


Chapter 13

Embarking on Virtual Journeys: The Evolutionary Dynamics of Travel Vlogs and the Integration of Virtual Reality

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ABSTRACT

A travel vlog is short for a travel video blog, which includes footage of the vlogger exploring different places, trying local foods, engaging in different activities, and interacting with the local culture. It plays a significant role in tourism by influencing and inspiring potential travellers. It is a powerful tool for promoting destinations, influencing travel decisions, and fostering a global community of adventure-seekers. Travel vlogs are commonly shared on video-sharing platforms such as YouTube and social media. This chapter delves into the evolutionary journey of travel vlogs, examining their roots in traditional word-of-mouth communication and their progression through electronic word-of-mouth (e-WoM), online consumer reviews (OCRs), and travel blogs. The chapter envisions the potential of virtual reality (VR) to redefine how travel stories are told and foster a deeper connection between creators and viewers. Finally, this study highlights the significance of travel vlogs in the tourism industry.

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INTRODUCTION

Travel vlogs have emerged as an effective and influential medium, significantly influencing how individuals engage with and adopt travel-related content. Travel vlogs provide a dynamic platform for vloggers (creators of travel videos) to share their experiences and perceptions of various destinations as individuals get more accustomed to visual and immersive experiences (Dewantara et al., 2023). Through the integration of audio, videos, and personal narratives, travel vlogs provide viewers with an immersive experience that is distinct from typical travel blogs or reviews (He et al., 2022). These engaging videos demonstrate picturesque landscapes and tourist attractions and capture the essence of a destination's cultural encounters, local cuisines, and overall ambience. According to Dewantara et al. (2023), vloggers connect with viewers looking for authentic and genuine travel experiences by providing a personal touch to their content.

Travel vlogs have a more profound significance than an ordinary form of entertainment; they provide prospective travellers with helpful information and inspiration (He et al., 2022). Viewers may virtually travel destinations, comprehend the ins and outs of travel, and obtain an understanding of other traveller's authentic experiences. This type of user-generated content (UGC) is becoming a significant factor in determining where to go, how to get there, and how to enhance the travel experience. The increasing significance of travel vlogs in the tourism industry is important for many stakeholders. The tourism industry, content creators, marketers, and researchers benefit from a comprehensive study of travel vlogs (Xu et al., 2021). This study explores the distinctive features of travel vlogs and their impact on the hospitality and tourism industry. Travel vlogs are important for destination marketing organisations, accommodation providers, and tourism professionals as they become a popular source of travel-related information.

Moreover, virtual reality (VR) has added a new dimension to travel vlog videos. Therefore, it is important to study the evolution of travel vlogs, their importance in the tourism industry, and how VR has transformed travel vlogs. This chapter aims to provide a brief insight into the evolution of travel vlogs and the emergence of virtual reality (VR) in travel vlogs. The chapter has been developed by reviewing the literature on each heading and subheading. This chapter starts with the introduction, followed by the literature review section, where the evolution of travel vlogs will be briefly discussed. Later on, the importance of vlogs in tourism and the integration of VR with travel vlogs will be discussed. Finally, the chapter will be concluded with the discussion and conclusion sections.

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LITERATURE REVIEW

Evolution of Travel Vlog

Innovative modern technologies are utilised in the hospitality and tourist industry to attract prospective consumers. Travel vlogs have emerged as a type of visual travel blog which includes information regarding tourist destinations, accommodation, cuisine, touristic activities, mode of accessibility, etc. (Peralta, 2019). Travel vlogs are perceived as more attractive than travel blogs as vlogs contain more information, including audio, video, photo, and, most importantly, real-life stories in visual mode (Cheng et al., 2020). Travel vlogs are considered a video form of online consumer review, usually generated by tourists and shared most on social media platforms. Moreover, vlogs are the updated version of word of mouth (WoM), where the consumer provides a review or share their experience regarding the products or services they have consumed (Cheng et al., 2020). In the current section, the evolution of travel vlogs will be described briefly, and how tourism word of mouth (WoM) has been transformed into travel vlogs after passing a long route.

Word of Mouth (WoM)

The term “word of mouth” can be described as the process in which information is transmitted and received face to face (Arndt, 1967). Word of Mouth is an informal communication method to convey information about goods and services among people. WoM is a type of interactive communication through face-to-face interaction; moreover, it happens free of financial motivations (Candrasari, 2020). WoM is considered a credible, accurate, and trusted communication method as those communications happen in person. In addition, consumer-generated WoM is considered more trustworthy. When making a purchase decision, customers like to perceive word of mouth as a more effective than usual way of marketing and promotion. Generally, WoM communication occurs within a close, trusting relationship between friends and family members, significantly reducing perceived risks and uncertainty (Talwar et al., 2021). This is because consumers discuss their self-experiences and are not motivated to provide false information. Katz et al. (2017) explored interpersonal influence and explained how information and impact are transferred between people within social systems. The previous scholars demonstrated that word of mouth is one of human history’s most potent information-sharing modes.

In the current study, Word-of-mouth has been investigated from the point of view of a tourist. Moore (2020) examined the importance of the sender-receiver

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relationship by examining the effect of WoM on the receiver's purchasing choices. WoM significantly influences recipients when actively seeking information. Furthermore, past research has found that individual information sources, such as word of mouth (WoM), are perceived as the lowest controversial sources of marketing information. WoM is considered more persuading and trustworthy than information from commercial sources. With the new advancements in technology and the wide accessibility of the internet, word of mouth (WoM) has transformed into electronic word of mouth (e-WoM), which is transmitted over the Online platform with the help of the internet. Researchers have argued that consumer-generated e-WoM is more significant and influential in the tourism industry than traditional WoM (Tran & Strutton, 2020). E-WoM expands the range of options available to customers while seeking information about products or services. Moreover, e-WoM is more effective as it is more associated and connected with consumer purchase behaviour.

WoM to e-WoM

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2004) describe electronic word of mouth (e-WoM) as “any good or negative comment made by prospective, existing, or past consumers regarding any specific product or service or organisation that is accessible to a large number of people and organisations through the internet”. E-WoM is the informal communication between consumers through Internet-based technologies, which indicates the qualities of specific products and services. Individuals can utilise the internet to explore different online platforms and obtain information shared by others. The fastest growth of Internet technology during the 1990s resulted in the emergence of a unique form of WoM known as e-WoM. Communication is a message-transferring activity between two or more persons to elicit a response. The concept of e-WoM was initially studied in relationship marketing to discuss the challenges and possibilities for business development with the growth of online customers. The internet enables new communication methods among consumers who have not previously connected. E-WoM consists of positive or negative reviews and feedback from potential, existing, or past customers. It is an excellent method of acquiring such information, thereby minimising the decision-making process (Kim & Hwang, 2022). E-WoM is gaining popularity and being used more extensively by consumers. It has been developed as one of the significant information sources on products and services as consumers recognise its abundance of information. It is one of the reasons why the majority of offline decisions are based on the information obtained from online.

Moreover, e-WoM is disseminated on online review sites, providing individuals with an open forum to discuss their thoughts and experiences. Additionally, electronic word-of-mouth (e-WoM) can take place on several platforms, enabling customers to

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assess, evaluate, and share their opinions on any product on review sites, discussion forums, bulletin board systems, and social networking platforms (Nilashi et al., 2021). E-WoM is rapidly becoming a more popular information resource for customers and marketers. Customers place greater importance on information obtained from online sources than they do from marketers' websites. Because they believe that E-WoM sources provide more accurate information than traditional sources, consumers prefer to get information about products and services from these sources. Nevertheless, Ngarmwongnoi et al. (2020) further asserted that the outcomes apply to individuals inquiring about products and services or interested in acquiring further knowledge regarding stated products and services.

E-WoM provides several benefits over traditional WoM for both customers and marketers. A broader range of information sources, such as reviews, ratings, and user recommendations, are available to customers through e-WoM. They may receive more in-depth and unbiased information about products and services. e-WoM makes it convenient for marketers to monitor and analyse customer feedback and enables them to respond and resolve any problems or complaints promptly. Moreover, as e-WoM has the potential to become viral and generate significant involvement on social media platforms, it can reach a larger audience and make an even more significant impact. According to Vergura et al. (2021), e-WoM is a crucial information source for academics and industry professionals. E-WoM may reach a larger audience than traditional WoM through social media, blogs, and online forums. This facilitates the dissemination of favourable reviews and fosters the development of a good reputation for scholarly work, products, or services. Moreover, e-WoM gives entrepreneurs insightful information for customer insights and market research, allowing them to customise their products according to customer requirements. E-WoM promotes and expands businesses more efficiently and effectively than traditional methods, making it an indispensable instrument for success in the current digital age.

E-WoM to Online Consumer Reviews (OCRs)

Online consumer reviews (OCRs) are a kind of e-WoM. Based on the review providers' point of view, OCRs can be either positive or negative. Huseynov (2020) defined OCRs as "the peer-generated product assessments posted on organisations' or third-party websites or platforms." In addition, OCRs can be described as exchanging personal views, suggestions, and customer complaints about products, services, and brands. OCRs assist the consumer in making buying choices by providing past consumers' opinions and experiences. Broad reviews and recommendations posted by the consumer provide the review readers with more valuable information.

Houser and Wooders (2006) stated that consumers carefully seek information and online feedback shared by others while determining purchase choices. Indeed,

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when customers cannot physically evaluate a product or service, they often depend on online consumer reviews (OCRs). The prior study has found that OCRs are a subcategory of e-WoM, and it is more highly accessible than e-WoM as they are often uploaded on commercial or retailer sites without restriction. In contrast, social networking platforms like Facebook control who access the information, and only Facebook friends can access the information shared. OCRs provide two functions in social influence: they serve as informants and recommenders to consumers (Elwalda & Lu, 2016).

Customers put a higher value on reviews from previous customers who have experienced that product or service rather than the random reviewers, as they consider the anonymous customers' feedback to be unbiased, and those are not part of the company's marketing strategy. In addition, OCRs do not necessitate a substantial marketing budget. OCRs are a significant marketing mix component that provides free marketing assistance. OCRs have already been established as an important source of information for consumer purchase and consumption (Siddiqui et al., 2021). The number of customers who depend on online reviews to evaluate products and services before purchasing has been increasing rapidly in recent years because of the noticeable growth in the popularity of review platforms (Lin et al., 2018). Online reviews are uncertain, and customers must deal with this uncertainty because services are intangible. Therefore, customers rely on third-party reviews to ascertain their degree of confidence. OCRs have motivated academics to study in this field as it is a significant type of E-WoM. Numerous previous studies have explored the influence of OCRs on consumer decision-making (Fox et al., 2018; Hernandez-Ortega, 2019).

Elwalda et al. (2016) investigated the perceived information qualities of OCRs and found that they had a beneficial effect on developing trust and purchasing intentions. Consumers conduct information searches on the search engine to get the information that they are looking for. At the start of the internet era, online discussion forums facilitated customer interaction. Blogs have been established over time. Consumers can make a blog regarding their experiences and make them accessible for others to read. Social media has become a trendy platform for sharing consumer reviews. Challa et al. (2021) described social media as a web-based app developed based on the concept and technical underpinnings of Web 2.0 and enables its users to interact with each other and share User-Generated Content. Previously, researchers examined consumer behaviour using a variety of social media platforms, including discussion forums (Dwityas & Briandana, 2017), blogs (Yilmaz, 2020), and consumer review websites (Erkan & Evans, 2018). Online consumer reviews have replaced electronic word-of-mouth (e-WoM), significantly impacting customers and marketers. Nowadays, customers can access many product and service reviews from other customers, offering insightful information to help with decision-making.

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Online reviews also allow marketers to interact directly with consumers, resolve problems, and foster brand loyalty by generating positive feedback. The e-WoM transformations have improved market transparency to the advantage of both advertisers and customers.

Online Reviews in the Tourism Industry

Consumers can now exchange information with each other due to the advancement in Information technology. Travelers frequently utilise Web 2.0 applications to gather information before or during their trips. Social media has been considered an effective information exchange platform that enables consumers to attach and communicate. OCRs are attractive sites that fascinate tourists and impact their travel planning procedures. Consumer review platforms named TripAdvisor are the most popular social media platforms for getting information about travel and tourism (Casado-Díaz et al., 2020).

Internet websites assist in advertising tourist items and contacting prospective consumers without geographical constraints. The primary objective of OCRs, particularly online travel websites, is to promote and provide information regarding alternate options to customers. Alhemimah (2019) described OCRs in the context of the travel industry as the travel information regarding a destination that is provided either directly or indirectly based on previous experience. Information is presented to justify the perception based on prior travel experiences. Tour information and personal travel experience can shape potential tourists' perceptions.

Tourists' recommendations have long been recognised as highly significant in the travel industry. On the other hand, consumers prefer to read and discuss with their peers regarding trip experiences rather than receive feedback from travel service providers. Numerous studies mentioned that OCRs on travel websites assist customers in making decisions by offering additional information (Chan et al., 2017; Lee et al., 2021). As a result, OCRs have developed into a valuable source of information for tourists and significantly impact their tour plans. The previous literature in the hospitality industry has focused on the influence of OCRs on consumers' attitudes toward accommodation and tourist destinations (Chakraborty & Biswal, 2020) and consumer decision-making (Bigne et al., 2020). Additionally, several researchers have examined the influence of OCRs on travel decision-making (Fileri et al., 2021; Mariani et al., 2019). For example, Zhu et al. (2020) stated that hotels with high ratings are more trustworthy. Several studies have examined OCRs in the tourism sector to identify, search, tour planning, and purchasing choices. Mauri and Minazzi (2013) examined the impact of OCRs on consumer purchasing intentions in tourism. They found that more than 75% of respondents considered the previous ratings and reviews before reserving a hotel room. According to Gretzel et al. (2007), OCRs are

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essential when customers browse travel websites to gather information and evaluate various options throughout the planning stage. 92.3 per cent of respondents used travel review websites like Lonely Planet and TripAdvisor when planning vacations.

Consumers and marketers acknowledge online reviews' growing importance in the hospitality and tourism industry. Online reviews provide travellers with insightful information and helpful advice from other travellers, assisting them in making decisions about where to stay, where to dine, and what activities to engage in. In addition, these reviews allow travellers to discuss their experiences and advise future travellers. Online reviews provide helpful feedback and insights marketers can utilise to enhance their goods and services. They also present chances for consumer interaction and brand loyalty building. Positive reviews can boost a business's exposure and trustworthiness, increasing financial status and bookings. Furthermore, as OCRs are economical and strategic marketing tools, travel agencies must keep an eye on, respond to, and comprehend OCRs' impact when they want to grow.

Travel Blog in Tourism

Travel blogs are a platform where individuals share and discuss their upcoming, present, or previous travel in written form, sometimes including photos (Xu & Zhang, 2021). Travel blogs can be considered as the internet version of personal diaries, consisting of one or more posts related to a similar theme (for example, a travel itinerary or the purchasing of a round-the-world ticket). The most popular travel blog platforms include travelblog.org, travelpod.com, blog.realtravel.com, yourtraveljournal.com, and travelpost.com (Martins & Costa, 2022). Numerous travel blogs were also seen to be affiliated with the digital and virtual travel community, e.g., realtravel.com, igougo.com, travelpod.com, and virtualltourist.com. Tripadvisor.com, holidaycheck.com, and cosmotourist.de are also renowned as specialised travel review platforms (Li et al., 2019). Renowned travel guides such as lonelyplanet.com, community.roughguides.com, and frommers.com allow tourists to share their travel stories (Wu & Pearce, 2016). Travel-related blogs can also be shared on a diary-style platform like livejournal.com or bloggerspot.com.

The most prominent type of blog in tourism is written by travellers who share their experiences and online feedback in the form of trip diaries or product reviews (Oliveira et al., 2020). The main stories in travel blogs are based on the weather, food, accessibility, and attractions of any region or country. Travel blogs often focus on particular topics such as accommodation, dining, and quality of service (Zadeh et al., 2021). Tourists consider travel blogs as archives of their trip experiences. Blogs are detailed descriptions that include information about numerous tourists' experiences and share important information with the blog reader. Naipeng et al. (2021) indicated the importance of posted pictures in assisting visitors' post-travel

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remembering and recall of prior experiences. Blogs may also be regarded as something for tourists to remember after returning.

Previous studies emphasised the importance of using blogs for management and marketing (Xu & Zhang, 2021). Most of the research offered empirical support for using travel blogs as sources of information for destination marketing organisations to understand better visitors' attitudes, behaviours, and engagements within a particular destination. In addition, travel blogs have gained importance among tourists in making decisions about where to go and developing perceptions about the locations they intend to go. Ali and Anwar (2021) stated that blogs have transformed the way of communication among consumers with each other. A blog story can influence many prospective tourists and develop an image of any particular destination in their imaginations.

Travel blogs are essential to the tourism sector since they provide several benefits. It gives travellers the information they need to thoroughly learn about destinations, accommodation options, dining options, and activities before making reservations. Travel blogs help them make well-informed decisions and enjoy their trip better. Furthermore, travel blogs provide genuine and distinctive viewpoints, frequently from locals or experienced travellers, which might motivate and enthrall prospective visitors. Moreover, travel blogs give organisations in the tourism industry a platform to advertise their goods and draw in prospective consumers through sponsored content and partnerships. Travel blogs are an efficient way of online advertisements and are considered more effective in interpreting advertising messages, significantly influencing the tourists' purchase intention of travel products (Choi & Lee, 2021). Several authors identified the value of travel blogs for brand and promotion management and research (Chang et al., 2021; Maggiore et al., 2022). Moreover, the benefits of blogging are consumer profiling, customer acquisition, customer engagement, brand awareness, brand reinforcement, reputation management, and customer service.

Travel Vlog in Tourism

The term "vlog" is a very recent term that is formed with the words "video" and "blog" (Wang & Chang, 2020). Travel vlogs integrate components of travel videos and blogs, emphasising video creators' attributes and the engagement of the viewers and audience. Existing literature indicated that travel videos have a significant role in consumers' decision-making procedures and more than sixty per cent of individuals like to watch travel videos before planning a tour, and more than a third of passengers narrow down their options after watching relevant travel videos online (Cheng et al., 2020). The "vloggers," "influencers," or "microcelebrities" can generate revenue by making travel vlogs, as travel vlog videos are perceived as the most popular form

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of travel video that people watch on YouTube or any social media (Mohanty et al., 2022). Prior research has investigated the influence of microcelebrity endorsement on customers' hotel booking intentions (Zhang et al., 2019). Due to the tremendous promotional opportunities, travel vlogs have acquired great interest from hospitality and tourism stakeholders.

Recently, researchers began to explore the impact of travel vlogs on individuals' decision-making while planning tours. For example, Le and Hancer (2021) performed qualitative research to evaluate how travel vlogs influenced viewers and found that travel vlogs deliver beneficial information, significantly promoting viewers' travel intention. Online travel videos inspire viewers' imagination and help in viewers' trip planning by sharing videos and information exchange. As travel vlogs are a kind of travel video, the empirical results of travel videos can yield insights into travel vlogs. As a result, the conclusion that informative and appealing travel vlogs can assist viewers in their decision-making procedure can be drawn. Travel vlogs are very different from other types of videos or programs, such as TV shows, because they have interesting and quality content and are easy to share (Cheng et al., 2020).

Visitors are transformed from inexperienced to experienced regarding the destinations in terms of destination selection by watching promotional videos. Moreover, the languages used in the videos can also create a significant difference. Multilingual travel vlogs assist in advertising the destination and native culture and making the foreigners understand. Zhumadilova (2016) also demonstrates that travel vlogs regarding any destination influence viewers' attitudes, perceptions, cognitive images, and buying behaviours toward that destination. People are inclined to watch and believe the travel vlogs and want to visit those places and experience the services recommended in the travel vlog. Trinh and Nguyen (2019) found that the travel vlog's information usefulness, credibility, and source originality significantly positively impact the prospective tourist. In contrast, official promotional videos significantly improve destination image. Moreover, travel vlogs can effectively enhance the perceived destination image. A video blog is a type of user-generated content (UGC) that combines storytelling with audio. The travel vlog-sharing platforms can be corporate or personal websites, but those are generally virtual content communities, especially YouTube.

Regarding content, vlogs are like text blogs but with videos. Vloggers present their surroundings, describe the scenario, review products, and convey their perceptions in travel vlogs. Travel vlogs have been considered influential in promoting tourism and destinations. Firstly, People who watch vlogs can gain knowledge more efficiently and simply than people who read conventional text blogs because of their multisensory characteristics and simple information presentation method (Trinh & Nguyen, 2019). While body language, facial expression, and language are provided in the vlog for viewing, the viewer can utilise these for a better understanding. Secondly, vlogging

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is very effective for generating travel ideas and planning (Liang & Gössling, 2020). Travel vlogs are the most popular videos to connect with on YouTube. Each month, YouTube receives 100 million searches for seeking travel information, receiving four times more social engagement than other forms of tourist video (Mowat, 2017). Thirdly, vlogs transmit emotions and experiences better than different reviews (Huertas, 2018). Vlogs can evoke emotions, stimulate attitudes, and increase viewers' desire to visit the presented. Finally, travel vlogs are user-generated content (UGCs) that show actual tourist experiences while maintaining a high standard of quality and originality. Moreover, travel vlog videos are more credible than videos generated by marketers. In addition, independent videos are more successful than commercial videos in grabbing viewers' attention (Zhumadilova, 2016). Travel vlog videos have grown in popularity recently, greatly influencing travellers' decisions on where to go. Offering genuine, motivating, and instructive insights into the tourist locations travellers visit significantly influences their choice of destinations. They are essential for destinations to market themselves to prospective tourists since they foster trust and impact viewers' decisions.

Elevating Travel Vlogs through Virtual Reality

Combining advanced virtual reality (VR) technology with conventional travel vlogs provides new narrative and audience engagement opportunities in the constantly evolving content creation arena (Bilgihan & Ricci, 2023). Content creators can transform viewers from observers to active participants in their travel experiences by utilising VR's immersive qualities. Using 360-degree videos is one of the most effective methods to incorporate virtual reality into a travel vlog. 360-degree videos give viewers complete control over their perspective by capturing their surroundings (Vettehen et al., 2019). With the audience at the centre of the journey, this immersive experience allows them to explore landscapes, historical places, and colourful cultures as if they were there. To do this, creators can use specialised 360-degree cameras, simultaneously capturing footage in all directions (Vettehen et al., 2019). Viewers can swivel and pan to experience the entire world from all angles, whether traversing historic monuments, strolling through crowded marketplaces, or hiking lovely trails.

Moreover, adding specialised VR experiences to conventional travel vlogs enhances immersion. Virtual reality (VR) experiences can encompass anything from guided tours to moment recreations, giving users an intense sensation of presence. VR headsets are helpful for content creators who want to immerse their audience in a virtual environment. This makes travel material engaging and unforgettable (Rahimzhan et al., 2020). This sensation becomes an experience through virtual reality, going beyond mere visuals. Virtual reality (VR) provides a potent narrative tool to travel vloggers, enabling them to portray a destination's appearance and sensation

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(Bilgihan & Ricci, 2023). VR video platforms like YouTube VR or specialised virtual reality applications are excellent ways to share these immersive experiences. Using virtual reality headsets, viewers may immerse themselves in these virtual worlds, strengthening their bond with the individuals who created them and their content.

A coherent viewer experience requires a smooth transition between traditional and virtual reality content. Start the trip with a typical travel vlog that provides information about the location, shares personal thoughts, and develops a story. Viewers can immerse themselves in the virtual world as the story effortlessly flows into VR portions. This dynamic strategy considers different audiences' preferences while maintaining the storytelling's interest. Virtual reality storytelling improves travel vlogs to a level that has never been achieved before. Creators can transcend geographical borders by using immersive 360-degree videos and customised VR experiences, which bring viewers closer to the destinations and develop a stronger relationship with the content (Ranieri et al., 2022). The integration of virtual reality and travel vlogging has the potential to transform how we experience and share our journeys completely.

The Importance of Travel Vlogs in Tourism

Travel vlogs are an essential part of the tourism industry since they are an effective way to enlighten, motivate, and interact with prospective tourists (Xu et al., 2021). Travel vlogs offer a visual and engaging experience beyond typical textual information. Viewers can see destinations, landmarks, and activities firsthand, making imagining themselves in those places more straightforward. Travel vlogs are also helpful for discovering new places, and viewers can gain information about regional traditions, customs, and experiences, which inspires people to go beyond the usual tourist destinations (He et al., 2022). Vloggers provide a more genuine and appealing view by frequently sharing personal experiences. By adding a personal touch, the vlogger builds a stronger emotional bond with his or her audience, increasing the viewers' trust and confidence when making travel plans.

Vlogs also provide helpful information that can assist with planning, such as recommendations on accommodation, transportation, and proposed itineraries (Dewantara et al., 2023). Because of this, travel vlogs are an excellent tool for those who want guidance on organising their trips. Travel vlogs may adapt to new platforms and formats, such as virtual and augmented reality, due to the advancement of technology advances. Due to their adaptability, travel vlogs maintain their significance and ability to captivate audiences in the dynamic digital media environment. Travel trends can be significantly influenced by the recommendations of successful travel vloggers, who frequently have a substantial following (He et al., 2022). Popular

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vlogs may generate greater interest in and visitation towards the accommodations, destinations, and activities they feature.

In addition, travel agencies, lodging facilities, and other travel-related organisations recognise the promotional benefits of collaborating with travel vloggers (Gholamhosseinzadeh, 2023). Expanding an organisation's prospective consumers and audience can enhance brand exposure through strategic collaborations. Additionally, vloggers have the chance to advance ethical and sustainable tourism practices. They can stimulate the adoption and recognition of sustainable tourism practises by emphasising environmentally friendly accommodations, conservation initiatives, and ethical travel behaviour. According to Gholamhosseinzadeh (2023), viewers frequently interact with travel vlogs by commenting, asking queries, and sharing their experiences. This content created by users fosters a feeling of community and gives the vlogger and prospective tourists more information. By highlighting the variety of people, customs, and ways of life throughout the world, travel vlogs promote cultural exchange. This exposure improves one's appreciation and comprehension of various cultures, encouraging a more friendly and receptive perspective on travel. Travel vlogs are a powerful and dynamic resource for the tourism industry. They provide a captivating fusion of information, inspiration, and interpersonal relationships that motivate and guide tourists in exploring the world.

DISCUSSION

With the dynamic character of information dissemination in the tourism sector, travel-related content has evolved from traditional word-of-mouth (WoM) to online consumer reviews (OCRs), travel blogs, and travel vlogs. Due to the extensive use of the internet and technological advances, there has been a significant evolution from conventional word-of-mouth (WoM) to electronic word-of-mouth (E-WoM). E-WoM enables users access to a wider variety of information sources and accelerates the sharing of ratings and reviews. OCRs are becoming essential to decision-making in the hospitality and travel industries. They provide insightful opinions from other travellers, enabling individuals to make well-informed decisions on accommodation, transportation, and travel locations. OCRs also give individuals a platform to discuss their experiences, promoting more market transparency. Travel plans are influenced by OCRs, which also influence travellers' attitudes. The information shared on these platforms significantly impacts individuals' confidence and decision-making, frequently based on personal experiences.

Travel blogs give detailed information on destinations, lodging options, and activities with written descriptions of the writer's travel experiences. They are useful for individuals seeking reliable and comprehensive information regarding

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numerous travel-related topics. The most recent advancement in the sharing of travel experiences is travel vlogs. With the popularity of video content growing, vlogs provide a multisensory experience that allows viewers to interact more deeply with the destination. Since travel vlogs are so popular, influencers have more significant opportunities to generate revenue from their content. Studies revealed that travel vlogs have a significant influence on viewers' decision-making. Vlogs are effective and appealing methods for disseminating information, generating travel ideas, and stimulating individuals' behaviour. Vlogs effectively influence perceptions and desire to visit a particular destination due to their authenticity and user-generated content. The study provides several implications. Destination managers and content creators can utilize VR technology in travel vlogs, which will improve the connection between viewers and vloggers. Moreover, the government can take the initiative to educate travel-related content creators on emerging technology, such as VR, to enhance the quality of their videos. The authorities should pay more concentration to privacy, standards, and guidelines to utilize VR technology in an ethical way.

CONCLUSION

The evolution of travel vlogs from traditional word-of-mouth to their present form has been characterised by persistent innovation and adaptability to technological improvements. Consumers today can access various information sources, each providing a distinct perspective on travel experiences. Online platforms influencing consumer behaviour and decision-making, such as travel blogs, travel vlogs, and OCRs, have become essential components of the tourism industry. Mainly, travel vlogs' multimodal form provides an immersive experience that goes beyond what can be achieved with standard text-based content. Travel service providers can benefit from monitoring and engaging with online reviews, collaborating with travel bloggers, and exploring partnerships with influential travel vloggers. The evolution of travel-related content reflects the growing importance of user-generated and multimedia-rich information in the tourism industry. Navigating this dynamic landscape requires a nuanced understanding of consumer preferences, technological trends, and the evolving role of influencers in shaping travel experiences. Future studies can be conducted to identify the level of satisfaction and engagement or challenges with VR from the perspective of both viewers and content creators. Moreover, future studies can focus on the issues of trust and authenticity of VR-integrated travel vlog videos.

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