Chapter 3

The Role of Digital Marketing and Online Relationship Quality in Social Tourism:
A Tourism for All Case Study

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ABSTRACT

The literature widely suggests that the digital media has greatly impacted the way a marketer reaches today's consumer. The adaptive process enabled by the digital technologies creates value in new ways in new digital environments. Therefore, social tourism has been defined as the effects and phenomena that result from the participation in tourism and more specifically from the participation of low-income groups. The chapter focuses on accessible tourism and tourism for all. A case study will be present. This chapter will discuss the increasing phenomena of online relationship and digital marketing in specific social tourism contexts. Based on the literature review, the authors will develop a research propositions that connect the online relationship quality dimension developed by the relational marketing (i.e., online contexts) with the consequent e-satisfaction and word-of-mouth (eWOM). The authors also considered some implications for management, as well as give suggestions for future lines of research.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is assumed as one of the major engines with more significant impact on the global development and growth of many economies. Year after year there has been an increase in competition in this sector, although this competition is established between tourism destinations (Becken & Simmons, 2002). Studies in tourism are increasing, although with different points of view and perspectives (Echtner & Jamal, 1997), for example on the planning of tourism destinations, local development, environmental impact, territorial brand management or even the loyalty of tourists (Backman & Crompton, 1991; Ferreira et al., 2018; Getz, 1986; Sousa & Ribeiro, 2018; Sousa & Vasconcelos, 2018). To Jafari and Aaser (1988), tourism as a study area has gained space, reflecting its increasing recognition in the academic community, an application of interdisciplinary concepts and methods. The field of tourism marketing is no exception and has faced increasing challenges caused by the diversity and demands of markets which call for new marketing approaches (Sousa & Vieira, 2018). New habits needs and trends in the global tourism creates more sophisticated consumers who systematically look for different and specific tourism experiences.

Therefore, and according to Hassan and Rahimi (2016), tourism is the world's largest industry that continuously contributing global economy. The economic and market structures of countries across the world are diverse that necessitates technology application to cater growing demands of both consumers and businesses. Technology application in tourism is said as linked with Information and Communication Technology (ICT). ICT has been continuously contributing business activities including tourism. The extended roles and capacities of digital marketing are also diverging traditional means of technology adoption in tourism. ICT has witnessed a sharp rise of up gradation over the last few decades where, innovations in digital marketing have contributed largely (Hassan & Rahimi, 2016). For instance, social media platforms allow potential travellers to collect a wide variety of multimedia information from different sources and use the experiences shared by others in order to prepare and sometimes enrich their own tourism-related experience. Social media are changing the way society consumes and contributes to the creation of information. Technology now allows individuals to easily contribute their thoughts, opinions and creations to the Internet. This has radically altered the way in which information is created and disseminated (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Gretzel et al., 2000; Hays et al., 2013; Senecal & Nantel, 2004; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

In this context, social tourism has been defined as the effects and phenomena that result from the participation in tourism and more specifically from the participation of low-income groups. This participation is made possible or is facilitated by initiatives of a well-defined social nature. Also, tourism for all refers to the goal to include as

many people as possible into tourism and leisure. The main current target markets for a social tourism policy are young people, families, senior citizens and people with a disability. These existing social tourism policies have often been shown to have substantial economic benefits. The youth tourism market has received particular attention in a growing number of countries: specific strategies have been developed to better inform this target group of the different options that are available for travel or to develop destinations as particularly attractive for the youth market (Bélanger & Jolin, 2011). According to Figueiredo et al. (2012), tourism is considered not only as a basic human right and should be accessible to all, as recognized by many governments and supra-national organizations, but also as a tool to promote social inclusion. Darcy, Cameron, and Pegg (2011) noted that accessible tourism enables people with disabilities to independently participate in travel activities using a variety of barrier-free travel products, services, and amenities. According to Scheyvens and Biddulph (2018), when the inclusiveness of tourism is discussed it is often in terms of its accessibility for tourists who are differently abled. The concept has been variously defined in order to pay more or less attention to issues of physical ability, cognitive ability and issues relating to age (Darcy, 2006; Darcy & Dickson, 2009). While accessibility is generally the key term in this literature, inclusive approaches and inclusive attitudes are identified as key to providing accessibility (Darcy & Pegg, 2011; Yau, McKercher, & Packer, 2004). In a context of increasing concern about equal opportunities for all, fight against discrimination, promotion of the fundamental rights of individuals with special needs and their inclusion in all social life domains, including leisure and tourism, the tourism industry needs to adapt its offerings, making them accessible to all (Ozturk et al., 2008)

The present chapter aims to present and analyse a Portuguese case study in specific context of social tourism and tourism for all. Since 2006, the brand, ACCESSIBLE PORTUGAL, has grown to become the institution for the promotion of Accessible Tourism for All in Portugal. It its current legal format, considered to be the most appropriate for its aims, this private, non-profit Association is an entity that qualifies tourism supply and demand for all segments of the market according to their distinctive characteristics. Accessible Portugal promotes the development of areas that are gearing up to welcome a diversity of clients / tourists from a growing market, improving the quality of the lives of residents who also have a diversity of needs that must be satisfied. In specific, TUR4all is the App for Accessible Tourism in the Iberian Peninsula. It provides information about accessible accommodation, restaurants, bars, monuments, museums, cultural centres, wine tourism, beaches, leisure activities, tourism offices, city tours in short, accessible destinations and experiences. The application enables people with special needs to plan their trips, with access to objective and accurate information about the level of accessibility of tourism resources. TUR4all has been designed so that users can customise their

search criteria according to their specific needs. This chapter focuses on accessible tourism and tourism for all. A case study will be presented and discussed. The authors also consider some implications for management, as well as give suggestions for future lines of research.

BACKGROUND

Digital Marketing and Online Relationship Quality

It has been nearly a quarter century since the commercial use of the Internet and the World Wide Web. During this time the business landscape has changed at a frenetic pace. Large multinational corporations such as Google, Facebook, Amazon, Alibaba, eBay and Uber (Kannan, 2017). There is general agreement that digital media have greatly impacted the way a marketer reaches today's consumer (Freitas & Santos, 2009; Santos, 2006). Digital media refer to electronic media that disseminate information in digital formats. This includes any media available via computers, mobile phones, smart phones, or other digital devices such as digital outdoor signs. The Internet is a prominent venue of digital marketing (Smith, 2011).

According to Kannan (2017), the adaptive process enabled by the digital technologies creates value in new ways in new digital environments. Institutions enabled by digital technologies build foundational capabilities to create such value jointly for their customers and for themselves. Processes enabled by digital technologies create value through new customer experiences and through interactions among customers. From a consumer's perspective, the use of information communication technologies offers a number of benefits, including efficiency, convenience, richer and participative information, a broader selection of products, competitive pricing, cost reduction, and product diversity (Bayo-Moriones & Lera-Lopez, 2007; Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014).

Nowadays, information and communication technologies have evolved, which has led to a sale of products and services through websites, thus allowing companies to obtain a competitive advantage over the market in which they operate. This is because online evolution has provided ever more active interactions and communications between the consumer and the business, as well as reducing the complexity of transactions and increasing the possibility of customization and customization of products and services (Asgari Hamid, Asgari & Mousavipour, 2012). Which is why the number of companies in the online context has increased, which has raised questions about the quality of the loyalty relationship between the online customer and the company (Walsh, Hennig-Thurau, Sassenber & Bornemann, 2009). The online relationship quality is an integrative and multidimensional concept, such

as relationship quality in an offline context (Asgari et al., 2012; Brun et al., 2014) transpose the concept of relationship quality in the offline context for the online context, approaching it in the same way. However, they contradict the perspective of Vieira el al. (2008) regarding the definition of determinants of this term, considering, then, that these, in online context, only go through the function of communication, the transactional function and the relational function.

The communication function concerns the interaction between an online company and its customers. This role plays a prominent role in this context, since, with the evolution of information and communication technologies, companies have more opportunities to interact with their clients (Asgari et al., 2012). Regarding the transactional function, Asgari et al. (2012), identify as key factors the quality of the related service as content available on the website, the accessibility, safety and design of the website and, finally, the complexity of the purchase. In turn, the relational function encompasses online services and personalized websites (Asgari et al., 2012). Thus, although online and offline relationships are quite distinct, due to the physical distance and the different media used, the various principles of relationship marketing and, in a particular quality relationship can and should be transposed from the offline context to online (Ching & Ellis, 2006).

Dimensions of Online Relationship Quality

As in relationship quality in offline context, in online context the concept is also composed of several dimensions (Asgari, et al., 2012; Rafiq et al., 2013). However, Asgari, et al. (2012) consider that the dimensions in an online environment differ from the offline context, being composed only by e-satisfaction and e-trust. On the other hand, Walsh et al. (2009), Rafiq et al. (2013), Aggarwal and Bhardwaj (2016) and Vize, Coughlan, Keneedy and Ellis-Chadwick (2016) consider that the dimensions of relationship quality coincide in both online and offline environments, ie, encompass e-trust, e-commitment and e-satisfaction. However, Walsh et al. (2009) argue that what distinguishes them is their relevance and their impact, since the interactions between the client and the employee are distinct in the two environments (Machado, 2018). Thus, in this research, the dimensions studied will be e-trust, e-commitment and e-satisfaction.

E-Trust

As regards e-trust, Shankar, Smith and Rangaswamy (2003) argue that this dimension of relationship quality is particularly relevant in the online context as clients increasingly rely on the Internet for information and shopping and, as such, there is scope to increase their loyalty in this regard. According to Bart, et al. (2005),

trust in an offline context differs from trust in online context, since the latter has as its purpose the website, the Internet and/or technology. The authors consider that the interaction between a client and a website is similar to their interaction with a physical store, and they develop their perceptions of trust based on their interaction with the website. Thus, the e-trust encompasses a set of client perceptions in relation to their expectations regarding the website. Mukherjee and Nath (2007) agree with Bart et al. (2005), because they also consider that the concept of trust is different when applied in both environments and point out several aspects that justify this difference, namely, the absence of human contact; the physical distance between the actors (consumer and seller) and, consequently, between the consumer and the product. For Shiu et al. (2016), this dimension is more relevant in an online than offline environment, since consumers perceive more risks inherent to this type of trade and associate them with the lack of physical contact with the product (s), either with the store itself. The e-trust is then described as the level of trust and conviction that an online customer possesses during the online shopping process (Ribbink, Riel, Liljander & Streukens, 2004).

E-Commitment

With regard to e-commitment, Brun et al. (2016) consider that this concept has not been so highly valued in the online context as it is offline. However, Chung and Shin (2010) argue for the importance of their application in both environments and consider that their research should not be overlooked. For Ching and Ellis (2006), this is a very relevant dimension in the online environment, because consumers in this context are less likely to be loyal to the company / brand, this is due to the high anonymity and physical and social distance between involved in the buying process. And, therefore, the strong sense of commitment is key to developing and maintaining an online relationship (Brun et al., 2016).

E-Satisfaction

Satisfaction is an important dimension in both offline and online contexts (Brun et al, 2016). Evanschitzky, Iyer, Hesse and Ahlert (2004) and Szymanski and Hise (2000) consider that e-satisfaction occurs when clients compare the online service experience with offline service providers. According to McKinney et al. (2002) and Sanchez-Franco (2009), since there is no physical proximity in an online context, this dimension is often associated with a particular website and its characteristics from the point of view of the consumer (Machado, 2018).

In terms of their impact, Shankar, Smith and Rangaswamy (2003) argue that satisfaction has a greater impact on relationship quality when applied in an online

context compared to its application in the offline environment. This difference is due to the discrepancy of resources available between both customers, that is, online customers, when satisfied, have the greater capacity / availability to demonstrate, compared to offline customers, due to the tools they have and the reduced efforts required (Shankar et al., 2003).

Background of Online Relationship Quality

Brun, Rajaobelina and Ricard (2016) argue that there are several factors that promote online relationship quality and that these are divided into relational characteristics and characteristics of the website. Relational characteristics correspond to factors that come from the offline context, but which coincide and influence the online context (Ching & Ellis, 2006). In turn, the characteristics of the website are composed of variables derived exclusively from the online environment (Chung & Shin, 2010). Thus, with respect to relational characteristics, Brun et al. (2016) concluded that the factors that precede and promote online relationship quality involve communication, conflict, and the perceived benefits of the relationship. And with regard to the characteristics of the website, Brun et al. (2016) have identified convenience, website design, information quality, ease of use, and security / privacy as the most relevant factors for online relationship quality. The factors presented above are explained below.

- **Communication:** It supports the interaction between the consumer and the company and is a decisive factor in the performance of the businesses (Miles et al., 1990; Vieira et al., 2008).
- **Conflict**: It is characterized by the frequency, intensity and duration of disagreement or disagreement between actors (Anderson & Narus, 1990).
- **Perceived Benefits of Relationship:** They represent the added value generated by a relation (Chou & Chen, 2018; Mukherjee & Nath, 2007). These results can be attributed to the performance of the product (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) or by the relationship itself (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2000).

Website Features

- **Convenience:** It allows consumers to reach businesses and their products and services when and how they want (Chung & Shin, 2010).
- **Website Design:** It provides the company's first impression to the consumer and should therefore make their online experience more enjoyable (Chung & Shin, 2010).

- **Quality of Information:** It concerns the authenticity and relevance of the information available on the website (Mukherjee & Nath, 2007).
- **Ease of Use:** It allows consumers to navigate the website simply and clearly, providing a pleasant online experience (Chouk & Perrien, 2004).
- **Security / Privacy:** It concerns the protection of data provided by consumers and the clarification of how the company collects and handles consumer information (Kalyanam & McIntyre, 2002). It is an essential factor in online trust building (Mukherjee & Nath, 2007).

According to the model applied by Brun et al. (2016), the characteristics of the website are more relevant for the development of long-term relationships, in online context, compared to the relational characteristics; this is due to the lack of physical contact and to the fact that the online experience of the consumer depends heavily on the website (McKinney, Yoon & Zahedi, 2002). However, all factors, whether they are part of the website's feature set or relational characteristics, influence the dimensions of relationship quality (Brun et al., 2016). Next, the impact that each factor has on trust, satisfaction and commitment is presented in an online context.

However, although all antecedents influence the dimensions of online relationship quality, they have different strengths in terms of impact on the overall concept. According to Brun et al. (2016), ease of use, website design and security / privacy are the factors that have the greatest global impact on online relationship quality; perceived benefits, conflict, convenience, and communication are the ones that least impact the concept as a whole.

SOCIAL TOURISM

The benefits of tourism can be wide ranging, extending to benefits to the economy, social life for people living in destinations as well as personal benefits to tourists. These personal benefits have been found to include: rest and recuperation from work; provision of new experiences leading to a broadening of horizons and the opportunity for learning and intercultural communication; promotion of peace and understanding; personal and social development; visiting friends and relatives; religious pilgrimage and health; and, subjective wellbeing (McCabe, 2009). In this context, social tourism for low-income groups forms part of social policy in several countries of mainland Europe, but little research evidence of its benefits exists (Minnaert, Maitland & Miller, 2009). According to Hunzicker (1951), in first definition of social tourism, describes social tourism as "the relationships and phenomena in the field of tourism resulting from participation in travel by economically weak or otherwise disadvantaged elements

in society" (Hunzicker, 1951, p. 1). In 1957, Hunzicker added a comment regarding the nature of social tourism provision, defining the concept as "a particular type of tourism characterised by the participation of people with a low income, providing them with special services, recognised as such" (Hunzicker, 1957, p. 12). These two early definitions highlight the complexity of the concept of social tourism, as they allow for four different interpretations (Minnaert et al., 2011). Each of these four interpretations is apparent in social tourism schemes, according to Minnaert et al. (2011) in Europe today:

- Social tourism is tourism that specifically encourages the participation in tourism activities of people who are economically weak or otherwise disadvantaged. Social tourism initiatives in this category aim to offer tourism experiences that are already accessible to a majority of people to groups who are excluded from them, usually for financial or health reasons;
- Social tourism is tourism that encourages participation in tourism by all, including people who are economically or otherwise disadvantaged. In this category, social tourism initiatives aim to encourage tourism participation for many or most members of the society – for example, through subsidised schemes such as holiday vouchers. Such initiatives see assistance to participate in tourism as a universal benefit, but with particular benefit to the economically least well off;
- Social tourism is tourism that is specifically designed for people who are economically or otherwise disadvantaged. These social tourism initiatives offer a product that is specifically adapted for social tourism users, for example, through the selection of specialist accommodation or the provision of support services.

Social tourism is tourism that provides economic opportunities via travel and tourism for people who are economically weak or otherwise disadvantaged. In this interpretation, social tourism initiatives are mainly focused on providing economic benefits for the host community. In this context, social tourism has been defined as the effects and phenomena that result from the participation in tourism and more specifically from the participation of low-income groups. This participation is made possible or is facilitated by initiatives of a well-defined social nature. Also, tourism for all refers to the goal to include as many people as possible into tourism and leisure. The main current target markets for a social tourism policy are young people, families, senior citizens and people with a disability. These existing social tourism policies have often been shown to have substantial economic benefits. The youth tourism market has received particular attention in a growing number of

countries: specific strategies have been developed to better inform this target group of the different options that are available for travel or to develop destinations as particularly attractive for the youth market (Bélanger & Jolin, 2011).

According to McCabe (2009), tourism can be linked to personal and social growth (Krippendorf, 1987) but there is very little evidence connecting consumption of tourism to social policy initiatives, despite some literature on leisure participation (Tomlinson, 1986). Barriers to participation have been identified however the potential impacts of participation, or lack of it, on education, work, religion and social structures including the health and social care agendas is limited (Corlyon & La Placa, 2006; MCCabe, 2009), and to an understanding of how tourism non-participation can be linked to concepts of relative deprivation or social exclusion (Agarwal & Brunt, 2006). There is little detailed research examining non-participation and social exclusion within tourism despite some important contributions on the constraints to travel (Fleischer & Pizam, 2002) and recent analysis of social exclusion in host populations of tourist-receiving geographical regions, namely English seaside resorts (Agarwal & Brunt 2006). A significant amount of research has also focused on the barriers and/or experiences of people with disabilities (Burnett & Baker, 2001) linking the impacts of barriers for policy on social inclusion (Shaw, Veitch & Coles, 2005). However there is a lack of connected research across different excluded sections of society (McCabe, 2009).

Against the above, the present chapter focuses on online relationship and social tourism contexts. Based on the literature review, the authors present a research propositions that connect the online relationship quality dimension developed by the relational marketing (i.e. online contexts) with the consequent e-satisfaction and word-of-mouth (e-wom).

A TOURISM FOR ALL: CASE STUDY

While recognizing Portugal's unexplored tourist potential and considering the emergent need in enabling the universal accessibility in tourist services, it is eminent to consider the fundamental importance of a feature that distinguishes us as a nation - the know how in welcoming others. The concept of hospitality assumes the ability and the competences related to customer service, relationship management and the interaction between the hosting community and the tourists who try to enjoy the experiences offered by the tourist destination (Mendonça, 2017).

According Tur4all (2019), since 2006, the brand, ACCESSIBLE PORTUGAL, has grown to become the institution for the promotion of Accessible Tourism for All in Portugal. It its current legal format, considered to be the most appropriate for its aims, this private, non-profit Association is an entity that qualifies tourism

supply and demand for all segments of the market according to their distinctive characteristics. Accessible Portugal promotes the development of areas that are gearing up to welcome a diversity of clients / tourists from a growing market, improving the quality of the lives of residents who also have a diversity of needs that must be satisfied. The promotion of Accessible Tourism from this perspective has been major success. The aging world population, particularly that of major tourist source markets, together with their growing and consolidated desire to travel, naturally require tourist destinations to gear themselves up in an endeavour to respond to the respective challenges. These challenges refer to the quality and safety that clients, increasingly more demanding and more aware of their rights, attach great importance to (Tur4all, 2019). Fundación Vodafone Portugal is a self-funded, non-profit entity whose aim is to contribute to the development of the Information Society, fight the digital divide and disseminate mobile communication technologies. All projects are important because they provide technical innovation for the development of Society, but some stand out for their scope and significance and for the way in which they help to build a more sustainable and fair future. Fundación Vodafone Portugal signed a Protocol agreement with Accessible Portugal to finance the customisation of the TUR4all project in Portugal, through which both a Web Platform and Mobile App (available for iOS and Android) were developed to provide information about accessible tourism resources in Portugal (Tur4all, 2019).

Tourism is a strategic undertaking for Portugal, being its greatest economic activity in regional development, in the extent to which a multiplicity of departments and agents all work together as part of a network. According to Tur4all (2019), the "2027 Tourism Strategy – Think in the Future, Act in the Present" envisages the setting out of a strategic benchmark for the next 10 years, taking into consideration various changes and perspectives as well as opportunities and challenges arising from them. Thanks to Portugal's location, potential areas of growth are identified, such as a gateway to Europe, its mild climate, abundant sunlight and daylight, a diversity of historical and cultural heritage, the art of giving visitors a "Bem Receber" (Warm Welcome), the diversity of available tourism resources, etc. These factors, together with identified opportunities such as the sustained growth of Tourism between now and 2030, the reputation of "Portugal" as a destination, the growing demand for healthy pastimes as well as health and wellness products, will bring a whole series of opportunities to the ACCESSIBLE PORTUGAL project.

Almost 80 million EU citizens have some level of disability. Because of "population ageing", this situation is expected to increase to 120 million between now and 2020. Accessibility is a prerequisite for these people to be able to effectively participate and play an active role in society.

It is within this framework that ACCESSIBLE PORTUGAL plans to develop the project which is summarised below.

- Development of a Platform and a mobile App (available for both Android and iOS), to provide and disseminate information about accessible Tourism Resources in Portugal, which will help to capture new segments of Demand, improve the tourism experience for people with special needs, in addition to promoting Portugal as a Tourism Destination that knows how to give its visitors a "Warm Welcome".
- It is an information tool (non-evaluative), with all the objectivity that this entails. It aims to act as a dynamic interaction between supply and demand through Social Networks to promote the tourism resources of destinations and their respective accessibility.
- It is based on an already existing Platform that is currently being upgraded in Spain. Its developer, PREDIF (the Spanish Representative Platform for People with Physical Disabilities,) boasts more than twenty years of expertise in this field.
- The partnership that exists with PREDIF allows ACCESSIBLE PORTUGAL to benefit from a proven structure and methodology, in a continual state of improvement, with an international framework and scope, as well as a content production system with translations available in 7 languages, creating synergies, reducing costs and expediting both development and deployment.

ONLINE RELATIONSHIP AND SOCIAL TOURISM: RESEARCH PROPOSITIONS

This chapter discusses the increasing phenomena of online relationship and digital marketing in specific social tourism contexts. Based on the literature review, we develop research propositions that connect the online relationship quality dimension developed by the relational marketing (i.e. online contexts) with the consequent e-satisfaction and word-of-mouth (e-wom).

Preliminary research was conducted in order to develop the research instrument. Details of the preliminary research are given below. After the collection of the preliminary data, empirical data would be collected through fieldwork (i.e. Tur4all Portuguese case study). Several studies in marketing and tourism contexts have discussed the association relationship marketing to the site and consumer purchasing behaviour, including the study of satisfaction, loyalty or quality of service (Heung, Kucukusta & Song, 2010). An extensive review of the current literature reveals that no integrated theoretical framework for the holistic study of the digital marketing and social tourism exists. The proposed research model not only has implications for future research, but also provides useful information for practitioners in the social tourism. Several studies have shown that more brand commitment and brand trust

leads to more positive satisfaction behaviour (Amine, 1998; Belaid & Behi, 2011). According to Bloemer and Kasper (1995) commitment is the necessary condition of loyalty. The investigations into the brand's engagement relationship have found that commitment plays a central role in predicting brand loyalty. Other studies postulate that more commitment leads to positive loyalty behavior (Amine, 1998). The correlation between trust, commitment, online relationship and satisfaction is also a well-studied area, being supported by the literature (Lin & Wang, 2006). These results are particularly evident in tourism contexts (e.g. social tourism), as the example of the importance of satisfaction in revisiting or recommendation family or friends (Bigné et al., 2005; Prayag, 2008).

Based on this discussion, we propose that, in a context of social tourism, in specific the "tourism for all Portuguese case study", the increase in trust, online relationship quality and commitment facilitates the development of behavioural satisfaction and WOM. Hence, we propose H1: e-commitment has a positive effect on e-satisfaction of social tourism; H2: e-trust has a positive effect on e-satisfaction of social tourism; H3: e-Satisfaction has a positive effect on e-WOM in social tourism contexts.

FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study is a preliminary and exploratory research based on a quantitative approach. The conclusions are based on the researchers' perception derived from the Portuguese case study. With the insights from this study it is expected that future

Figure 1. Online relationship and behavioural intentions in social tourism.
Source: authors.
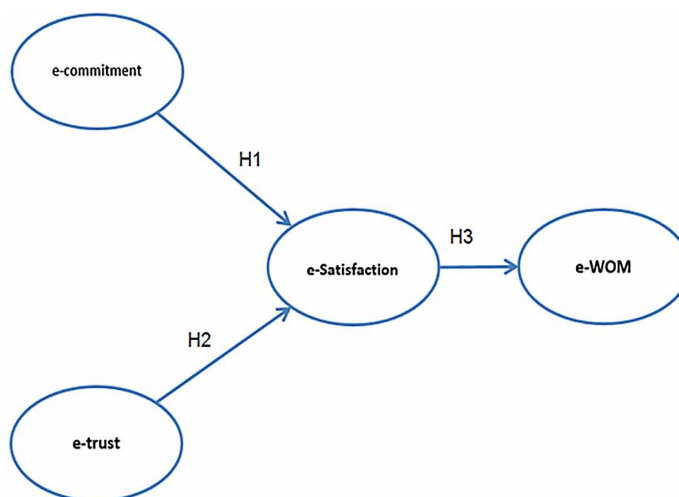
work can contribute to the development of empirical studies to address the developed propositions. In specific it is expected that future research explores the relationship between online relationship quality, e-trust, e-commitment, e-satisfaction and e-wom (e.g. Tur4all in Portugal). For example, studies may look at a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in several social tourism contexts. It is important to reveal the individual decision that cause satisfaction and/or dissatisfaction and shed light on the most determinant and critical attributes in explaining the overall social tourist experience, in the specific the case of digital marketing contexts. Studies could further develop a questionnaire to be applied to internet consumers in Portugal to capture a cross-sectional view of the relationships among the constructs gauging their impact.

CONCLUSION

As we can conclude from the proposed conceptual model, the quality of the relationship is composed of e-commitment, e-trust and e-satisfaction (Aggarwal & Bhardwaj, 2016; Rafiq et al., 2013; Vize et al., 2016; Walsh et al., 2009). In that this has a positive impact on e-wom in the context of social tourism. It is noticed that in social tourism is taken into account the quality of the relationship which in turn if it has good repercussions in the domain of the word in online context. Therefore it is advisable for tour operators to bet on the online context in order to create a good relationship (relationship quality) in order to trigger a good e-wom. We can thus affirm that in the social context tourism one of the good indicators among the users to evaluate the tourism is the e-wom. Building a positive relationship quality will be one of the best marketing strategies so that the users themselves are satisfied and therefore recommend the service of the tour operator with whom they have a good relationship.

It is therefore recommended that tour operators engage more in online relationships with their users in order to increase their turnover, by way of the recommendation of the users themselves.

The literature widely suggests that the digital media have greatly impacted the way a marketer reaches today's consumer. The adaptive process enabled by the digital technologies creates value in new ways in new digital environments. Institutions enabled by digital technologies build foundational capabilities to create such value jointly for their customers and for themselves. Therefore, social tourism has been defined as the effects and phenomena that result from the participation in tourism and more specifically from the participation of low-income groups. This participation is made possible or is facilitated by initiatives of a well-defined social nature. Also, tourism for all refers to the goal to include as many people as possible into tourism and leisure. Whereas the communication function concerns the interaction between

an online company and its customers. This role plays a prominent role in this context, since, with the evolution of information and communication technologies, companies have more opportunities to interact with their clients. In view of the foregoing, the present chapter focused on accessible tourism and tourism for all. A case study was presented and discussed. This chapter discussed the increasing phenomena of online relationship and digital marketing in specific social tourism contexts. Based on the literature review, we developed research propositions that connect the online relationship quality dimension developed by the relational marketing (i.e. online contexts) with the consequent e-satisfaction and e-word-of-mouth (e-wom). The authors also considered some implications for management, as well as give suggestions for future lines of research (e.g. empirical study).

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KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Digital Marketing: Is the marketing of products or services using digital technologies, mainly on the internet, but also including mobile phones, display advertising, and any other digital medium.

E-Satisfaction: The contentment of a consumer with respect to his or her prior purchasing experiences with a given retail-oriented website.

E-WOM: Is any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual or a former customer which is available to a multitude of people via the internet.

Online Relationship: Is an integrative and multidimensional concept, such as relationship quality in an offline context.

Social Tourism: Is tourism that provides economic opportunities via travel and tourism for people who are economically weak or otherwise disadvantaged.