

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Digital Marketing Among Tourists in Southern Kerala

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Abstract:

Digital marketing is vital in promoting tourism in the southern sections of Kerala by expanding reach, easing engagement, enhancing the caller experience, and contributing to the destinations overall growth and sustainability. In this ultramodern period of important online technology and tools, connecting to implicit guests has become vastly easier. These days Internet marketing is becoming a necessary strategy for all sizes of businesses. The growing significance of digital marketing in consumer accession and brand creation greatly influences business. Trip and tourism has always been ahead of other companies in espousing technological trends. Online Booking, Reviews, Digital Marketing, Innovative generalities like social media marketing and creation, and the use of digital technology have become the new face of tourism assiduity. This has resulted in increased profit and revolutionary changes in the tourism assiduity.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Digital Tourism, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), Social media marketing (SMM), Pay Per Click (PPC), Influencer Marketing.

INTRODUCTION

Kerala, famed for its flourishing geographies, littoral appeal, and vibrant culture, attracts excursionists worldwide with its stirring decor, lush timbers, and different wildlife. Its backwoods, strands, and hill stations appeal to both domestic and transnational trippers. The state's artistic uproariousness is showcased through traditional art forms like Kathakali and Mohiniyattam, along with martial trades like Kalaripayattu, during vibrant carnivals. Homestays offer excursionists an authentic regard into Kerala's pastoral life and cookery. either, Kerala has become a mecca for health tourism, offering Ayurveda and yoga treatments. Geographically divided into North, Central, and South regions, each offers unique gests. Digital marketing has significantly bolstered Kerala tourism, enabling interactive platforms for stoner engagement and feedback. Kerala Tourism has embraced digital marketing tools like YouTube and microsites effectively, fostering direct relations with implicit guests and enabling measurable returns on investment. Social media platforms play a vital part in destination marketing, allowing governments to show destinations and engage with trippers. With trippers decreasingly counting on social media for trip planning and sharing gests, digital marketing has converted the tourism geography, making it more accessible and interactive encyclopaedically.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the moment's digital period, consumers heavily rely on internet platforms and digital technologies for

probing and coping products and services. Businesses must work with digital marketing tactics like SEO, social media, Influencer marketing, and mobile advertising to engage guests effectively. Tourism assiduity, facing violent competition, has seen significant growth but also challenges for excursionists in choosing destinations and penetrating original information. Southern Kerala's tourism sector has embraced digital marketing tools to address these challenges, performing in increased sightseer engagement. Feting the significance of digital marketing in shaping consumer geste, this study aims to explore its effectiveness on tourism products in Southern Kerala, offering perceptivity into its effectiveness and counteraccusations for the assiduity.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main research objectives are:

- To dissect the impact of SEO (Search Machine Optimisation) and Websites in digital marketing among excursionists in southern districts of Kerala.
- To assess the impact and influence of Social Media Marketing (SMM) among excursionists in southern districts of Kerala.
- To examine the distributions of respondents based on their visit purpose, identifying trends and insights into their motivations.
- To analyse the distributions of respondents based on the purposes of their visit, identifying key trends and patterns that highlight the primary motivations behind their visit in southern districts of Kerala.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Durrani, Z., Zia, Asbah., Ali, T. Y. & Shahid, M. N. (2023). The study tried to establish the impact of digital marketing is largely effective in making UAE's tourism assiduity more profitable. This study substantially concentrated on the innovative generalities of digital marketing and its use on new platforms. Then it examines the applications of digital marketing in the United Arab Emirates(UAE) on the profitability of tourism assiduity. It's decisive for associations in the tourism sector according to changing trends. Because the tourism frugality of the UAE is substantially dependent on the profit generated from this sector.

Balamuraly. B: Ph.D. Thesis (2022) made a detailed analysis of the study about the Influence of Digital Marketing A Study on Excursionists in Kerala the introductory generalities of digital marketing in tourism, Kerala tourism, and its significance. The study substantially focuses on original and foreign tourists. Innovative use of digital technology in the tourism sector of Kerala applicability was bandied. The digital platforms and results within tourism practice, stoner-generated content, and related interactive digital platforms came crucial studies. This examination tried to include important places in all the 14 sections in the major sightseeing destinations in Kerala.

Tom Nuenen and Caroline Scarles (2021) bandied substantially in the tourism sector, it was bandied about the proper use of advanced digital technology to increase responsiveness, responsibility, etc. The study includes the geste and emergence of lenses within tourism practice, associated interactive digital platforms, and the impact of the proliferation of interactive digital platforms and solutions. And stoked Reality(AR) and Virtual Reality(VR) and resembling changes in sightseer geste in the digital marketing.

Eran Ketter and Eli Avrahan (2021) a study was conducted on" Stay Home Today Digital Marketing Strategies of Tourism Destinations for Hereafter during the COVID-19 Epidemic". It set up that sightseer destinations retailed themselves substantially during the COVID-19 (March-May 2020). The focus during

the COVID-19 is on digital marketing. It was examined which digital marketing strategies were used in the said tourism extremity. In that, scholars and interpreters can serve in exploration and mitigation.

Suneel Kumar and Shekhar (2020) Conducted “ Technology and Innovation Changing Generalities of Rural Tourism – A Methodical Review ”. It substantially emphasizes sustainable pastoral tourism, sustainable tourism, and pastoral tourism conceptualization and its significance is apparent. Also, the use of technology has been developed to enable pastoral tourism. The conclusion from the available literature countries that pastoral tourism offers significant benefits that can break numerous problems of the frugality and the tourism assiduity.

Chandan Kumar Mishra (2020) in a composition on “ Digital Marketing Scope, openings, and Challenges stressed the significance of digital reforms which find a business to reach the right consumer ”. With the profitable development of the country and the innovative use of the Internet, consumer requirements and their prospects have bettered. As a result, comfort, pleasure, and service have become important criteria for product selection..

Canovi and Pucciarelli (2019) “ Social media marketing in wine tourism winery possessors’ comprehensions ”, in a study conducted on social media marketing, it was set up that the maturity of possessors working in the tourism sector isn't using the full eventuality of social media. Especially, feting the profitable, and emotional benefits. However, due to obstacles like the absorption of social media, the horizonless eventuality of social media isn't completely exploited.

SCOPE OF STUDY

This study concentrated on examining the impact and effectiveness of digital marketing on excursionists visiting southern districts of Kerala. Main and sub-variables are linked and grounded on colorful digital marketing ways used in the tourism sector, drawing from literature, reports, and expert opinions. Repliers' opinions on the effectiveness of these variables are collected to dissect their impact. Particular profile variables are also examined to understand repliers' backgrounds. The position of influence is assessed using chance situations, mean satisfaction, standard deviation, and covariance. A retrogression equation model is developed to explore the relationship between digital marketing and sightseer geste, considering correlation and correlation forecourt, as well as Beta values. Consequences are drawn from the analysis, including test results of suppositions, and conclusions and recommendations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Primary Source

The data was collected through a questionnaire from 200 respondents in the southern districts of Kerala.

Secondary Source

The data have been collected from the records of the Directorate of Kerala Tourism, Department of Kerala Tourism, Ministry of Kerala Tourism, Government of India and Government of Kerala, Economic Review of the State Planning Board, Government of Kerala, DTPC Alappuzha, DTPC Pathanamthitta, DTPC Kollam, DTPC Thiruvananthapuram, Books and working papers. The study report of Journals, Dailies, Websites and, Booking Apps.

Tools used for Data Analysis

The methods of percentages, frequencies and chi-square test were used to analyze the collected data.

Period of the study

The period from October 2023 to November 2023 was used to conduct this study.

Area of the study

It is attempted in selected tourist destination in Southern Districts in Kerala (Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta, Kollam, and Thiruvananthapuram).

Sampling Design

The study covers the major tourist areas of Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta, Kollam, and Thiruvananthapuram in the southern districts of Kerala. 200 tourists were randomly selected. Stratified random sampling technique was used in the said study.

Limitations of Study

1. Tourists from other states outside Kerala are reluctant to provide accurate details.
2. Only 200 respondents were selected for sampling including other states.
3. Data are collected only from selected tourist destinations in four districts of Southern Kerala.

Hypothesis

1. “There is no significant relationship between monthly income and purposes of visiting” on tourists in the southern districts of the Kerala.
2. “There is no significant relationship between gender and sources of awareness” of digital marketing platforms on tourists in the southern districts of the Kerala.

FINDING AND ANALYSIS

TABLE – No.1
Profile of the respondents

Group		No. of Tourists				Total	
		Domestic		Other States			
		No. of Tourists	%	No. of Tourists	%	No. of Tourists	%
Gender	Male	99	53	7	54	106	53 %
	Female	88	47	6	46	94	47 %
	Total	187	100	13	100	200	100
Age	Below 30 Years	48	26	4	31	52	26 %
	30 - 45 Years	77	41	6	46	83	41 %
	Above 45 Years	62	33	3	23	65	33 %
	Total	187	100	13	100	200	100
Educational Qualification	SSLC / +2	26	14	0	0	26	13 %
	Graduation	60	32	7	54	67	34 %
	Post Graduate	46	25	4	31	50	25 %
	Professional	55	29	2	15	57	28 %
	Total	187	100	13	100	200	100
Profession	Govt. Employee	42	23	3	23	45	23 %
	Private Sector Employee	50	27	5	39	55	27 %
	Business	45	24	3	23	48	24 %
	Profession	36	19	2	15	38	19 %

	Others	14	7	0	0	14	7 %
	Total	187	100	13	100	200	100
Monthly Income	Up to 20,000	24	13	0	0	24	12 %
	20,001 –30,000	51	27	3	23	54	27 %
	30,001 – 40,000	76	41	4	31	80	40 %
	40,000 Above	36	19	6	46	42	21 %
	Total	187	100	13	100	200	100

Table No.1 clearly shows the segment profile of the obtained. According to it, most of the respondents are male and in the age group of 30-45 years. It is very clear that graduate level qualification is more than other educational groups. According to the data of the respondents, it is understood that majority of them are working as private sector employees. According to the survey, the sample of the respondents had a monthly household income between Rs 30,001 - 40,000.

TABLE – No.2
District-wise source of information

District Wise	Domestic Tourists		Other states Tourists		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Alappuzha	47	25	3	23	50	25
Pathanamthitta	38	20	2	16	40	20
Kollam	54	29	5	38	59	30
Thiruvananthapuram	48	26	3	23	51	25
Total	187	100	13	100	200	100

Source: The Primary Data

According the Table 2 shown that 30% of the respondents were from the Kollam district, 25% were from the Thiruvananthapuram district, 25% were from the Alappuzha district, and 20% of the respondents were from the Pathanamthitta district. Out of the 59 respondents in the Kollam district, 54 respondents are Domestic and 5 respondents are other states. Out of the 51 respondents in the Thiruvananthapuram district, 48 respondents are Domestic and 3 respondents are other states. Out of the 50 respondents in the Alappuzha district, 47 respondents are Domestic and 3 respondents are other states tourists. Out of the 40 respondents in the Pathanamthitta district, 38 respondents are Domestic and 2 respondents are other states.

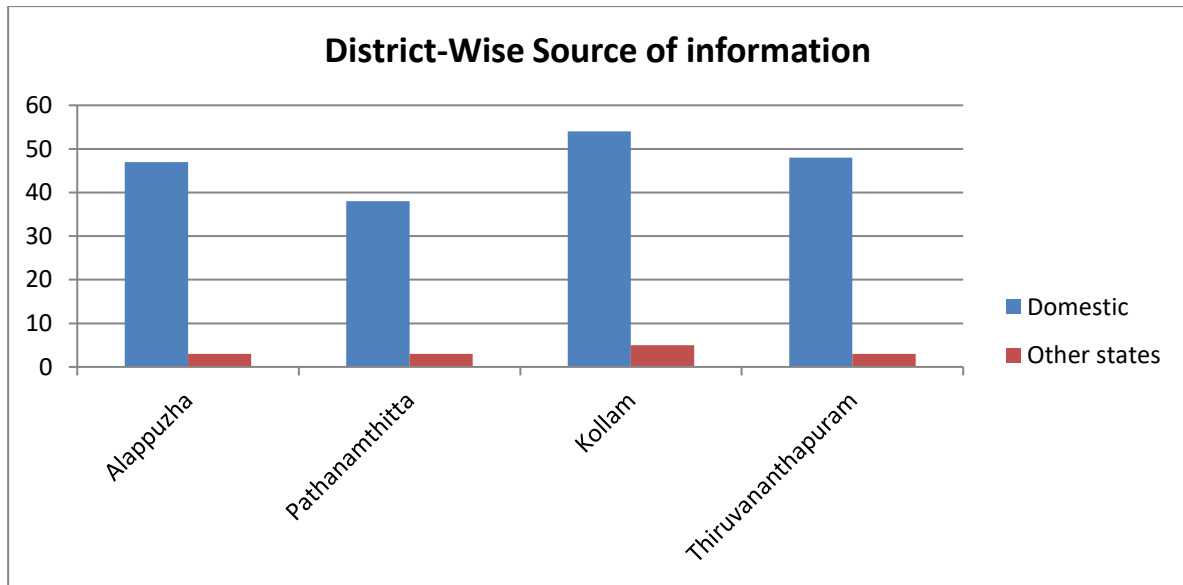


TABLE – No.3
Distribution based on the purpose of the visit of respondents

Purpose of visit	Domestic Tourists		Other state Tourists		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Sight Seeing	38	20	3	23	41	21
Adventure	30	16	2	15	32	16
Plantation and Hill	37	20	2	15	39	19
Medical and Yoga (Ayurveda)	16	9	1	9	17	9
Beaches and Backwaters	36	19	3	23	39	19
Cultural and Heritage	30	16	2	15	32	16
Total	187	100	13	100	200	100

Source: The Primary Data

According to the Table 3 specifying that 21% of the respondents visited Southern Kerala for sight-seeing. 19% visited for enjoying plantation and hill tourism, 19 % visited Southern Kerala for enjoying beach and backwater tourism and 16 % of the respondents visited Southern Kerala for enjoying the cultural and heritage tourism. 16% visited with a purpose of involving adventure tourism, 9 % visited Southern Kerala for attending medical and yoga treatment.

Chart I: Distribution based on the purpose of the visit of respondents

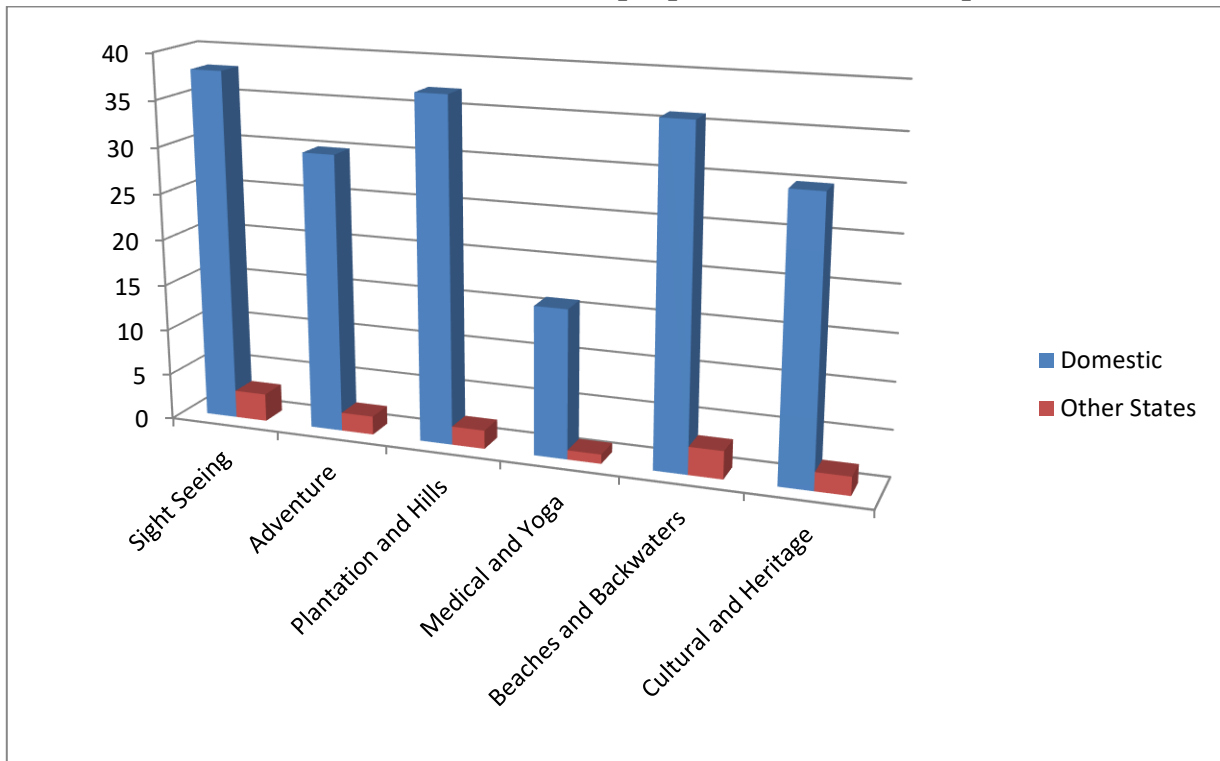


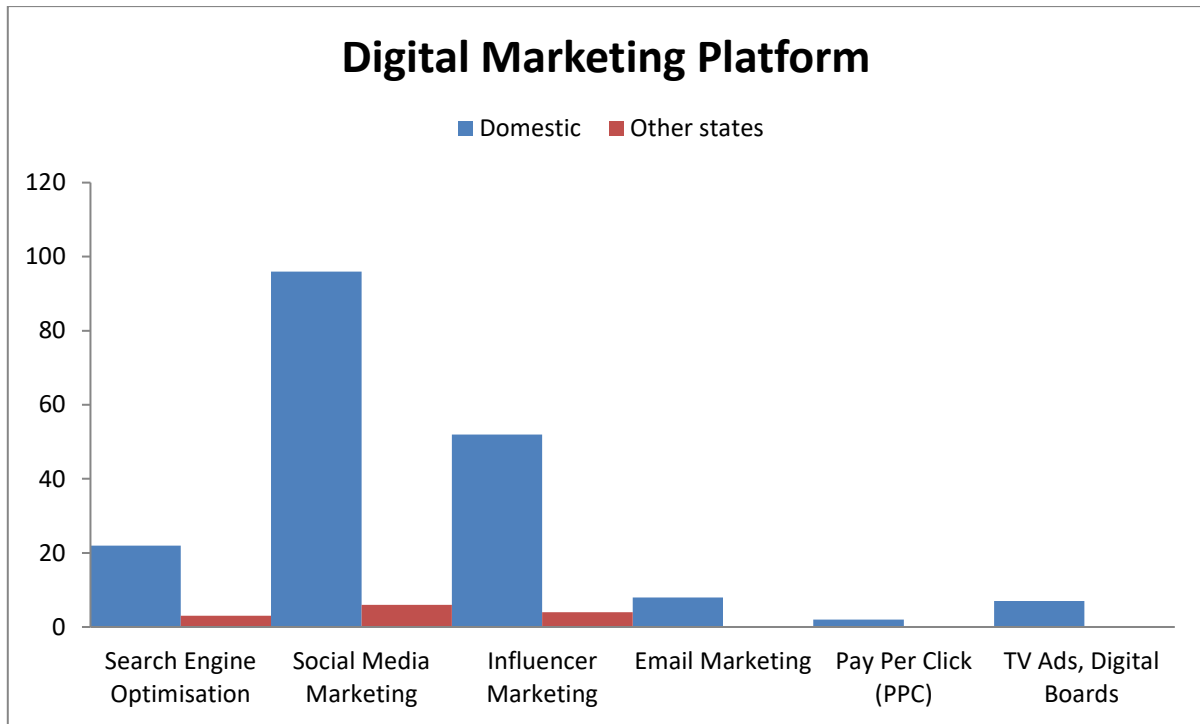
TABLE – No.4

Sources of awareness about tourist places using the digital marketing platforms

	Domestic Tourists		Other state Tourists		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)	22	12	3	24	25	12.5
Social Media Marketing	96	51	6	46	102	51
Influencer Marketing	52	28	4	30	56	28
Email Marketing	8	4	0	0	8	4
Pay Per Click (PPC)	2	1	0	0	2	1
TV Ads, Digital Boards	7	4	0	0	7	3.5
Total	187	100	13	100	200	100

Source: The Primary Data

Table 4 shows that, 51% of the respondents’ sources of awareness about tourist places used in the digital marketing platform are Social media marketing. 28% of the respondent’s source of awareness about tourist places is Influencer marketing. Awareness about tourist places used in the digital marketing platform 12.5% is Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). 3.5% of the respondents came to know about the tourist destination through TV Ads, Digital Boards. 4% of the respondents came to know about the tourist destination using Email Marketing and Pay Per Click (PPC) is 1%.



Test (Chi-Square)

Null Hypothesis - 1

“There is no significant relationship between monthly income and purposes of visiting” on the tourists in the southern districts of the Kerala.

Value	d.f	Significance (2-sided)
“Pearson Chi-Square value”	25.67a	3 .001
“Likelihood Ratio”	20.12	3 .001
“Liner-by-Linear Association”	15.28	1 .001
“No. of Valid Cases”	200	

a.8 cells (57.1%) have expected count < 5. The min. expected count = 0.05

Result: Since the Chi-square value (25.67) exceeds the Table value at a significance level of 0.05. The result is there are “no significant relationship between monthly financial income and purposes of visiting” on the tourists in the southern districts of the Kerala.

Null Hypothesis - 2

“There is no significant relationship between gender and source of awareness” of digital marketing platforms on tourists in the southern districts of the Kerala.

Value	d.f	Significance (2-sided)
“Pearson Chi-Square Value”	18.56a	2 .001
“Likelihood Ratio”	15.28	2 .001
“Liner-by-Linear Association”	10.74	1 .001
“No. of Valid Cases”	200	

a.8 cells (57.1%) have expected count < 5. The min. expected count = 0.05

Result: Since the Pearson Chi-Square value (18.56) exceeds the Table value at a significance level of 0.05. The result is there are “no significant relationship between gender and source of awareness of digital marketing” platforms on tourists in the southern districts of the Kerala.

Suggestions

1. The digital marketing platoon should also see to it that the forms used in the website should be as short and sweet.
2. The digital marketing platoon should make sure that Google Analytics and webmaster tools are streamlined.
3. In the case of a small original business the SEO professional should make sure that the Original SEO, on-runner SEO, and WordPress SEO are used effectively.
4. The team should also make sure that Link installation is handed to connect social media, emails, and other internet operations.
5. The digital marketing professional should see to it that messaging platforms similar to Signal, Yahoo correspondence, Outlook, Skype, Brand watch, Hoot suite, LinkedIn and converse are used for marketing.

Conclusions

The study findings suggest that excursionists in Southern Kerala are effective in digital marketing, particularly through social media and Influencer marketing. The impact of digital marketing plays a major part in adding profit to the tourism sector. So, those who do business in the tourism sector keep up with the new changes and trends. Acclimate their marketing strategies consequently. In the period of digitalization, digital marketing ways are successfully employed. A competitive advantage, advanced customer engagement, and bettered profitability are used to subsidize the right opportunity. Very easily, the position of influence remains harmonious across gender, nation, educational qualifications, income groups, employment status, and the purpose of the visit among excursionists. Likewise, the study reveals a positive correlation between the main variables and dependent variables, buttressing how employed sightseers in southern Kerala geste in the region. perpetration of digital marketing strategies like hunt machine optimization(SEO), social media marketing, influencer marketing, pay per-clicking (PPC), dispatch marketing, and mobile marketing among excursionists in southern sections of Kerala similar to Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta, Kollam, and Thiruvananthapuram are successful as far as businesses are concerned., greatly increased exposure and followership reach.

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