Κατά πόσο η χρήση πρώτου προσώπου σε μια αξιολόγηση παίζει ρόλο στην υιοθέτηση (ή μη) των πληροφοριών που αυτή περιέχει; *

Αδιάφορη η ύπαρξή του  1  2  3  4  Εξαιρετικά σημαντική

12. Τι συμπέρασμα βγάζετε για την φερεγγυότητα μιας αξιολόγησης ιστότοπων όπως το Booking όπου δημοσιοποιούνται αξιολογήσεις μόνο μετά από απόδειξη ότι ο κριτικός έχει επισκεφτεί το ξενοδοχείο? *

Φερέγγυα  1  2  3  4  Αφερέγγυα

13. Τι συμπέρασμα βγάζετε για την φερεγγυότητα μιας αξιολόγησης ιστότοπων όπως το TripAdvisor όπου δημοσιοποιούνται αξιολογήσεις απλώς με την παροχή ενός έγκυρου e-mail? *

Φερέγγυα  1  2  3  4  Αφερέγγυα
14. Φύλο
- Άνδρας
- Γυναίκα

15. Ηλικία
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- >55

16. Εκπαίδευση
- Λύκειο
- ΑΕΙ/ΤΕΙ
- Μεταπτυχιακό

17. Ετήσιο Εισόδημα
- <10.000
- 10.000-15.000
- 15.000-25.000
- >25.000