



Karelia University of Applied Sciences
Degree in International Business
Bachelor's degree

Applying the 4Ps Marketing Mix in the Vietnam Hospitality Indus- try to Attract European Tourists

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Thesis, November 2021

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THESIS
November 2021
Degree Programme in International Business

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Title
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Abstract

Information Technology (IT) brings enormous benefits to the business world. It enables organizations to work more efficiently, maximize productivity, reach customers quickly, reduce operational costs, advertise, etc. Thanks to information technology, it is easier to communicate with customers. This provides businesses with the resources to communicate quickly and effectively.

Digital marketing is a current phenomenon and one of the fastest-growing industries in the world. Vietnam's tourism industry is being profoundly invested in to develop in order to attract leisure foreign tourists. Consequently, this thesis investigates the relationship between Vietnam's tourism industry and digital marketing.

The thesis aims to use the 4Ps marketing mix of digital marketing to attract international, especially European, tourists to Vietnam. The thesis will analyse Vietnam's tourism market and digital market, then use the 4P marketing mix to generate appropriate solutions. Another topic that needs attention is online European behaviour. Understanding customers' consumption habits is essential to promoting the most appropriate advertising and outreach strategy. The thesis is conducted in a quantitative method, using methods of collecting secondary data from the internet, books, statistics, etc. and primary data through a survey.

Language
English

Pages 47
Appendices 1
Pages of Appendices 4

Keywordsⁱ
4P's Marketing Mix, digital marketing, SWOT, tourism, Vietnamese market, European travellers

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

Nowadays, living in the 21st century, the world is rapidly changing because of technological advancements; people must constantly better themselves to keep up with this pace. The improvement of digital technology has resulted in significant changes in a variety of commercial industries and our daily lives. Everything, as we can see, is undergoing a digital revolution. Entertainment, health, banking, business, and even money is all becoming digital or are tied to digital technology somehow. Many companies may be left behind or fail if they do not keep up with the trends or conduct digital transformation promptly. As a result, individuals are becoming increasingly interested and associated with digital technology and gadgets as a method of communication, entertainment, news, work, and other activities. People have become more hooked to digital devices as communication and information technology have advanced, and social media has matured and become well established. The evolution of digital technology has created a powerful platform of marketing for all different kinds of business.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant influence on us, and it has affected practically every area and business. During the Covid-19, every company has sought to revert to its previous state, wishing to learn more about its consumers and products. As a result, while other industries such as tourism and services have slowed or stopped growing, digital marketing can increase. Many businesses resort to the internet to market, which is necessary and inescapable to survive and thrive in the demanding economic environment. Traditional marketing may be obsolete while businesses are increasingly focusing on digital marketing. Digital marketing is a relatively recent solution that may be thought of as a "powerful arm" of many organizations, bringing brands and products to a massive number of customers and increasing sales.

1.2. Aim

The thesis aims to use the 4Ps marketing mix of digital marketing to attract leisure international tourists to Vietnam, especially from the European market. The thesis will analyse Vietnam's tourism market and then use the 4P marketing mix to generate appropriate solutions. Additionally, the study focuses on understanding the value of digital marketing and its strength to increase Vietnam's tourism industry's potential. Another topic that needs attention is online leisure European behaviour when searching for or buying travel products.

1.3. Methodology

The thesis is conducted in a quantitative method, using the method of collecting secondary data from the internet, books, statistics, etc. and primary data through a questionnaire survey. The main goal of this thesis is to determine the importance of digital marketing and develop a 4P model solution for the Vietnamese tourism industry. The survey was performed entirely online. The research was planned objectively to find facts and precisely measure in order to support the theoretical concepts of the thesis.

2 TOURISM BUSINESS IN VIETNAM

2.1. General

Vietnam is a long, narrow country in Southeast Asia, located on the eastern side of the Indochina peninsula with the population of 98,678,000 people. It is bordered on the north by China, on the east and south by the South China Sea, on the southwest by the Gulf of Thailand (Gulf of Siam), and on the west by Cambodia and Laos (Buttinger 2021). The unique feature that makes Vietnam is the combination of nature's poetic and majestic beauty and the cultural diversity between different regions. The nature of Vietnam varies from majestic mountains to plains with green rice fields and long coastlines. At the same time,

culture fans will find much to explore thanks to the country's lengthy history and many ethnic minorities. While the countryside offers breath-taking views, the main cities are more up-to-date and provide many opportunities to sample the best of Vietnam's gourmet cuisine (Lee 2020). With all the advantages, Vietnam attracts a considerable number of international tourists visiting annually, creating a substantial competitive edge over other countries in the region. Indeed, the great potentiality of tourism can encourage the tourism business and, at the same time boost the Vietnamese economy.

As one of the world's largest economic sectors, travel and tourism drive exports, create jobs, and generate prosperity worldwide. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council, before the pandemic, travel, and tourism, which included its direct, indirect, and induced impacts, contributed to 1 out of 4 new employments worldwide, accounting for 10.6% of all jobs (334 million) and 10.4% of global GDP (US \$9.2 trillion). Nevertheless, in 2019, international visitor expenditure was US \$1.7 trillion (6.8 % of total exports, 27.4 % of global services exports) (World Travel & Tourism Council 2021). Tourism is undeniably beneficial to most economies in the world in the world. Tourism spending involves and affects a variety of businesses considerably more directly and indirectly. Tourism is one of a country's most important sources of employment generation and foreign exchange. Income from tourism in a developing country like Vietnam can be re-invested for better infrastructure, education, transforming the lives of people in the rural, financing sustainable management, and establishing more responsible ways of touring.

Vietnam's tourism industry has shown incredible capabilities in recent years; the number of international visitors to Vietnam has increased rapidly. Besides attracting international tourists and domestic tourists growing tremendously, Vietnamese people have spent more time traveling around the country, especially on holidays and weekends. Between 2015 and 2019, international tourists climbed by 2.3 times, from 7.9 million to 18 million, a 22.7% annual rise. This is the world's fastest growth rate compared to other nations and significantly greater than Vietnam's tourism's average yearly growth rate of 7.6% from 2011 to 2015. The total tourism receipt is 32.8 USD billion, of which Inbound tourism

accounted for 55.7% and domestic tourism occupied 44.3% (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 7-9).

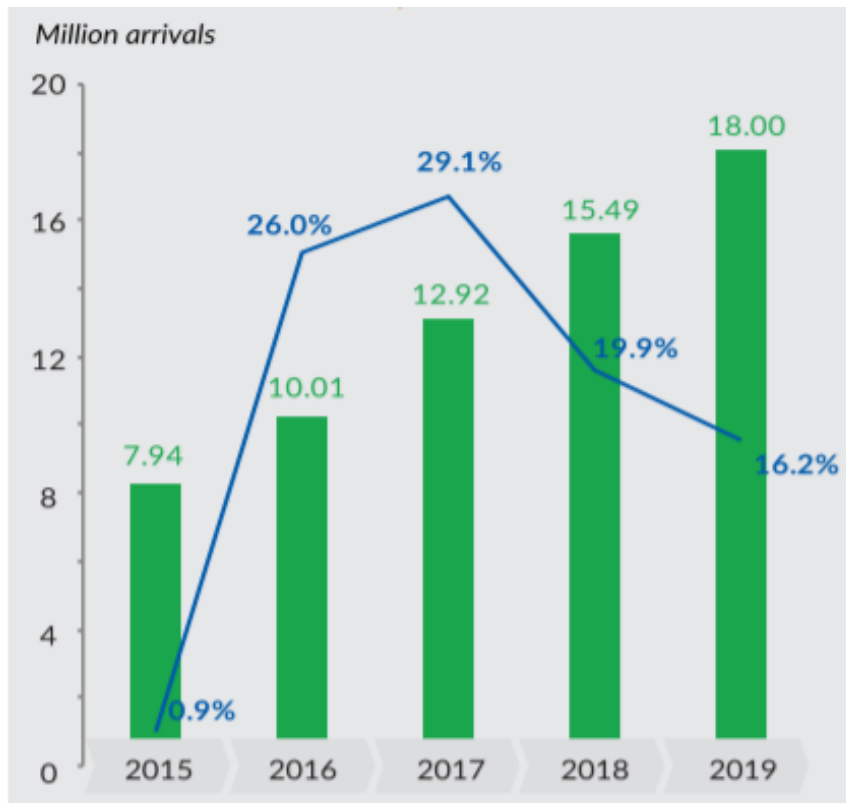


Figure 1. International visitor arrivals to Vietnam, 2015-2019 (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019).

The growth in the number of people coming to Vietnam to travel and the number of Vietnamese traveling in the country inspires the tourism industry. When traveling, people spend a lot of money; they pay for services, entertainment, refreshments, and amenities such as transportation, accommodation, food, and medical services. This creates more jobs, increases revenue for industries, raises spending by those companies, accelerates tax contributions, etc. As a result, tourism generates a great demand for various goods and services across the economy. Vietnam has been suspending inbound International flights, but the government plans to open it by 2022. There will be promising opportunities for the tourism business after the Covid-19 pandemic. (Dezan & Associates 2021.)

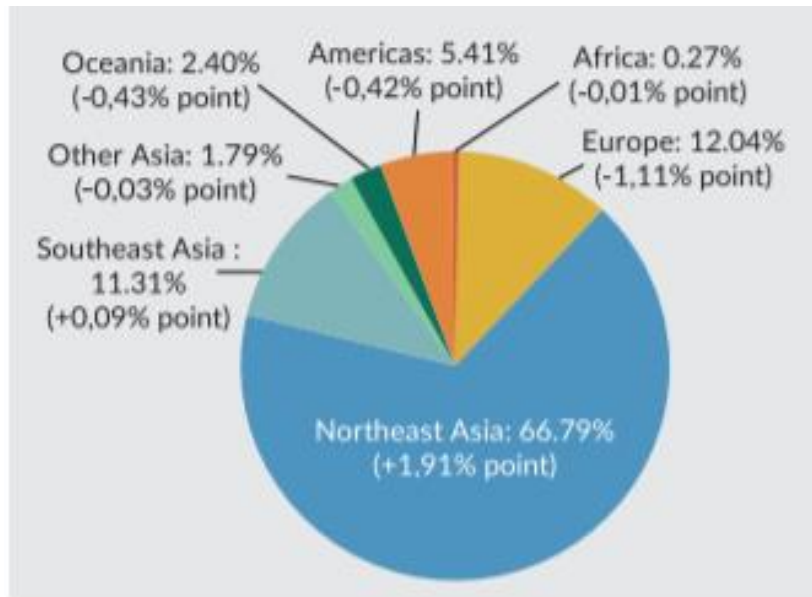


Figure 2. Proportion of international visitors in 2019 by regions, compared to 2018 (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019)

Figure 2 is taken from the Vietnam Tourism Report 2019, indicating the number of international visitors by region. According to the figure, Europe is the second-largest percentage of international visitors, although the number decreased slightly compared to 2018. This figure demonstrates that European visitors are potential customers for Vietnam's tourism.

2.2. Travel business

Along with the general formation and development of the tourism industry, the number and scale of travel businesses are constantly developing. From 1960 until now, Vietnam presently has had over 2,600 companies authorized to provide foreign travel services and thousands of local travel businesses. Policies and institutions that lay the groundwork for tourism growth have been developed and updated in response to changing global tourist circumstances and trends. Additionally, Bilateral visa exemptions for ASEAN citizens and unilateral visa exemptions for people of Japan, South Korea, Nordic nations, Western Europe, Russia, and a few other significant markets have benefited tourism enterprises in actively attracting tourists and investors. (Dulichvietnam 2021.)

According to the provisions of the Tourism Law in Vietnam, travel service firms comprise both foreign and domestic travel service businesses. International travel service enterprises fall into two categories based on their business scope: travel business for tourists entering Vietnam and travel business for tourists leaving Vietnam (Law No. 09/2017/QH14 2017.). The number of foreign travel service enterprises grows annually with a growth rate ranging from 7% to 9% (Dulichvietnam 2021). In 2019, the turnover of travel agencies had risen approximately 31.8% compared to 2015. Besides, the total number of visitors who used the travel agencies in 2019 was 18.4 million visitors. Meanwhile, foreign visitors numbered 5.7 million, which increased approximately 100.32% compared to 2015. (General Statistics Office 2020, 651.)

Travel service businesses have developed new tours that appeal to customers. In order to do that, they expand their network of business partners to assist in maintaining and improving the quality of tourism products and developing close relationships with local tourism management agencies to create favourable conditions for travel business activities. Travel service businesses assist local tourism management organizations to get a better picture of tourism potential, investment status, and tourist attraction exploitation. For tourism development in the area, municipalities must have appropriate investment and management solutions. Besides, hundreds of travel service organizations participate in brand communication activities annually, promoting Vietnamese locations and tourism products to domestic and worldwide markets through events. These include international trade shows, seminars to expose Vietnam's tourism in source markets to introduce products and images, seek additional partners, and develop businesses' marketplaces both at inside and outside Vietnam. The tourism sector has established many programs to encourage Vietnamese tourism with diverse activities and attractive services to attract tourists to Vietnam. These programs engage travel service businesses' active and effective participation, increasing the number of international tourists to Vietnam and affirmation of the travel service business's international activities. (Dulichvietnam 2021.)

Even though the Vietnamese tourism industry has achieved tremendous success, the travel industry faces numerous challenges. In terms of size, Vietnamese travel businesses are primarily small, medium, and micro enterprises with limited potential, making it difficult to compete in the domestic market with foreign firms. Several issues need to be addressed in terms of legal compliance in travel service businesses' operations. In addition, E-commerce also causes many difficulties for travel service businesses; when travel products and services are easily duplicated, it is impossible to control the quality of services supplied to visitors and copying items vs. original products quickly leads to a loss of reputation for Vietnam tourism in general. Human resources in the tourist industry, in general, and in the travel service industry in particular are still insufficient in terms of experience and abilities. (Dulichvietnam 2021.)

2.3. Tourist accommodation

The increase in international and domestic travelers has resulted in high demand for tourism facilities, increasing investment prospects and providing numerous job chances for professionals in this industry. According to Vietnam Tourism, between 2015 and 2019, the number of tourist accommodations expanded by 1.58 times, from 19,000 to 30,000 (an average annual growth rate of 12.0%); the number of rooms climbed 1.76 times, from 370,000 to 650,000 (an average annual growth rate of 15.1%). (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 23.) The tourism industry's rise has stimulated investment in infrastructure, product systems, services, and distribution networks, generating money, increasing exports, and creating jobs, as well as spillover impacts to all associated industries. Significantly, world-class luxury resorts have sprung up in popular tourist sites, including Da Nang, Hoi An, Phu Quoc, etc., attracting high-end travelers and celebrities looking for outstanding service.

Besides, a new wave of all-in-one resorts and leisure and entertainment complexes has emerged, providing tourists with a comprehensive range of services including food and beverages, lodging, leisure and entertainment, and sightseeing. Airbnb, homestays, boutique hotels, timeshares, and other types of

accommodation are becoming more and more popular. With the rising use of online booking, innovative technology, and e-payment in hotel administration and operations, digital technology's impact on the tourist hospitality industry has grown.

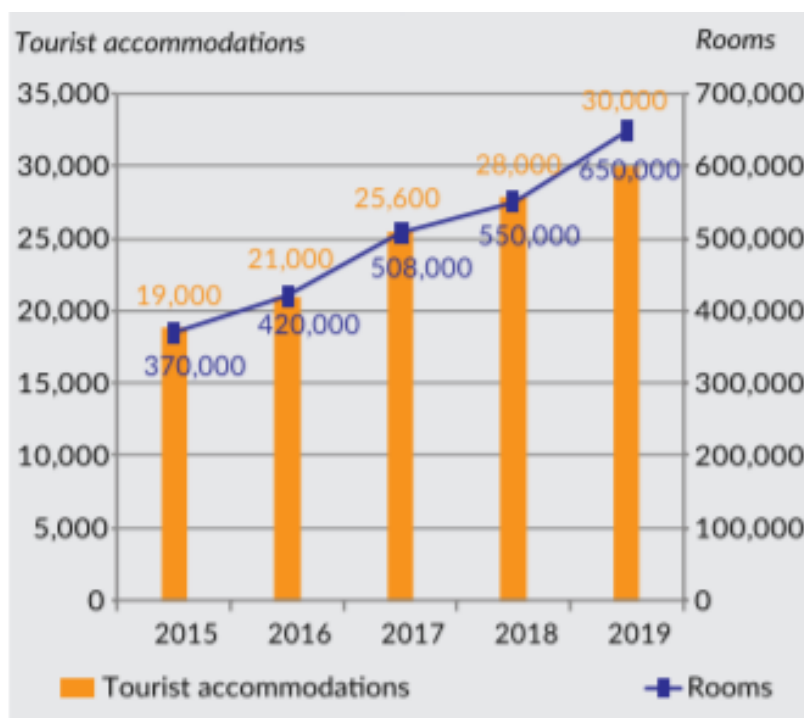


Figure 3. Number of tourist accommodations and rooms, 2015-2019 (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019).

Despite the increase in room numbers, the average room occupancy in 2019 was 52%, a slight decrease from the previous year (54%). The drop is due to a substantial rise in supply compared to the increase in demand and a shorter length of stay. (Vietnamtourism 2019, 26; Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 26.)

2.4. Transportation

Tourism is an inter-regional and multi-disciplinary economic sector. The transportation industry's involvement is critical to the excellent development of the tourism industry. Vietnam has modernized its road transportation infrastructure, train stations, and ports, improved air routes, and increased flying routes to several new markets. Customers' travel and transportation are well served by the network system and sea and river transport methods, constantly improving, stimulating domestic tourism, and enticing foreign visitors to Vietnam. The transportation industry will increase the opening of flight routes connecting key domestic tourist areas with regional and international markets, increase the operating frequency of airports during peak tourism periods, and expand and modernize airport facilities, terminals, and land and air services systems. (Nhandan 2012.)

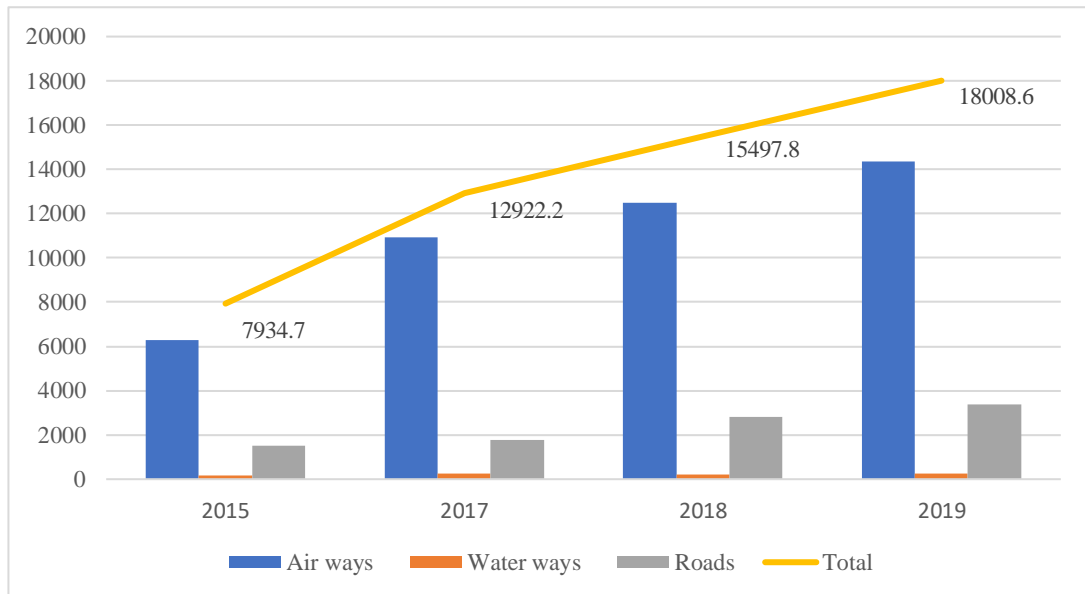


Figure 4. Number of international visitors in 2019, by mode of transport (thousand visitors) (General Statistics Office 2020).

According to the Figure 4, international visitors who arrived by air accounted for 79.8% of the total, with land making up 18.7%, and water 1.5%. In general, people traveling to Vietnam by air accounted for a significantly higher proportion. Although Vietnam numbers of international visitors coming to Vietnam by

air are positive, there are still have numerous downsides, mostly regarding airport infrastructure. Tan Son Nhat and Noi Bai international airports are experiencing overcrowding due to increased domestic and international flights. At Vietnam's two largest airports, customer satisfaction has consistently dropped. While the projected capacity was just 25 million people, the number of passengers traveling through Tan Son Nhat in 2018 was above 38 million, a 6.4% increase over 2017. This was not the first time Tan Son Nhat International Airport had been given a poor service rating. Due to the increasing growth in local and international tourism demand, Vietnam must take adequate measures to address the airport problem (Vietnamnet 2019). Long Thanh International Airport is an excellent solution at the moment. According to VnExpress, the final phase is expected to be finished by 2040, at which time the airport will have four runways and four passenger terminals. It will have a passenger capacity of 100 million people and a freight capacity of five million tons. (Tu 2021.)

3 MARKETING OF TOURISM BUSINESS IN VIETNAM: TRADITIONAL AND DIGITAL MARKETING

Nowadays, marketing plays an essential role in successful business activities. Marketing is the process by which a corporation promotes the purchase or sale of a product or service. Advertising, selling, and delivering things to consumers or other businesses are all examples of marketing. A business can fulfil customers' needs through marketing activities, increasing sales, and ultimately ensuring profitability. Tourism marketing is quite different from other businesses. Tourism marketing refers to the use of marketing methods in the tourism industry. Many countries around the world today rely heavily on tourism to boost their economies. The tourism sector is tremendously competitive because it is one of the world's major industries, which means that enterprises in the field must discover ways to differentiate themselves from competitors, advertise themselves as the most outstanding alternative for tourists, and highlight some things that set them apart or make them superior.

3.1. Traditional marketing

In the 80s and early 90s in Vietnam, the economy expanded and integrated with the world. Universities accepted and taught marketing. Marketing began to describe the production and commercial methods in the industry, but it evolved into a scientific theory throughout time. Since the creation of products is fundamental, relying primarily on human labour, the market's demand rises. As technology advances, shifting to mechanized labour, mass manufacturing, and mass production, the market's demand increased, and expanded. In addition, another reason is the appearance of middlemen in the process of exchanging goods between the producer and the buyer, making the producer unable to comprehend the customer's wants and wishes. (Truyenthongonline 2021.)

This gets even worse when the amount of goods produced grows yet do not even fulfil customers' needs, resulting in a backlog of goods. Marketing was limited to enterprises that produced goods and consumer goods. Still, it rapidly grew to include industrial production and had encroached on the whole industry with an advanced integration period. Both commercial and non-commercial services are available. Marketing has now encroached on practically all disciplines, including education-related businesses such as training, culture-sports, tourism, politics, government, etc., after being limited to only the business field in its early years. (Truyenthongonline 2021.)

Furthermore, word-of-mouth advertising still exists. Satisfied guests frequently tell their friends, family, and loved ones about their excellent memories, major attractions, and fantastic vacation; such positive descriptions always develop an organization's goodwill and stimulate the listeners, motivating them to go and experience. Many travel firms try to deliver the highest quality products and services to their customers in order for tourists to spread the word about their positive experiences and bring about a significant rise in sales. Fairs and exhibitions are also popular in Vietnam and are regarded as effective marketing tools in the tourism industry. Fairs and exhibitions, which have been in use for many years, used to give promotional activities and information about vacation packages and products. (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 7-9.)

In 2019, Vietnamese government focused on overseas tourism promotion such as short-haul destinations in Asia, especially Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, and India. They were likely to attract high-spending and long-stay visitors from long-haul destinations in Europe, North America, Australia, Russia, etc. Particularly, the FITUR International Tourism Fair in Madrid, Spain, ITB Berlin Travel Trade Show in Germany was some of the major promotion activities (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 7-9). The digital transformation of manufacturing/production and allied industries, as well as value creation processes, is known as Industry 4.0. It refers to the intelligent networking of equipment and processes for industry using information and communication technologies (i-scoop 2021). Despite the strong development of technology in Industry 4.0, traditional forms of tourism marketing, such as distributing leaflets, ticket counters, fairs, etc., still play an essential role. Traditions will often bring friendliness and intimacy, besides, support high growth.

Although traditional marketing has brought remarkable achievements to Vietnam's tourism industry, traditional marketing has significant drawbacks. Firstly, it is expensive, and there are different kinds of traditional marketing forms such as flyer printing, program production, offline events, TV advertising, etc. These things take a lot of money and are time-consuming. Secondly, it takes much time to update offline ads and prepare events or fairs. This is the main problem for start-ups or small companies. Furthermore, those forms of traditional marketing lack customer interaction, making it difficult to measure and understand customers' reactions toward business products or services. Campaigns are then harder to measure. While there are still ways to measure traditional marketing campaigns such as with brand trackers, these are not as in-depth or intelligent as the tools available for digital marketing.

3.2. Digital Marketing

From creating, planning, implementing, and measuring marketing operations, technology has impacted practically every activity and method of working in organizations today. Technology has evolved at an incredible rate, leading marketing transformation trends and serving as a model for modern digital marketing efforts. The shift in marketing technology has become critical not only for marketers who want to improve their expertise but also for marketers who want to learn new skills and activities. Not only do new technologies have an impact on management tasks, but they also have a significant impact on marketing. Similarly, most Vietnamese tourism companies are trying to keep up with the pace and follow the trends of society and a new generation. In Vietnam, there were approximately 68.72 million internet users in January 2021, and it increased by 551 thousand (+0.8%) between 2020 and 2021 (Kemp 2021).

Further, with a population of approximately 100 million people, there are plenty of human resources, and for the past 30 years, Vietnam has been the only country with a "golden population structure" which means that for every two or more persons who work, only one person is dependant. With all of the enormous advantages, digital marketing will soon develop dramatically. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and websites play significant roles in customer interaction and promotional activities. Vietnam currently has nearly 44 million smartphone users, over 68 million internet users, 66 million social media users, and 145 million mobile subscribers. (Nhandam 2020.)

Traditional management and commercial practices have proven ineffective during the epidemic, requiring an immediate embrace of digital transformation. One of the solutions to help the tourism sector recover from the epidemic's effects is a digital transformation that will help domestic tourist enterprises compete more effectively, resulting in more beneficial changes for both customers and tourism businesses. The Vietnamese Government has approved a national digital transformation program that will begin taking place in Vietnam from now to 2025, intending to make it one of the top 50 countries in information technology and digital economy, accounting for 20% of GDP. This is also a

critical corridor and source of assistance for economic sectors in general and the tourism industry in particular, as they speed their digital transformation. Furthermore, if the COVID-19 epidemic, with its negative consequences, is skilfully used, it will provide a tremendous boost to accelerate and deepen the digital transformation process in the tourism business. (Nhandam 2020.)

The Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT) has collaborated with relevant organizations to carry out various activities supporting the Master Plan for ICT application and intelligent tourism development. As an agency of the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism charges aiding the Ministry in performing and exercising its powers in tourism-related matters (Vietnam Online 2021). The active participation of local governments, tourism enterprises, and related industries and VNAT's coordinating function have had favorable results that tourism management and promotion efficiency have improved, and the number of start-up companies has risen. (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 37-38.)

Many actions have been undertaken to encourage tourism development, such as the creation of a digital tourism database with information about tour guides, tour operators, and accommodation businesses as well as tourism attractions. The database links data from enterprises, local governments, and central management agencies to create a digital data platform for tourism management, promotion, and business operations. Creating and launching the "Vietnam Tour Guiding" application will aid tour guides, travel agencies, and tourist management authorities in their operations. The app connects tour guides, visitors, and travel agencies during their journeys; it allows tour guides and travel agencies to be evaluated and ranked, and it gives valuable information about products and services and facilitates e-payments. A dashboard for Vietnam tourism is being developed to support tourism management (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 37-38). There are also some useful digital tools:

- Search engine optimization marketing (SEO): SEO is crucial since it increases the visibility of a website, resulting in increased visitors and the opportunity to convert leads into consumers. This is also a helpful tool for increasing brand awareness, cultivating relationships with potential

customers. According to Citynationplace, 65% of leisure travelers use the internet as a reliable source of information when deciding on a trip destination, and more than 86% of international investors said they use a search engine as their primary source of information when looking for information on potential countries to invest in (citynationplace 2019). Therefore, SEO plays an essential role in customers' decisions, and professional SEO experts should be invested in improving the business website.

- **Social Media Marketing:** Businesses may use social media to see what their customers are most interested in. As a result, they may generate content relatable to the target demographic, enhancing social media engagement. According to Statista, an average user spent 145 minutes per day on social media in 2020 (Statista 2021). With the tremendous impact and potential of social media, marketing on social media is vital if tourism businesses want to expand overseas. The travel industry establishes interactions and maintains a social media presence that is useful and valuable for followers and fans.
- **Email** is a marketing tool that allows companies to build a flexible, integrated, and uninterrupted customer experience. Furthermore, email marketing helps the marketer cultivate relationships with potential consumers, current customers, and past customers. It is indeed the chance to speak with them directly in their inbox at a time that suits them. Not only is email marketing responsive, but it is also low-cost, time-saving, and easy to track.

4 SWOT ANALYSIS

4.1. Strengths

The European Union (EU), one of Vietnam's most important foreign investors, is the country's second-largest export market, accounting for almost 17% of total export value. After China, the Republic of Korea, ASEAN, and Japan, the EU ranks fifth among Vietnam's import markets, accounting for almost 6% of the country's overall import value. Vietnam, on the other hand, is the EU's 16th most important commercial partner. (VEN 2021; Statista 2021.) Various economic sectors, notably tourism, are likely to benefit from the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA).

In the context of challenging global changes, the new-generation trade pact, which is set to take effect in 2020, will allow the domestic tourism sector to access new markets, restructure the market, and promote sustainable development. Besides, the Party, the Government, the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Culture, Sports, and Tourism, and the close coordination of critical ministries, sectors, localities, and the entire society, have given more attention and support to Vietnam tourism. There was expansion in air connections between Vietnam and source markets, and more and more international airlines have expressed interest in entering the Vietnamese air transport market. Technical infrastructure tourism has been strengthened and developed more sustainably, and significant corporate groups such as Sun Group, Vingroup, FLC, Blm, and BrG, etc. have opened plenty of high-end hotels, resorts, and entertainment and recreation complexes. (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism 2019, 45.) Accor, Marriott, Hyatt, Intercontinental, HG, and Four Seasons are just a few of the major international accommodation agencies in Vietnam, which have partly contributed to help improve the quality of tourism and increase competition in creating development motivation for the tourism industry. (Vietnamplus 2020.)

4.2. Weaknesses

In 2020, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Vietnam's tourism suffered heavy losses. Most tourism businesses in Vietnam are small and medium-sized, with minimal resources and were severely damaged by the Covid-19 outbreak. Many tourism businesses have been compelled to cut back or possibly cease operations, affecting Vietnam's tourism competitiveness. Many concerns still exist in Vietnam's tourist indicators, such as tourism service infrastructure, health and hygiene, ground and port infrastructure, and environmental sustainability. These flaws have the potential to restrict Vietnam's tourism growth and development. (Vietnam tourism 2019, 49.) For example, the infrastructure is still in bad condition. Trains, buses/vans, planes, ferries, taxis, private vehicles/cars, and motorcycles are the most common modes of transportation in Vietnam. This is a big issue in Vietnam's hotel and tourism industries. The road network connecting the northern and southern sections of the country is deplorable. The roads are in bad condition and filled with potholes. Furthermore, road flooding following heavy rains is a typical occurrence in most tourist destinations. The train system is outdated and ineffective. Steam engines still power trains. All of these factors harm tourists' ability to travel from one location to another.

Additionally, national tourist promotion resources, procedures, and policies are still restricted, which is a fundamental shortcoming of Vietnamese tourism compared to other competitive locations in the region. Safety and price stabilization policies to avoid price increases with foreign customers are still weak. The actions of increasing prices and looting are still happening, making the image of Vietnam in the eyes of tourists much worse. In terms of human resources, both the quality and quantity of human resources are in limited supply in Vietnam's tourism business. Even though several training programs have been established, the standards have yet to be met. This is especially true for hotels having difficulty finding qualified workers for housekeeping, maintenance, and customer service, among other things. Foreign language and customer service abilities are crucial requirements in the hospitality sector. Education and training are the only ways to acquire such abilities. However,

retraining to match market demands costs tourism businesses more in terms of time and financial resources. (Koushan 2018.)

4.3. Opportunities

Although the Covid-19 pandemic brought different challenges to Vietnam's and the world's economy, it also allowed the tourism sector to accelerate the adoption of digital technologies in management and commercial transactions. Online activities have grown in popularity to keep society's fundamental functions running while lowering the risk of infections.

Start-ups and innovation based on new technologies are developing strongly in Vietnam, focusing on solving problems arising in the development process. The Covid-19 pandemic provides opportunities for the tourism industry to restructure its operations in a more flexible and long-term manner, strengthen an organization, improve labour skills, re-target source markets, and improve cooperation. In addition, a new worldwide trading order is currently being established. The United Kingdom left the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020, entering a new era for both the UK and the EU. (Vietnamtourism 2019, 45-46.)

4.4. Threats

Firstly, natural environmental factors and weather changes have greatly affected Vietnam, including for example tropical hurricanes, floods, sea-water levels rising, etc. These have had considerable impacts on infrastructure, resources, and economics in the middle of the country in particular. For example, in 2020, six tropical storms and typhoons began in early October; these severely damaged homes, roads, rail ways, and thousands of people were evacuated. This affected the economy and society of Vietnam, and the tourism industry was also affected, leading to the risk of decreasing numbers of domestic and foreign tourists. (The Flood People 2020.)

Globalization will face further challenges, especially if the Covid-19 outbreak continues. The epidemic has fuelled anti-globalization trends such as "introversion," "shrink," protectionism, populism, and nationalism. Alternatively, as a result of the epidemic, the tendency to restrict foreign investments has increased. This directly impacts trade operations, stagnates investment, produces fear, and slows the expansion of many international firms. Consumer demand has fallen as well, and the drop-in export activity has continued to pose several issues for local businesses. All the effects will have an impact on the economy and tourism industry at the same time. (Tran 2021.)

5 4PS MARKETING MIX OF DIGITAL MARKETING

For a long time, the 4 Ps of marketing have formed the foundation of traditional marketing. The 4 Ps of marketing imply producing a product based on user or human requirements, meeting the customer's needs at a reasonable price, where the cost of the product must be consistent with the use of the product (Singh 2021). However, with the rapid development of technology, which has created opportunities for increasing marketing technology platforms and data sets to help create links and increase connections with consumers, marketers have had to be more loyal and public to increase user experience and promote the personal experience. Even though consumers' online behaviors changes and marketers change the way they convey and communicate with customers, the 4Ps of marketing still make perfect sense.

5.1. Place

With the rapid development of technology, the penetration of electronic devices has caused industries to start the digital transformation. Therefore, the definition of the 4Ps now refers not to just a physical place, but that governments and companies can access everyone globally. Tourism advertising on today's major technology platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtuber, Pinterest is indispensable.

Understanding and taking advantage of the power of social networks and online communication tools is one of the critical factors determining the success or failure of marketing. Tools to support the marketing process for businesses include search engine optimization (SEO), Pay per click (PPC) or digital display, CRM, etc.

5.2. Products

Tourism activities are one of the tourism industry's most successful items. A successful business must offer products and services that precisely satisfy the customer's needs, match consumer satisfaction, and persuade the customer to purchase the product. If the main product and service are not good, the clients will not buy the products or use the services. Furthermore, if businesses wish to gain a competitive advantage, they must have unique, irreplaceable, and replicable human resources.

Vietnam has vibrant landscapes, from long beaches to majestic and poetic mountains or rivers and lakes stretching. The geography and landscape are an advantage to attract tourists to Vietnam. As a result, services such as top-notch tourist attractions, delectable cuisine, and excellent lodging are critical to the tourism industry's success. A quality tourist destination is a place where the natural beauty of nature is found, and the tourist attractions are unique. (Kerdpitak 2017, 502.) There are several well-known tourist locations in Vietnam, ranging from natural tourism to history and vacations. For example, Halong Bay (a UNESCO World Heritage Site with one of the most enthralling sea views in the world), Hue (one of the most historic towns), Phong Nha-Ke Bang National Park (Listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List for caving), Son Doong cave (the world's largest cave), etc. (Lee 2020). Vietnam has focused on promoting tourism destinations that are well-known around the world. However, Vietnam has many primitive regions, rich, beautiful landscapes imbued with the soul of Vietnamese culture, which should be utilized and invested in more, such as the northern mountainous region of Vietnam, which is home to many ethnic minorities. Floating markets are a unique tourist attraction in the western area, along

the Mekong River. However, it is still undervalued, as it does not attract so many foreign tourists.

Another feature that draws visitors from other countries is the unique local cuisine. Vietnam is well-known as one of the countries having internationally renowned food. Vietnamese cuisine was honored to be listed in the top 10 cuisines in the world (Ideal travel Asia 2021).

A tour guide with considerable experience is also a valuable asset. They have deep knowledge about tourist attractions and know various languages, including English, Chinese, Spanish, Korean, and so on, which is a significant tourist advantage. To summarize, variables such as travel schedules, tourist attractions, cuisine, facilities, and hotels are the primary tourism items that must be properly invested in to set the country apart from others in the region. (Kerdpitak 2017, 502.)

5.3. Price

The more differentiated products are from competitors' products, the quicker customers will make their decisions. Many factors influence the likelihood of a purchase, but when companies can offer unique and differentiated products at lower costs than their competitors, customers are more likely to make a purchase. Customers may be able to make judgments more rapidly due to the difference in both factors (product and price), boosting the business's competitiveness. Businesses that outperform their competition must be run at a low operational cost. It is vital to discover suppliers who can provide low-cost raw materials or operating components to run a low-cost business. Furthermore, businesses must decrease excessive time and resource use. (Kerdpitak 2017, 502.)

Vietnam is famous for cheap tourism, with the cost of accommodation or eating and traveling quite affordable. This matter needs to be promoted more strongly. Price policies in tourism need to be managed more strictly by the government to ensure the quality of the tourism industry and avoid price increases, which easily leave poor impressions on tourists. Additionally, many world-famous YouTubers have come to Vietnam and do challenges, for instance, "Vietnam \$100

Street Food Challenge!! Best Street Food in Saigon!!!” (Over 8 million views) by Best Ever Food Review Show, which has approximately 7.5 million subscribers (Best Ever Food Review Show 2020) or “What Can \$100 Get in VIETNAM (World's Cheapest Country)” (over 3 million views) by Brett Conti, who has over 300 thousand subscribers (Conti 2020). These contents have attracted many viewers and interactions.

5.4. Promotion

Strategies to attract tourists are one of the first things that should be taken care of. Vietnam has had strategies to attract international tourists, such as #VietnamNOW. In addition to promoting Vietnamese cuisine, UNESCO world heritage sites, long-standing cultural traditions, and natural landscapes, #VietnamNOW also highlights modern tourism experiences such as high-class golf courses, luxury resorts, adventurous discoveries, and other exciting activities in the city (Dulichvietnam 2021). Although tourism strategies have been widely promoted on social media sites like Facebook and YouTube, they have not brought about high coverage in international forums. The campaign has promoted beautiful tourist images of Vietnam and excellent cuisine; however, the popularity is not high. The country needs a unique, different travel strategy to increase coverage in the world. Tourism can be exploited in another area, such as “imperfect tourism”. This would involve building a video to let tourists know that in traveling to Vietnam, they may easily encounter things like theft, pick-pocketing, and being overcharged. However, Vietnam also has countless wonderful things, including the fact that Vietnamese people are very welcoming, ready to bring tourists home to help when they are in trouble, and other small yet extremely warm things. Alternatively, unique dishes will not be found anywhere other than Vietnam. Traveling is not always perfect. When foreigners have found difficulties in a completely foreign country, Vietnamese people will always be ready to help them.

The second marketing strategy is to connect with famous travel bloggers, KOLs (Key Opinion Leader), or Youtubers to share their experiences traveling to Vietnam. The target audience is European travellers, so partnering with European influencers to deliver quality content is essential. Those shares bring intimate experiences, helping viewers understand more about Vietnam's culture, country, and people. Tourist businesses can better understand what customers want and care about when coming to Vietnam from the perspective of international visitors. There is no denying the coverage and influence of KOLs or travel bloggers in customers' decision-making.

In addition, the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism should have solid connections with travel companies to develop the tourism industry in general. Safety issues, including the safety of destinations, tourism services, and security-related issues, influence tourists' decisions. Therefore, the National Administration of Tourism has coordinated with travel companies to create a "Safe Vietnam tourism" application. The application is presented in Vietnamese and English. The application fully integrates features to meet visitors' requirements for information, including hotel services, amusement parks, transportation services, research and update the latest information related to destinations, special promotions, etc. (Thuong 2021.) This application is beneficial to help increase reliability for users, significantly to help users better understand the place and circumstances before visiting the place, avoid unnecessary risks such as being overcharged or being tricked to the wrong places.

Seventy percent of travellers implement travel research on their smartphones worldwide. In 2018, 82% of all travel bookings were made online through a mobile app or website without any human interaction in the world (Condor 2021). The importance of developing effective online booking systems cannot be overstated. Tourism businesses should create a service that allows customers to research, compare, and buy travel products from the same website. Travel agents must do everything possible to make the booking process as painless and straightforward as possible and ensure that the online booking system is the best it can be, with the ability to adapt to future changes (Hotelmize 2021). Ad-

ditionally, in terms of shopping and booking flights and hotels, tablets have officially overtaken cell phones. European leisure travellers may prefer smartphones, but tablet owners are considerably more inclined to shop and buy with their tablets. (Russell 2021.)

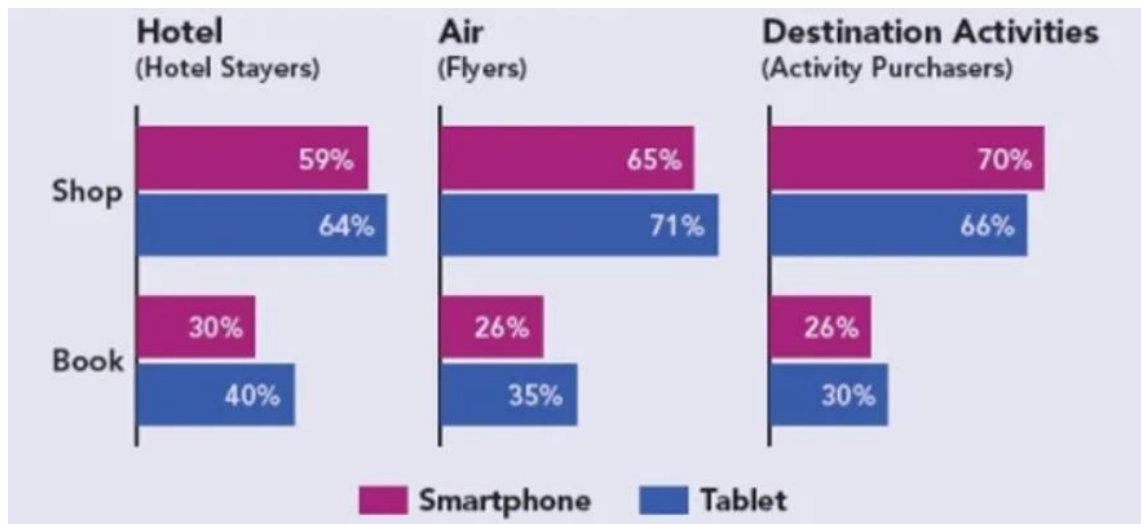


Figure 5. Mobile Shopping and Booking, by Product and Device (Russell 2021)

According to Figure 5, although many people use smartphones to search for trips, users still want to use tablets to book travel products. As can be seen, travellers feel comfortable using tablets and laptops to plan travel compared to smartphones; perhaps the small screen is the biggest problem.

6 RESEARCH METHODS

The strategies, processes, or techniques used in the collection of data or evidence for analysis in exploring new knowledge or getting a better understanding of a topic are referred to as research methods. There are two main categories of research methods that use different tools for data collection: qualitative research and quantitative research. Qualitative research collects information on people's lived experiences, emotions, and behaviours, as well as the meanings

they impose on them. It assists in the better comprehension of complex concepts, social relationships, and cultural phenomena by researchers. This form of research can be used to figure out how or why things happened, analyse events and describe activities. Meanwhile, quantitative research collects numerical data that can be ranked, measured, or classified using statistical methods. It facilitates in the discovery of patterns or links, as well as the formulation of generalizations. This type of study is beneficial for determining how many, how much, how often, or to what extent something exists. (University of Newcastle Library Guides 2021.)

This thesis conducts a quantitative research method in which a questionnaire is utilized to collect relevant information from a large number of people during the research process. A questionnaire survey was created online using the free internet application, Webropol. It included 14 questions. The survey's main objective was to understand traveller behaviour better. This can then be applied to the 4P marketing mix strategy. Understanding the strategy's elements, products, price, place and promotion of digital marketing, has affected decision-making in planning and booking a trip.

6.1. Quantitative research method

Quantitative research is described as a systematic analysis of phenomena through the collection of measurable data and the application of statistical, mathematical, or computational methods. Quantitative research gathers data from current and potential consumers by implementing sampling methods and sending out online surveys, polls, questionnaires, and other forms of data collection, the results of which can be represented numerically. After gaining a thorough understanding of these figures, a business may forecast the future of a product or service and make modifications as needed. (QuestionPro 2021.) Quantitative research templates are objective, detailed, and, in some cases, investigative in purpose. This research strategy produces logical, statistical, and unbiased findings. Data was collected in an organized manner and on bigger

samples than what was representative of the total population; hence, it has frequencies of variables and differences in variables (QuestionPro 2021). As a result, it is critical to analyse data in a standardized manner and to make an informed decision in order to get a reliable conclusion.

6.2. Limitation

The data collection process was carried out in a sincere and systematic manner; however, it still has a few limitations. First, in searching for data, some information was quite old. Since the advancement of technology is constantly changing, the accuracy of the data needs to be considered. For example, in the promotion part of the 4Ps marketing mix, the information of the number of phone and tablet users to plan and book a trip was in 2014.

Another limitation is about the survey, which had just over 70 respondents. Although the survey was spread in different groups on Facebook and LinkedIn, it still did not receive many participants. Such small numbers are challenging when trying to carry out data analysis.

7. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected from the survey is mainly responses to multiple-choice questions. During the data collection, 73 respondents replied. The surveys were sent to many different groups, with the leading target group being European people. The open link has been sent to groups such as Joensuu English Speakers, International friends in Berlin, international students in Finland, etc. These groups have more than 1,000 participants, and most of them are from the European Union, and they usually go to the exchange, work, travel around European. The age of the people in this group is also quite diverse, from about 20 years old to over 40 years old. In order to approach to middle-aged people, I posted on my LinkedIn page. All questions are based on the elements of 4Ps marketing mix: places, prices, products and promotion.

7.1. Results

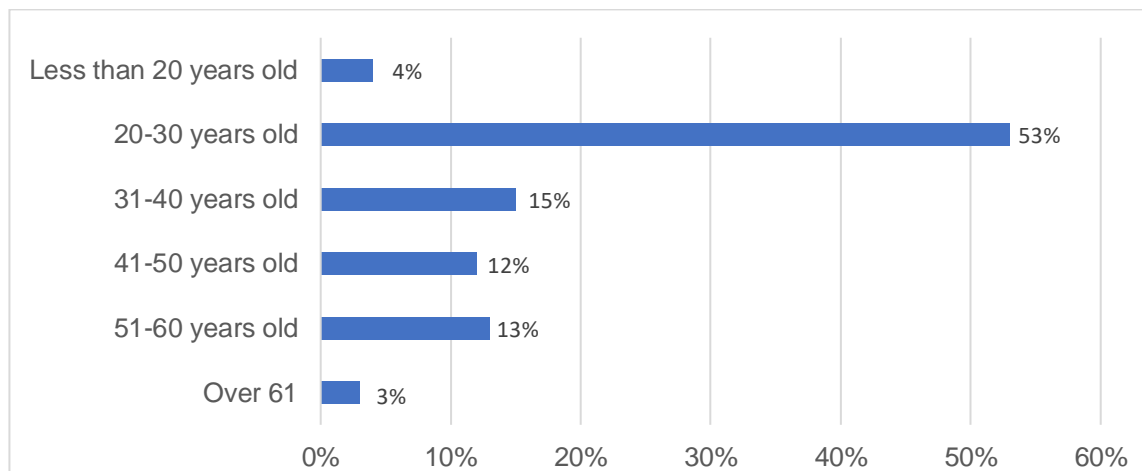


Figure 6. Respondent age groups (n=73)

The primary age range for respondents was 20-30-years olds. Most respondents were living in Finland, Germany, and France. Other European countries including Netherlands, Italy, Spain, etc. Figure 6 shows the respondent's place of residence.

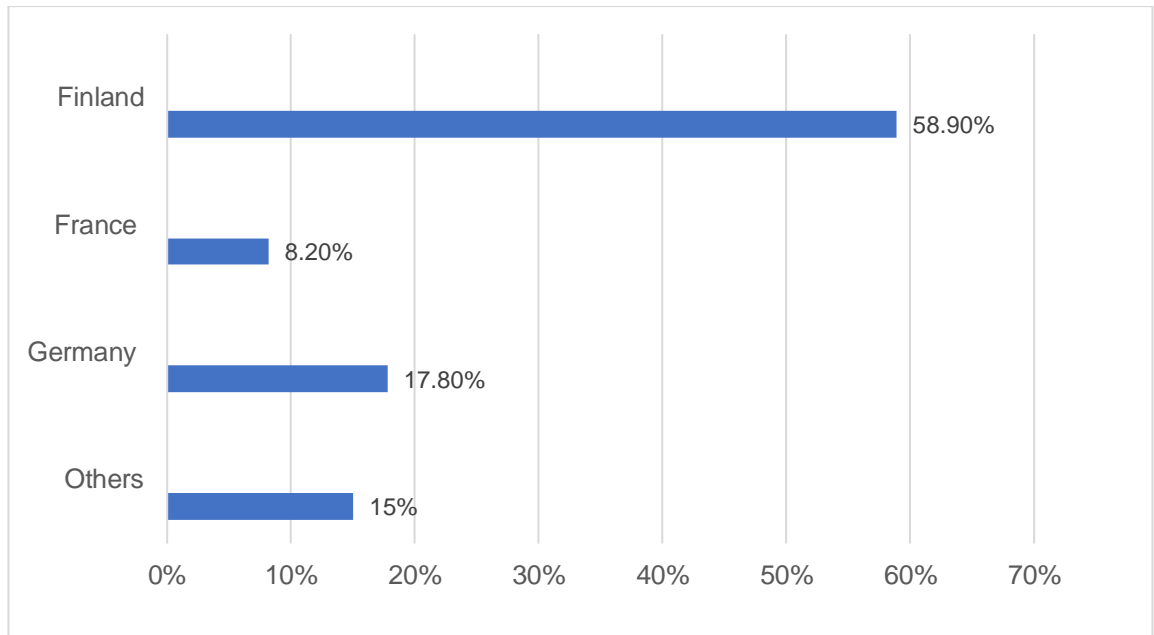


Figure 7. Respondent's residence (n=71)

The respondent's nationality was approximately 41% Finnish, German, French, and the rest are from different countries in Europe such as Estonia, Netherlands, Sweden, Belgium, Hungary, etc. 30% of respondents were not from Europe.

Foreigner's impressions about Vietnam

Table 1. Respondents' impressions about Vietnam (n=73)

Respondent category	People have been in Vietnam				Total	
	Yes		No		No	%
	No.	%	No.	%		
Beautiful natural landscapes	22	91.7	37	75.5	59	80.2
The excellent country for outdoor adventures	9	37.5	16	32.7	25	34.2
Hospitality and friendly people	17	70.8	18	36.7	35	47.9
The Diversified and unique culture	13	54.2	20	40.8	33	45.2
Cuisine, delicious food	20	83.3	33	67.3	53	72.6

Vietnamese coffee	17	70.8	8	16.3	25	34.2
Safe place to travel	6	25	6	12.2	12	16.4
You do not know very much about Vietnam.	2	8.3	16	32.7	18	24.7
Other	3	12.5	2	4.1	5	6.8

Most respondents had never been to Vietnam (67%), and about 33% did not know much about Vietnam. According to Table 1, the elements that most impress foreigners about Vietnam are beautiful natural landscapes (81%), cuisine, delicious food (73%), and hospitality, and friendly people (48%). The most poorly rated factor was a safe place to travel (16%). There were some other answer about their impression of Vietnam including Vietnam is crowded country, clear water for diving, very good dry chicken and conical hats.

People who have been to Vietnam were impressed with beautiful natural landscapes (92%), cuisine and delicious food (83%), hospitality, friendly people, and Vietnamese coffee with (71%). The figure was quite different from the general impression of foreign visitors before coming to Vietnam. Especially in terms of hospitality, friendly people and Vietnamese coffee were highly appreciated.

In the 4Ps marketing mix, this question was related to products. This question helped the researcher have an overview of the tourist attraction products.

Planning and booking a trip

Most consumers preferred to plan and book their trip independently: over 80% of respondents said they always search for information and buy trips online, and only about 12% sometimes buy trips through agencies. Figure 8 and 9 show the percentage of respondent's usage of online services for planning and booking a trip.

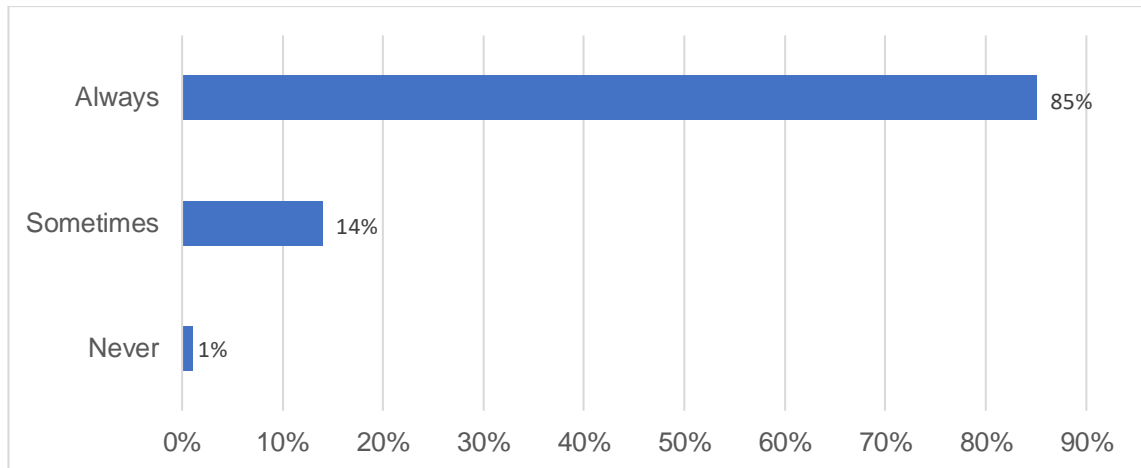


Figure 8. Percentage of respondents planning a trip online (n=73)

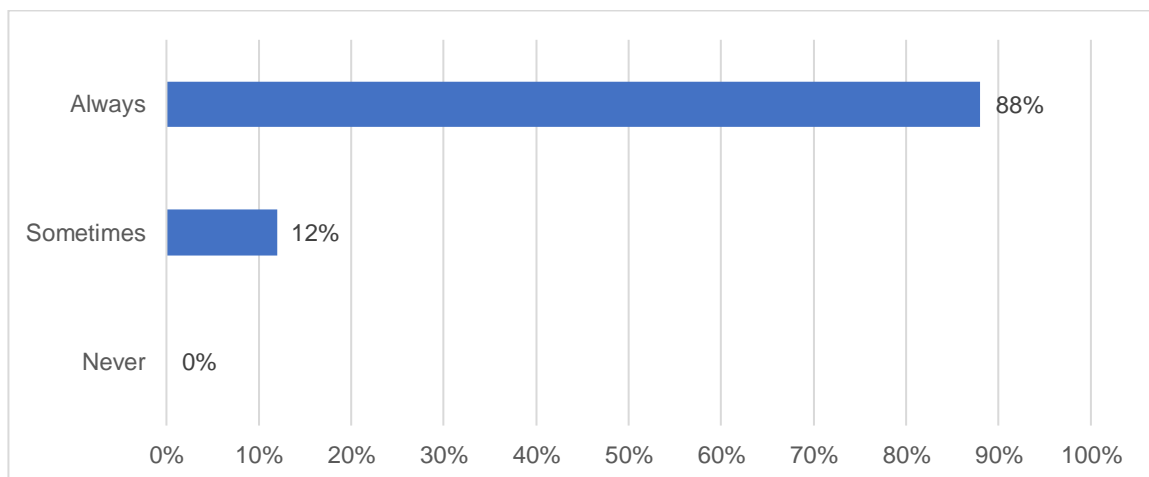


Figure 9. Percentage of respondents planning a trip online booking a trip (n=73)

Action when planning a trip

People aged 20-30 years often surfed the internet to look for information (average score 4.3). They then read reviews from travellers on virtual community sites/travel guidebook sites / online travel agencies (average score 3.8). The next step was to search for information and pictures from social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, etc by hashtags or destinations, with an average score of 3.3 The 20-30-year-olds and 41-30-year-olds were pretty similar in this regard. Meanwhile, for the 31-40-year-olds, the first thing they did was to read reviews from travellers on virtual community sites/travel guidebook sites / online travel agencies (average score 3.7). The second action was to spend

time surfing the internet to look for the information (3.6); the third factor was asking for recommendations from friends (3.4).

Table 2. The actions for respondents decided to travel a country (where 1 - means never, and 5 – always) (n=73)

	Never (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Usually (%)	Always (%)	Average score
Spent time surfing the internet to look for the information	1.4	8.2	5.5	39.7	45.2	4.2
Read reviews from travelers on virtual community sites / travel guidebook sites / online travel agencies.	2.8	4.2	29.2	33.3	30.5	3.8
Watch video on the Internet from travel bloggers / reviews / influencers	12.3	5.5	37	24.7	20.5	3.4
Search information and pictures from social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, etc by hashtags, destinations.	18.3	8.5	21.1	29.6	22.5	3.3
Ask recommendation from friends	6.9	12.5	29.2	30.6	20.8 %	3.5

Social media usage

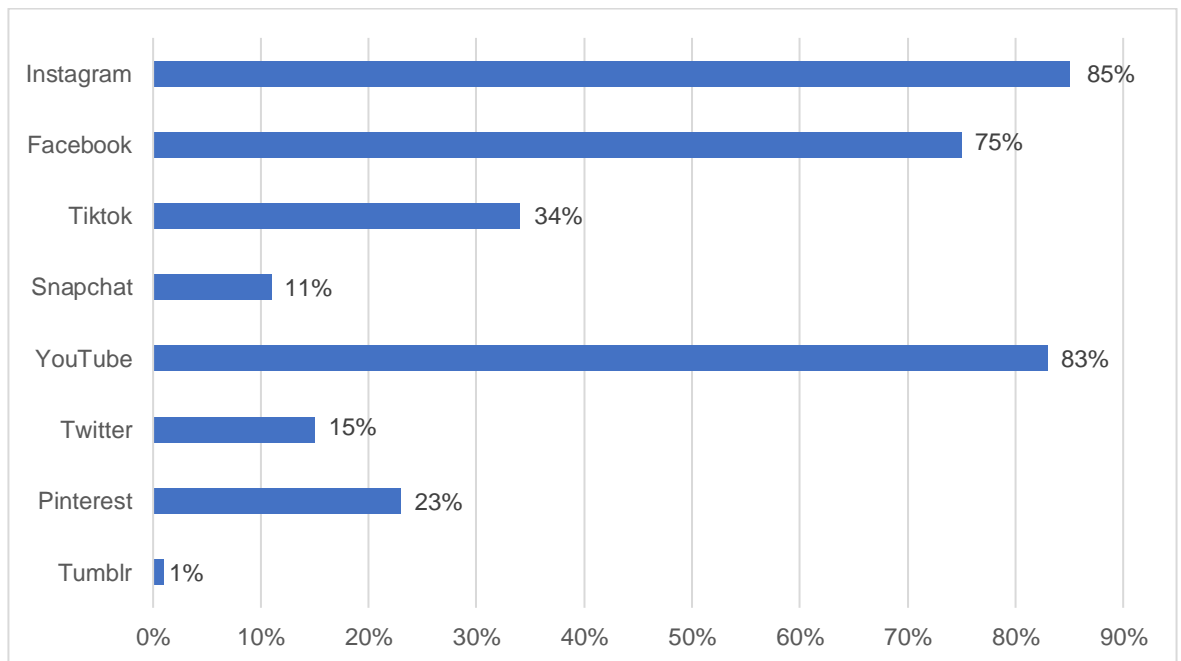


Figure 10. Social media usage (n=71)

The three most used social media platforms were Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. For the 30-41-year-olds, in addition to using the above three networks, consumers also used Pinterest and Tiktok, accounting for about 50%. Tumblr and Snapchat are rarely used for trip information (Figure 10). Overall respondents used laptops the most to make a trip online (about 70%). However, for those aged 51-60, besides using a laptop to shop for a trip, about 22% used a PC (personal computer) (Figure 11).

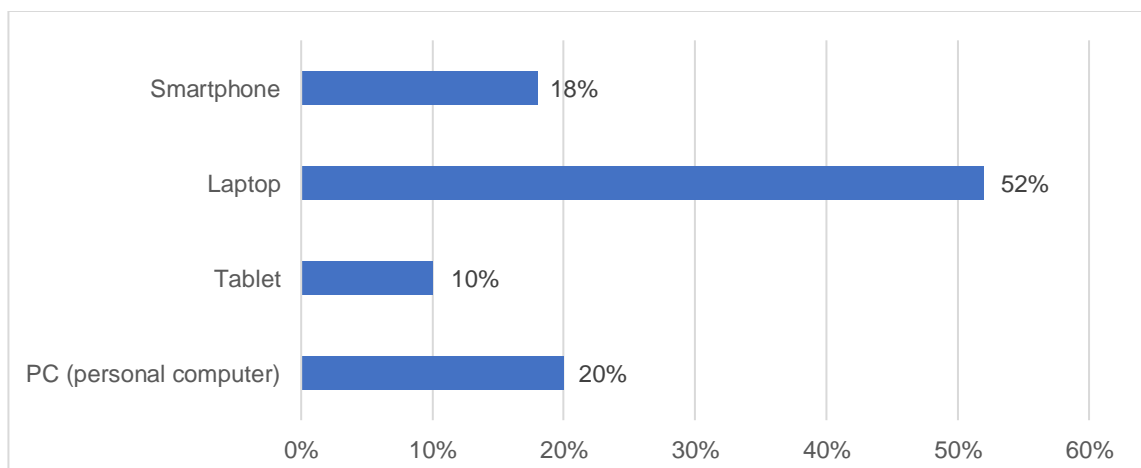


Figure 11. Devices when choosing and buying a trip (n=71)

Trust criteria

Table 3. Trust criteria (where 1 - means it is not important, and 5 - very important) (n=72)

	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	Average score
Recommendation from friends	4.2	12.5	22.2	31.9	29.2	3.7
Popularity on the Internet	4.2	18.3	12.7	40.9	23.9	3.6
Clear contact information of business (hotel, tourist services, etc.)	0	4.2	16.9	46.5	32.4	4.1
Safety payment system	0	0	8.3	29.2	62.5	4.5
Promo code and discount price	4.2	11.1	25	34.7	25	3.7
Guarantees the money refund in case of failure	1.4	7.1	18.3	35.2	38	4.0
Guarantees the safety of personal information	2.8	1.4	9.7	40.3	45.8	4.3

Based on Table 3, all respondents mentioned that a safety payment system was the most important with a 4.5 average score, then guarantees the safety of personal information was the second most important (4.3 average scores) and clear contact information of business (hotel, tourist services, etc.), with a 4.1 average score. For consumers 31-40 years old, money refund guarantees in case of failure and recommendations from friends were also essential criteria with 4.4

and 4.2, respectively. Consumers from 41-50 years of age also chose the recommendations of friends and popularity on the internet as essential criteria with 4.2 average score.

All the questions related to planning and booking a trip, social media usage, and trust criteria related to promotion and place. As mentioned in the 4Ps marketing mix section previously, promotion campaigns will be implemented on different social media platforms. These questions will help find the suitable social media sites, trust factors, and most used devices to devise the proper marketing strategy.

Elements affect respondent's the travel decisions

There were many reasons to decide to take leisure travel to a country. The most critical factors chosen were safety, adventure, and a beautiful landscape with 4.1 points. The most unimportant factor was learning a new language with 2.6 average points. Most of the countries that respondents have traveled to (outside their home country) recently were mainly European countries. A few were in Asia, such as China and Thailand. Table 4 shows the reason why respondents decided to choose a certain country to travel to.

Table 4. The reasons respondents decided to travel (where 1 - means it is not important, and 5 - very important) (n=72)

	1(%)	2(%)	3(%)	4(%)	5(%)	Average score
Beautiful landscape	1.5 %	4.3 %	17.4 %	36.2 %	40.6 %	4.1
Famous architecture /	5.7 %	8.6 %	21.4 %	38.6 %	25.7 %	3.7

historical destinations						
Low price	5.7 %	17.2 %	28.6 %	21.4 %	27.1 %	3.5
Safety	1.4 %	2.9 %	17.1 %	38.6 %	40 %	4.1
Experience new cuisines	2.8 %	15.5 %	18.3 %	36.6 %	26.8 %	3.7
Culture	2.8 %	4.2 %	26.8 %	40.8 %	25.4 %	3.8
Have an adventure	2.8 %	4.2 %	15.5 %	39.5 %	38 %	4.1
Visit friends / family	20.8 %	6.9 %	27.8 %	27.8 %	16.7 %	3.1
Learn languages	32.4 %	16.9 %	22.5 %	14.1 %	14.1 %	2.6
Direct flights	16.9 %	14.1 %	22.5 %	29.6 %	16.9 %	3.2
Easy entry procedures	5.6 %	7 %	24 %	33.8 %	29.6 %	3.7
Recommendations of friends	10 %	14.3 %	20 %	32.8 %	22.9 %	3.4

Table 5. the reason why respondent feel disappointed when visiting a country, where 1 - means strongly disagree, and 5 – strongly agree (n=72)

	Strongly disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly agree (%)	Average
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The place is different from expectation	4.2	6.9	30.5	30.6	27.8	3.7
Environmental pollution	1.4	6.9	12.5	54.2	25	3.9
Poor service quality, not worth the price	2.8	2.8	5.5	41.7	47.2	4.3
Unsafety (been robbed, terrorism, etc.)	2.8	4.2	8.3	26.4	58.3	4.3

According to Table 5, many factors affect the quality of a trip. Two main factors: lack of safety (being robbed, terrorism, etc.) and poor service quality, with 4.5 and 4.1 average scores respectively, make tourists felt unhappy when traveling. These remaining 2 questions were related to price and products in the 4Ps marketing mix. The factors of product quality and price were brought into question to understand the needs of European tourists better.

7.2. Discussion

The survey questions were all related to the elements of the 4Ps marketing mix: products, price, places and promotion. The survey shows that Vietnam made a good impression on Europeans, especially beauty and food. However, the issue of safety was poorly regarded. At the same time, the issue of safety is one that tourists feel was extremely important when traveling abroad. Therefore, Vietnam needed to have more measures to create trust for tourists, such as avoiding robberies, pickpockets in public places, increasing tourist prices, etc.

With the development of technology, customers have become more independent and more intelligent when planning and buying a trip online by themselves. Secondary data shows that 82% of all travel bookings were made online through a mobile app or website without any human interaction. The survey shows the same results when over 80% of travelers plan and book a trip online. Depending on their age, the ways to plan their trips were different such as that 20-30-year-olds and 41-50-year-olds, they will spend time surfing the internet to look for their information and read the feedback on the travel sites.

In comparison, people in their thirties and forties want to read more social media feedback, and they also want to ask for recommendations from friends. The most used social media platforms are Instagram, Facebook, and Youtube. In addition, people also use Tiktok and Pinterest quite regularly, especially those aged 30-40 years. So, in addition to focusing on marketing on social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube, Tiktok and Pinterest are still worth investing in regarding content. As previously mentioned, tablets have officially overtaken cell phones in terms of shopping and booking flights and hotels. Nevertheless, according to the survey, customers use laptops and PCs more than smartphones and tablets to buy a trip. Therefore, travel agencies should develop interfaces on tablets, laptops, and PCs rather than smartphones, laptops, and PCs. User-friendly interfaces, simple, fast page load speeds, limited interruptions, secure payment systems, and restrict risks when paying by PayPal are all important.

8. SUMMARY

The rapid change of technology and the imperative of businesses to find ways to adapt to say is inevitable. The faster a company adapts to technology, the easier it will be to succeed.

Businesses in multiple fields are already using digital marketing to increase sales and increase the number of customers. The current tourism industry channel has also been greatly influenced by technology. The number of internet users increases rapidly every year. The number of registrations on social networking sites also increases, making it easier for businesses to communicate and reach customers based on demographics. These days, more and more people use the internet to find out information about where they want to go or buy a journey. Customers are getting more intelligent: they choose to buy products online rather than agents because many reputable travel websites easily compare prices and find out the right products. Today's new generation is more independent than the old generation, and they will search for information and shopping on their own. Moreover, the development of social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, etc. has motivated and inspired many travelers to explore the world. Therefore, marketers need to be dynamic, creative, and constantly refreshing.

Vietnam's tourism industry has a lot of great potential for development; its abundant natural resources and beautiful scenery make it suitable for resorts when considering its warm tropical weather all year round. There are many conditions for development, however. Vietnam currently has not fully exploited the values of its tourism potential. The tourism industry still lacks digital advancements and online presence to allow for promotion worldwide. Travel companies have now invested more money in digital marketing, which is considered as a driving force to promote Vietnamese tourism in the international market, especially for European tourists. The application of the 4 Ps marketing mix is an up-to-date digital marketing strategy to attract leisure European tourists to Vietnam.

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Appendices

Survey: About understanding traveler's behavior

This thesis aims to understand People's online consumption Habits before traveling, giving directions for digital marketing strategies to attract international tourists to Vietnam. The following questionnaire will require approximately 5 minutes to complete. The survey is Anonymous, and the answers will be used for research purposes exclusively.

Thank you for taking your time to assist me with this research and enhance my understanding of this research focus.

1. Your age?
 - Less than 20 years old
 - 20-30 years old
 - 31-40 years old
 - 41-50 years old
 - 51-60 years old
 - Over 61

2. Your place of residence:

3. Your nationality:

4. Have you been Vietnam?
 - Yes
 - No

5. What impresses you about Vietnam? (You can choose more than one answer)
 - Beautiful natural landscapes
 - The excellent country for outdoor adventures
 - Hospitality and friendly people

Appendix 1

- The diversified and unique culture
 - You do not know very much about Vietnam.
 - Other, please specify
6. Do you use online resources for planning a trip?
- Always
 - Often
 - Never
7. Do you use online resources for booking travel?
- Always
 - Often
 - Never
8. What do you do before booking a trip?

	Never	Often	Sometimes	Usually	Always
Spent time surfing the internet to look for the information					
Read review from traveller on virtual community sites/ travel guidebook sites/ online travel agencies.					
Watch video on the Internet from travel bloggers/ reviews/ influencers					
Search information and pictures from social media platform such as Facebook, Instagram, Tiktok, etc by hashtags, destinations.					
Ask recommend form friend					

9. What country did you visit last time? (Outside your home country)

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10. In general, what makes you decide to travel to that country (Please, rate each factor on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 - means it is not important, and 5 – very important)

	1	2	3	4	5
Beautiful landscape					
Famous architecture/ historical destinations					
Low price					
Safety					
Experience new cuisines					
Culture					
Have an adventure					
Visit friends/ family					
Learn languages					
Direct flights					
Easy entry procedures					
Recommendations of friend					

11. What makes you usually disappointed when visiting the one country

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Environmental pollution					
Poor service quality, not worth the price					
Unsafety (been robbed, terrorism, etc.)					
The place is different from expectation					

12. Choose 3 social platforms do you use the most

- Instagram
- Facebook
- Tiktok
- Snapchat
- YouTube

Appendix 1

- Twitter
- Pinterest
- Tumblr

13. When you decide to shop a trip online, what device are you more likely to shop and buy with

- Smartphone
- Laptop
- Tablet
- PC (personal computer)

14. When choosing Internet resources for travel planning, what is important to you? (Please, rate each factor on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 - means it is not important, and 5 – very important)

	1	2	3	4	5
Recommendation from friends					
Popularity on the Internet					
Clear contact information of business (hotel, tourist services, etc.)					
Safety payment system					
Guarantees the money refund in case of failure					
Guarantees the safety of personal information					
Promo code and discount price					
