

Market Perspectives: The Role and Effectiveness of Social Media in China's Post-Epidemic Hospitality Recovery

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Abstract. This article is based on the discussion of the role of social media and its influence on the recuperation of the boarding after the Chinese epidemic. In this research the direct effect of user involvement level, social media follower and the degree of user participation will be analyzed by using a census. One of the results of the research is that, there is a significant direct relationship between the frequency of social media usage and the performance of the hotel so that the more often the hotel is used, the better the performance. Frequent social media activities generate and enhance customer engagement and satisfaction resulting in with more bookings and higher performance. Furthermore, the online engagement of users as well as the quality of the content also, to a large degree, positively influence hotel performance, with attention being attracted by good content and brand loyalty being promoted. The research grants empirical power to the proof of social media strategies' relevance in the revival of the hospitality management and also provides hotel managers a set of data to work on for hotel marketing strategies. It is recommended that in social media marketing, the hoteliers now focus on content creative and user engagement to monitor the user behaviour and feedback using data analyzing tool, make alterations to the definable approach as the market demands to deliver service satisfaction to the customer and build the trust on the brand so that the hotel can compete effectively in the market environment.

Keywords: social media, hospitality recovery, user engagement, content quality, post China outbreak, marketing strategy, brand loyalty, performance improvement

1. Introduction

1.1 Research background

Since the dawn of 2020, COVID-19 has spread its gloomy wing on the global aviation & tourism industry. In China, the State has begun acquiring tough administrative measures like embargoes and travel bans, thus, hotels business has suffered the greatest loss in sales (Yujun Ma, 2023)[5]. According to the data from China's NBS (National Bureau of Statistics), operating revenues of the hotels and tourism-related industries in China in 2020 fell by 34.2% year-on-year. Moreover, hotel occupancy rates and room rates have dropped to very low levels in for some regions such as Hubei, Hunan, and Heilongjiang Province (Yu-hung Hong, 2023)[2]. The rise of this problem has produced a lot of pressure on finance in hotel industry that has caused hotels a large number of retrenchments or pay cuts which have sent many

workers below the poverty level (Shabrina Rahma Valda & Arvianti Gilang Fadhila, 2020)[7]. With the epidemic being under control gradually and domestic tourism rebounding, hospitality sector rose the occasion to implement the new normal strategies. Strengthening health and safety protocol, customer service flexibility, digital marketing tools, the industry is embracing to come out of the maze (Lina Zhong et al., 2022)[9].

1.2 Research Motivation

Social media has stood as a major recovery channel for the hospitality industry to cope with the epidemic and post-epidemic, enabling proper communication and marketing opportunities. It has not only expanded the visibility of the hotel chains, but they are also able to communicate with the customers and attract them to make room reservations, thus evolving to be the most critical channel to gather customer feedback and market trends (Zhaolin Hu & Suting Zhu, 2023)[3]. Chinese, these days, with the fast progress in digital transformation, many more users tend to get the information as well as decision through their social media platforms like Weibo, WeChat, and Jitterbug. Based on this, unpacking the role of social media during the post-epidemic reviving of the hospitality sector bears a very important theoretical and practical significance for managers to plan and execute marketing strategies in a way that will to the fastest recovery of the industry from the crisis according to Mengqing Wang et al., (2020)[8].

1.3 Research Question

RQ1: What is the impact of social media usage frequency on hotel performance in post epidemic China?

RQ2: How does user engagement on social media affect customer satisfaction and performance in the Chinese hotel industry?

RQ3: What is the relationship between social media content quality and post-epidemic hotel performance?

1.4 Research purpose

Through the use of a quantitative survey, this study will seek to give feedbacks into the extent to which social media is going to play a part in the recovery of the tourism and hospitality industry during the post-China phase. The research will measure comprehensively the business impact of social media actions in terms of a key metrics, including brand exposure, customer engagement and the booking conversion rate. The research will further bring the link between the adoption of different social media channel strategies and hotel's performance into focus and thus, provide tool for managerial marketing decisions for quick recovery of the industry (Justice Antonio E. L. Nyoko, 2022)[6].

2. Literature review

2.1 Social media and its role in marketing

On social media networks, the users tend to develop content, exchange information and connect with people, a concept that heavily restructured the way the traditional marketing

campaigns had been organized. Through using the social media platforms to reach out to their clients, companies are able to respond to the market dynamics in a personalized way and thus enhanced brand awareness, boosting the sales volume and retaining the customers by interacting with them (Lukasik, 2022)[4].

2.2 The role of social media and its changes during the epidemic

During COVID-19 social media took on the challenge and served as an important channel between businesses and their customers. The use of social media in the travel and hospitality industry was very significant in terms of advertising health and safety measures, updating customers on the newest changes of all services, and offering online bookings. Firms are still relied on to use social media not only to track consumer sentiment and what is happening at the market but also to adjust their marketing strategy in real-time to be able to overcome the challenges of the epidemic (Baraybar-Fernández et al., 2023)[1].

2.3 Social Media in the Global Hospitality Industry

Marketing has been evolved from a push system to a pull system via social media in the global hospitality industry. Hotels resort to social media platforms to highlight the advantages of their apartments and services, visuals that lure in guests using visual content, and customer reviews and recommendations to boost them in the market. Nowadays, thanks to the effectiveness of social media platforms, hotels can easily create a unique and ever-lasting connection with their clients which is very important particularly for customer satisfaction and increasing the number of repeat bookings (Nyoko, 2022)[6].

2.4 Recovery Strategies and Challenges for China's Post-Epidemic Hotel Industry

Post-epidemic recovery will force the hotel industry to confront a number of tough issues, such as regaining consumer confidence, meeting with uncertainty regarding market demand and restrictions on international travel, but it could make use of several innovative strategies. Such approaches entail making interaction with consumers better online, using big data in consumer behaviour analysis and demonstrating the flexibility of booking and safety of accommodation using social media. These measures are not only the ones that helped hotels change their routine habits but also laid a foundation for their long-term growth (Nyoko, 2022)[6].

3. Research methodology

3.1 Research design

This study adopts a quantitative approach by using a questionnaire to quantify the role and effectiveness of social media in the recovery of China's hospitality industry after the epidemic. The questionnaire was designed to include multiple sections aimed at assessing indicators such as social media usage frequency, user engagement and content satisfaction.

3.2 Data collection and samples

The sample was selected based on age, gender, occupation and social media usage habits to

ensure a representative and diverse sample, with a total of 350 respondents required. Data were collected through online platforms and direct access, and were strictly anonymised to protect participant privacy.

3.3 Data processing and analysis

Data cleaning and pre-processing is carried out before data analysis, including removing missing values, correcting outliers and standardising data. Descriptive statistical analyses were used to demonstrate the underlying distribution of the data, such as mean and standard deviation. The relationship between social media metrics and hotel performance is further explored through regression and correlation analyses to validate the research hypotheses and quantify the impact of social media.

4. Discussion

Table 1 Relevance

		Frequency of social media use	user engagement	Content satisfaction	Hotel performance
Frequency of social media use	Pearson Correlation	1	.754**	.717**	.708**
	Sig. (bobtail)		.000	.000	.000
	Number of cases	350	350	350	350
user engagement	Pearson Correlation	.754**	1	.699**	.732**
	Sig. (bobtail)	.000		.000	.000
	Number of cases	350	350	350	350
Content satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.717**	.699**	1	.719**
	Sig. (bobtail)	.000	.000		.000
	Number of cases	350	350	350	350
Hotel performance	Pearson Correlation	.708**	.732**	.719**	1
	Sig. (bobtail)	.000	.000	.000	
	Number of cases	350	350	350	350

** . The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

In this study, via correlation analyses, we found that the level of social media use made a significant correlation with user engagement, content satisfaction, and also hotel performance (Pearson correlation coefficients of .754, .717, and .708; $P < .001$, respectively)(**Table 1**). Particularly, the coefficients of correlation of user engagement-content satisfaction and hotel performance were .699 and .732 (the $P < .001$), respectively, while the coefficient of correlation between content satisfactions and hotel performance is .719 (the $P < .001$)(**Table 1**). Therefore, these results imply a strong relationship between the social media effect, user engagement increase, good content delivery, and the hotel performance. This research has clearly highlighted the vital role of a comprehensive social media strategy in satisfying the customers and increasing bookings especially when things begin to drive in after the pandemic. The data

have been drawn from this analysis that provides the hotel managers with valuable insights, which can be of great help them as they develop their own strategies and enhance customer engagement, create brand visibility and generate revenue from post-quarantine social media resumption.

Table 2 Ratioa

modelling	Unstandardised coefficient		Standardised coefficient	t	significance	95.0 per cent confidence interval for B		
	B	standard error	Beta			lower limit	limit	
(Constant)	.413	.150		2.749	.006	.118	.709	
1	Frequency of social media use	.228	.056	.219	4.063	.000	.118	.338
	user engagement	.331	.051	.340	6.462	.000	.230	.432
	Content satisfaction	.341	.052	.324	6.527	.000	.238	.444

a. Dependent variable: hotel performance

Analysis of regression showed that usage frequency, user engagement level, and content satisfaction were factors that substantially influenced the performance of the hotel. Namely, the tubbed. 219 of frequency of social media usage for explaining hotel performance ($t=4.063$, $P<.001$) was statistically significant, and they have shown that the frequency of using social media has an inclined effect on the rate of hotel performance. The coefficient of standardized .340 for user engagement exhibits a stronger effect of increased user engagement on hotel performance ($p<.001$, $t=6.462$)(**Table 2**). Moreover, the percentage coefficient of .324 for content satisfaction illustrates a vital role for improving content quality that cannot be ignored in evaluating the hotel performance ($t=6.527$, $P<.001$)(**Table 2**).Such outcomes validate social media campaigns as well as emphasize the concept of the need for providing consumers with accurate information and making content productive so that the hotel industry with use the results to refine social media strategies, enhance customer service and increasing performance.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Recommendations for practice

The study reveals that social media will not only be a critical component, but the internet would drive the hotel business in the highly electronic market of China. Hoteliers may find it wise to place a longer term bet on social media marketing, making specific moves in the direction of volume and diversity of the content along with heightened user engagement to make sure the content is total and of quality to fully engage user attention over the longer term. In so doing, hotels are able to apply data analytic instruments on the social media as enablers which helps them to track user behavior and feedback at all times and update their strategies according to data. They use data to optimize CRMs and hear customer needs in a fast manner

which makes them improve the service levels and ensure the enhancement of the brand acceptance and loyalty to maintain the competitiveness.

5.2 Future research directions

Given the exploratory nature of this study, there is a need to investigate the global implementation and impact of social media strategies in national and cultural context. Furthermore, applying qualitative research to register particular people's impressions, likes, and dislikes towards social media contents will add to the enhanced hotel industry marketing insights in the experience. Customarily, long-range research on how social media strategies shape hotel performance, including the probability of any future long-term effects on brand image rebuilding as well as customer loyalty is called for in order for managers to use the social media instruments effectively. Our scientific inquiry enables us to have a comprehensive standpoint on the outcomes of social media strategies and assist to determine if an action plan is needed for the future science of the market.

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