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## Integration of Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) as Marketing Communications Channels in the Hospitality and Tourism Service Sector

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### Introduction

The tourism and hospitality sector contributes immensely to social and economic activities in a nation. According to Ranasinghe et al. (2020), tourism is one of the largest and fastest-growing industries in the world, and it is a social phenomenon of significant importance. Doh (2010)

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introduction of Web 2.0. The broader social media landscape comprises all aspects of social media, including conventional networks and news media platforms (Hanna et al., 2011). As Internet competencies advance, Luo and Zhong (2015) have reported that the Social Networking Platforms offer a forum for contact between visitors through electronic word of mouth (EWOM) as a marketing tool. Pabel and Prideaux (2016) have pointed to the need for more exposure to social media, their distribution structure, and their smartphone networks as “the rise in the usage of social media coupled with increased ownership of smartphones.”

Social media gain attention at a period in which the public sector cuts their financing, forcing them to look for greater meaning in the way marketing and budgets are used as part of the Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) marketing campaign. Social networking provides DMOs with a tool for reaching a small global public (Hays et al., 2013). The scope of this chapter focuses on how the integration of new technology advancement in marketing communication relates to the effects of ICTs on destination marketing in emerging economies. The chapter also elaborates on the different components of e-marketing of tourist destinations, augmented and virtual reality for the promotion of emerging destinations. The chapter also discusses the challenges and opportunities for ICT utilisation for destination marketing in emerging economies.

## Evolution of Marketing Communication

In recent years, incredible developments have been observed in relation to new marketing communication tools that can be classified into several traditional platforms—E-mail, word of mouth, and social media. On the other hand, guerrilla marketing, marketing automation, time marketing, social trade, management of social consumer connections tend to forecast performance (Ahmed et al., 2020). The other developments include remarketing, social networking, viral marketing, mobile commerce, and video marketing which fall under contemporary marketing communication. Word of mouth, QR codes (QRC), real-time marketing (RTM), social media marketing (SMM) are the most common marketing communication platforms and tools used by the industry stakeholders.

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