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Review Article

Digital Narratives of Konkan Tourism: Socio-Specific Locus Concerning the Use of Social Media, Vlogs, etc., for Shaping Travellers' Perceptions

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Abstract

In today's tech-savvy era, digital marketing plays a pivotal role in influencing travelers' decisions across the globe. This particular research studies how digital storytelling with the help of blogs, social media, and vlogs is transforming the way the Konkan coastal region of Maharashtra is perceived and marketed as a popular tourist destination. The popular platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube Shorts, and videos impact tourists' decisions about the destination where they are going to travel. Through studying and analyzing the secondary data, this study examines how social media influencers, travel bloggers, and online content creators have totally redefined the coastal tourism experience in the Konkan region of Maharashtra.

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KEYWORDS: YouTube Shorts, Konkan region, Facebook, Influencers, Vlogging Impact

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Konkan region, known for its pristine beaches, lush green hills, and rich cultural heritage, has long been a significant yet underexplored tourist destination. Over the years, digital media—specifically social media platforms and blogs—has drastically transformed how destinations like Konkan are marketed to global travelers. With the rise of digital content, tourism is no longer solely dependent on conventional advertising but has also been shaped by travelers' online experiences and personal stories shared on digital platforms. This paper explores the role of digital storytelling in promoting Konkan tourism and its implications for the region's cultural heritage and the local economy.

The Konkan Coastal region of Maharashtra is blessed with clean beaches, green hills, and rich cultural heritage, and it really has a significant number of unexplored tourist destinations.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the impact of digital storytelling on tourist and their perception of the Konkan region as a travel destination
2. To study the role of social media content creators in promoting the Konkan Tourism
3. To understand how the traditional storytelling format is transformed into digital content creation to influence Konkan Tourism
4. To assess the ramifications of digital storytelling on local communities and businesses involved in the tourism sector of the Konkan region.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on secondary data analysis. The research involves

1. Content Analysis: A thorough analysis and review was done of the existing social media content, including blogs on search engines, Instagram Reels, YouTube travel vlogs, and shorts depicting tourism in the Konkan region.
2. Literature Review: Analysis of existing research on the role of digital media in tourism, storytelling, and its effects on destination marketing.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

An exploration of digital storytelling as a learning activity in teaching of English as a second language in higher education [1].

In this study it has been seen that digital storytelling supports active learning for the students. It helps to share the knowledge and achieve both the syllabus and language-associated goals of students. The oral communication skills of the students were developing because they could see themselves and how they were communicating. This would help them to review their communication skills. Students understood and recognized the different learning modes and objectives through digital storytelling.

A Study on Factors Influencing Tourists' Perceived Benefits of Facebook contents of the State Tourism Departments [2].

This research has aimed to give clarity on how a state or any union territory tourism department promotes various tourist destinations only through Facebook content. It analyzed the key elements of content creation by destination management organizations and tourists in general. This study focused on identifying various promotional strategies used to promote tourism. It also highlighted how content creation impacts the tourism authorities, along with the travelers. The ultimate goal was to examine the impact of Facebook as a tool for destination marketing

Digital Transformation Drivers, Managerial Actions, and Means of Value Creation [3].

This research explores how firms adopt digital transformation (DT) using technologies like IoT, cloud, and big data to create novel customer value propositions. It focuses on why firms pursue DT, how they restructure for it, and how they build data-driven value. The study is divided into three interconnected but independent parts, each examining different aspects of DT in emerging markets. These include motivations, internal and external process changes, and suitable architectures for data-enabled value creation.

This research studies how any company or firm that adopts digital transformation using different technologies creates a space for customer propositions. It emphasizes why certain firms and companies adopt DT, how they restructure it, and how they work on building the data-driven value.

5. FINDINGS FROM SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

1. Role of Blogs and Travel Websites

Travel vlogs and blogs have now become an important tool in advertising and promoting Konkan tourism by showcasing the authentic and detailed stories that highlight the hidden spots of various districts of the Konkan region. The hidden spots include secret waterfalls and the Velas Turtle Festival [4], Harihareshwar Tirth Point, etc., which are beyond what has been covered by local tourist guides. Blogs such as ravenouslegs.com and homegrown.in, along with wordpress.com and blogger.com, etc., share their own travel experiences, cultural heritages, and other significance of those places, which eventually help travelers to plan their own itineraries and their advice through their blogs. All these blogs also become popular through the social media platforms. They also opt in for collaboration with local businesses, resorts, homestays, and hotels for sharing their valuable insights of the staycation.

2. Influencers and Vlogging Impact

Social media influencers and vloggers have played a major role in enhancing Konkan Tourism's popularity. This is possible through engaging in digital visual storytelling to mark the natural beauty and cultural lifestyle. Ankita Prabhu Walawalkar, Aditya Panchal, and Mukta Narvekar [5]—all these people have showcased the beauty of beaches, fishing villages, cultural heritages, and the importance of festivals through their

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HD videos that attract audiences through all the social media platforms. Travel agencies like Kokonut Voyage, led by Manasi Yadav [6], are not just curating personalized Konkan experiences but are also emerging as influencers in their own right. By sharing authentic stories, local insights, and travel tips across social media platforms, these startups amplify their reach, inspire audiences, and shape tourism trends, blending the roles of tour operator and digital storyteller to promote the Konkan region. Collaborations between the influencers and local businesses also boost the economic gains and educate the audience to travel in the Konkan region.

3. Trending Hashtags and Various Social Media Campaigns

Trending hashtags like #Konkandiaries and #Konkanvibes have really become a powerful tool on various social media platforms, including Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, helping travelers to unearth Konkan's hidden gems through user-generated content through their algorithms. Seasonal trips, the Velas Turtle Conservation Festival, or monsoon treks—all these components boost tourist passion for traveling in the Konkan region. The travel agencies and local businesses also make use of these trending hashtags to enhance their presence and attract customers. This online engagement through social media has made it very appealing to millennials and Gen Z travelers who plan all their trips through digital platforms.

4. Ramifications on Local Communities and Businesses

The increase in digital storytelling has boosted the subsistence in the Konkan region's tourism sector. This is benefiting the local hotels, motels, homestays, and other service providers and vendors in that region. A lot of local businesses have shifted their focus from traditional working to enhancing the tourist experience by providing them with various travel experiences that include ecotourism, heritage tourism, adventure sports activities, recreation activities, and all of that through social media platforms at their fingertips. Authentic homestays and traditional farm stays showcasing the Konkani hospitality really broadened the travelers' reach in the Konkan region. However, this digitally driven growth brings challenges like seasonal tourist visits and commercialization, making tourism policies crucial in long-term balances for business.

6. DISCUSSION

Digital storytelling has majorly changed the perspective on how the Konkan region is advertised as a tourist destination. The engaging nature of social media and the blog/vlog era has created interest in the places before actually visiting the destination. By watching the real-life personal experiences shared by travel influencers, potential visitors form personal connections in the Konkan region, enhancing their desire to keep exploring that region. Moreover, digital content really helps to preserve and highlight Konkan's various tourism highlights that make it accessible to a larger audience.

Digital storytellers and respective authorities must maintain the balance between promoting tourism destinations along with ensuring sustainability practices. The development of ethical and responsible tourism content on social media that encourages respect and value for local traditions and minimizes the environmental damage is really essential for the long-term viability of Konkan as a tourist destination.

7. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the emerging influence and trends in digital storytelling, highlighting tourism in the Konkan region. Through vlogs, blogs, and digital content creators, they play a key role in promoting the region's cultural heritage and natural beauty. The major shift from local guides' traditional storytelling to digital platforms that made Konkan more accessible to tourists across nearby cities like Mumbai and Pune, along with across Maharashtra, has revitalized interest in tourist destinations. While the digital era has contributed significantly to tourism growth, we have to be very careful and responsible towards the local communities and the environment. Responsible and sustainable practices have to be promoted along with the digital campaigns to ensure the practices of Konka's culture and environmental integrity for the future.

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