

# Chapter 13

## Using Internet: A Mechanism to Develop Market Share

**S. Fatemeh Mostafavi Shirazi**  
KTO Karatay University, Turkey

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter presents the subject area of the Internet as an international form of media and examines related issues. It begins by considering the Internet as a source of information in various forms of social network sites that enables any individual to post their experiences, opinions and evaluations of tourism destination. This provides a summary of the existing state of knowledge concerning to social network sites and word of mouth (WMO) recommendation. In addition, it serves to clarify the associated word of mouth and market share development.*

### INTRODUCTION

Using the Internet as an international form of media has focused in the most publications on the subject of tourism industry. In modern era, millions of people in the entire of world use internet for their travel information. According to Chung and Koo (2015, p. 215), “when faced with new technology for tourism purposes, travelers often use information searches in the Internet and, in addition, gain valuable travel information from various sources”. The Internet plays a critical role in competitive market of tourism destination, particularly on the subject of seeking destination information and intention to travel. Peterson and Merino (2003) state

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that the Internet as a sociocultural fact has and will continue an imperative effect on consumer behavior throughout information search. Remarkably, the Internet has a major impact in tourism industry. In 2005, the Travel Industry Association of America reported that about two-thirds of travelers (102 million) use the internet (search engines) for travel planning. From Buhalis and Law's perspective (2008), most tourism organizations such as airlines and travel agencies have welcomed Internet technologies as part of their tourism marketing strategies. They state that the Internet is one of the powerful technologies that have changed tourists' behaviour as well as their ways of planning. The noteworthy role of the Internet influencing almost all aspects of tourism industry has been well document (Luo, Feng & Cai, 2004; Cox, Burgess, Sellitto & Buultjens, 2009; Xiang & Gretzel, 2010).

The internet in general and social network sites in particular as promotional tools have been explored in many service industries. The Internet provides the ground for easy, quick and friendly communications between people via social network sites (SNSs). Boyd and Ellison (2008, p. 211) describe SNS as "web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system". Currently, Zhong, Hardin and Sun (2011) make the point that social network sites have become an imperative social milieu that enables people to have interpersonal communication by allowing them to share and create information. Social networks implication has a significant impact in tourism business as travellers adore expressing their ideas, experiences and feelings about tourism destinations with others, using social network sites such as face book, LinkedIn, MySpace, YouTube and Telegram. Notably, the informal information is posted via SNSs known as electronic word of mouth (eWOM). Within this context, it is important to consider how using the Internet as well as informal communication via social network are developing market share and improving tourism destination. Despite the increasing documents regarding the benefit of the Internet in tourism industry, there are few studies examining the aforementioned issues. This chapter forms the basis for further studies.

## **Background**

According to Amichai-Hamburger and Vinitzky (2010), the Internet is an international network of computers that has a far-reaching influence and may have an effect on nearly all parts of our daily life. The Internet provides a social ground where people can communicate others and interact. They state that social life on the Internet begins with social tools, such as chat forums and news groups. Nowadays, it has developed in various forms including blogs and social networks (Amichai-Hamburger, 2005).

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