

Using Social Media as a Strategic Tool for Achieving Long-Term Goals in Cypriot SME Hotels

Iordanis Katemliadis¹, Sotiris Apostolopoulos², Christos Papademetriou² and Ivan Paunovic³

¹Dept. of Business and Management, UCLAN Cyprus, 7080 Pyla, Cyprus

²Dept. of Economics and Business, Neapolis University Pafos, Cyprus

³Hochschule Koblenz/Koblenz University of Applied Sciences, Germany

ikatemliadis@uclan.ac.uk

s.apostolopoulos@nup.ac.cy

c.papademetriou@nup.ac.cy

paunovic@hs-koblenz.de

Abstract: The present empirical study examines to which extended level Cypriot hotels utilize social media as a strategic tool to mainly engage customers and build a robust brand. Undoubtedly, the ongoing digitalization of the hospitality industry in many EU countries places social media platforms as essential instruments of strategic management and competitive advantage with the relevant enterprises of the hotel sector implementing and integrating social media strategies into their operational and marketing frameworks as well. In this light, the aim of this research is to assess the level of the aforementioned strategic integration towards SME hotels in Cyprus. Empirically, a qualitative approach was adopted by collecting data through semi-structured interviews with ten owners/managing directors of such hotels across Cyprus in order to detect their views and experiences on the use of social media specifically for brand development, partnership establishment, customer engagement and service innovation. Findings indicated the crucial role of social media in establishing robust brand endeavors whilst it is evident that they are recognized by the interviewees as a strategic asset to achieve broader business goals, not just a promotional tool. However, the level of strategic integration varies across the concrete enterprises, depending mostly on the organization size, leadership mindset, and resource availability. Lastly, hotels that consistently treat social media with a focus on a long-term vision exhibit increased customer engagement and loyalty, more effective reputation management, new partnerships formation, and stronger adaptability to market shifts or successive crises.

Keywords: Social Media, Cyprus, Smes, Hotels, Strategy, Qualitative

1. Introduction

The tourism and Hospitality Industry is a sector of the economy that depends immensely on the exchange of information, includes intangible elements and uses extensively the multimedia technologies to present its products and services and engage customers. The hospitality sector has been dramatically transformed with the introduction of the Internet in the mid 1990's that shifted much of the power from the supply side (e.g. hotels) to the consumer side (tourists) and changed the way we communicate and interact with each other (Alves de Castro & Carthy, 2021). The second major shift happened at the beginning of 2000's with the first social media networks (SM) appearing, introducing new technologies and offering new interactive tools to businesses and people (Appel et al., 2020). In 2003 Myspace and LinkedIn, in 2004 Facebook, in 2005-2006 Twitter (now X) and YouTube, in 2010-11 Instagram and Snapchat and most recently TikTok (2019) changed forever the landscape in many aspects of life and business and unavoidably affected hospitality in very profound ways. The industry found a powerful tool to create and tell stories, interact with large audiences, create experiences and use them in creative ways to overcome inherent difficulties in the way the tourism product is presented. If we want to provide a definition, we can say that SM is an umbrella term that describes several online platforms such as blogs, business networks, collaborative projects, enterprise social networks (SN), forums, microblogs, photo sharing, social bookmarking, social gaming and video sharing (Aichner et. al., 2021). SM proves to be an important tool especially for Small and Medium Sized (SMEs) hotel companies. According to European Commission (2020) definition SMEs within European territory are defined as those that employ fewer than 250 people; and have either an annual turnover not exceeding EUR 50 million or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding EUR 43 million. SMEs are the backbone of the European economy representing 9 out of every 10 companies and creating 2 out of 3 jobs. They are also heavily involved in innovation, and they are very important for the prosperity of the continent. In Cyprus almost all companies in all sectors are considered SMEs by European standards.

Research has shown that SM can be a driving force towards the internationalization process of businesses and can decrease the costs of a business (Belás, et al.,2021.) It can also help SMEs to compete and stand out

adopting the use of SM in the advertising front (Wardati and Mahendrawathi, 2019). Other scholars have found a significant influence of SM on SME performance as a cost effective interactive, compatible tool (Qalati et al., 2022).

SM can help the hospitality in various areas such as brand development, customer engagement, service innovation (Prodromou et al, 2025; Paunovic et al. 2022) and partnership establishments and no longer serves as only a tool to improve visibility. Hotels need to treat SM as a strategic tool that they can use to achieve their long-term goals, integrate them across departments and treat them as a revenue engine. This qualitative study endeavors to address the challenge of understanding at what extend hotel managers of SMEs in Pafos, Cyprus use SM as a strategic tool and how they can use them in the long run.

Research questions

- To what extent do hotel managers of SMEs use SM as a strategic tool
- How SME hotels can use SM to achieve their long-term goals

2. Literature Review

It is estimated that there are currently 5.4 billion users of SM worldwide using various platforms and the numbers are keep growing projected to reach 6.05 billion by 2028 (Statista, 2025). This trend, as part of the digitalization discussion, has attracted many scholars in the last decade and a growing number of articles have been published. Most predict that SM is not just another trend, and it has revolutionized the way SMEs are operating, affecting all areas of business. Different scholars have researched the topic following different research streams.

At the beginning of the phenomenon, in the mid 2000's many researchers focused on how SM has affected the tourism industry. This initial research interest was followed by studies on the use of social media in tourism demand and supply and destination marketing (Leung et al.,2021). During that period and until 2014 the following research streams have dominated this research area: the role and effects of social media, behavior of social media users, social media content, and literature review (Lu et al., 2018). A quantitative approach to the topic by Leung et al (2017) revealed that Word of Mouth (WOM) was used as the major theoretical foundation to analyze the social media field. Other scholars turned their attention to consumer behaviors' theoretical frameworks to investigate service failures and service recovery mechanisms in the hospitality industry (Nusair, et al.,2019). They also revealed that this research area is using a very diverse set of theoretical frameworks such as online reviews, information technology and user generated content (UGC). They support the notion that hospitality companies need to transform their practices beyond marketing to customer service since the new medium provides us with this opportunity.

Other scholars reported that most of the social media research is using quantitative research methods predominantly and apart from the above research streams new ones were introduced between 2011 and 2016 such as service quality service recovery, customer satisfaction, brand/destination image, service quality, big data, netnography, Travel 2.0 and Web 2.0 (Nusair, et al.,2019; Katemliadis et al., 2025). This means that Hospitality companies can use social media analytics to take better decisions using the data provided by the SM.

Many scholars in their work present areas where SM can help companies either in day-to-day operations or more long term strategically. SM for example can play an important role in sales and generate income as well as collect feedback from their visitors and use it to become more innovative. Research has revealed that the SM platforms experience and especially information credibility and quality are very important for end users (Galati, et al., 2017). The same authors identified that consumer outcomes have received the most interest from researchers. This notion is supported by other scholars as well and especially how SM impacts travel-related decisions (Hudson and Thal, 2013).

In another stream of research, it was pointed out that in order SM to build trust with consumers and brand communities they need to cater for the consumer perceived values of utilitarian, hedonic, and social. This in turn will create SM WoM (Word of Mouth) and lead to purchase intentions, which is the ultimate goal after all. This study is one of the few that identify the opportunity companies to leverage their SM brand communities into business strategies (Wang, et al., 2021). The use of SM as sales tool was also addressed but it was pointed out it can be also used as an instrument to improve employee engagement and create a sense of belonging (Cartwright & Raddats, 2021).

Despite the widespread adoption of SM, most companies treat them more as a marketing tool and less as a strategic tool they can use. Research conducted indicated that Hotels use SM as a one-way communication and there are missing out the strategic role, they can play for a variety of business purposes such as customer service and stakeholder relationships (Kim and Chae 2018). The same study showed that hotels that used Twitter (now X) have positively affected their Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR). Furthermore, blogs and consumer feedback can provide companies with user generated content (UGC) that they can use as a strategic tool (Bowen & Bowen, 2016). The above further reinforces the importance of SM as a strategic tool and asks for reorganization of their resources.

There is skepticism though for the impact of SM on creating value since hotel companies spend large amounts using them (Garrido-Moreno, et al., 2018). Research on this area is underdeveloped even though after 2018 more research has focused on it and recent ones examine the influence of SM on the quality of hotel services and the behavioral intentions of tourists (Han, et al., 2025). The latter research highlights the critical role of social media marketing in elevating hotel services and inform strategic recommendations for enhancing marketing approaches in the hospitality sector. This can lead to positively impacting the performance of hotels creating an advantage for those companies. To do so, research suggests that managers need to use SM to collect customer information and share this information in all departments to improve customer satisfaction and engagement (Garrido-Moreno, et al., 2018). The same research highlighted the importance of creating a strategy on how to treat customer reviews as a guide to measure their impact.

A stream of research that has attracted considerable attention is the use of SM in advertising (Voorveld, et al., 2018). SM companies created their own advertising platforms, and their mainstream revenue comes from it, and it is now for most marketers the most important venue for advertising (Saxena and Khanna 2013). The academic world has followed this trend, and we see an increasing number of studies on this topic. Surprisingly this stream of research has largely ignored the Hospitality and Tourism industry and a few scholars researched SM advertising in the industry. They tended to focus on SM use as communication platforms and many advertising Journals ignored SM advertising in hospitality. Other scholars though claim that advertising is well researched not as a stand-alone topic but as part of the marketing mix of 4Ps (product, price, promotion and place) (Morosan et al., 2014).

Future areas of research for SM can focus on brand safety in digital space viral marketing and the impact of influencer marketing on travel decisions in Hotel, Tourism and Travel (HTT) (Chu, et al., 2020).

3. Methodological Approach

Empirically, a qualitative approach was adopted by collecting data through semi-structured in-depth interviews (Aung et al., 2021) with ten owners/managing directors of hotels in Cyprus to detect their views and experiences on the use of social media specifically for brand development, partnership establishment, customer engagement and service innovation. More precisely, an inductive research methodology has been applied to explore to what extent do the endeavors of SME Cypriot hotels in utilizing social media contribute to achieving long term- goals towards brand awareness, customers attraction and competitive advantage (Apostolopoulos et al, 2022; Thomas 2006). More specifically Pafos was chosen due to the fact that is considered a tourist area, exhibiting over the last few years an exceptional status towards hospitality enterprises and specifically with regard to the continually impressive development of the hotel industry. The concept of social media contribution to achieving strategic long-term goals in relation to the rising local entrepreneurship (within the concrete industry) played a pivotal role in emphasizing Pafos.

The ongoing digitalization and the support of relevant EU funding provide such hotels with the opportunity of enhancing brand awareness, fostering customer loyalty, driving direct bookings, and enabling effective reputation management through social media. However, to achieve goals like these, hotel enterprises need to realize that social media could serve as part of an overall strategic vision not just for the needs of simple advertising which is a robust tool.

Acknowledging the existing body of literature that confirms the broader strategic role of social media in hospitality sector as well, this exploratory study examines the aforementioned areas that could be influenced by these digital tools whilst using the authors' network and snowballing for further interviewees within sample strategy. In relation to the sample size, research team has kept a small sample (Paunović et al, 2024; Makris et. al, 2025) so as not to lose subjective and individual characteristics (Patton, 2002). We need also to clarify at this point that before snowballing; convenience sampling was employed to initially recruit some hotel entrepreneurs (due to easy access to certain hoteliers) and then through the snowballing expansion we ended

up tracing the rest of them. Both non-probability sampling methods and drawing conclusions for the entire Cypriot hotel industry is certainly limited.

Interviews took place between May and August 2025 through in-person and online meetings.

Table 1: Sample Study – Cypriot SME hotels

	Interviewee	Type Of Hotel
I1	RESORT	
I2	RESORT	
I3	RESORT	
I4	BOUTIQUE	
I5	LOW BUDGET	
I6	LOW BUDGET	
I7	LUXURY	
I8	LUXURY	
I9	LUXURY	
I10	LUXURY	

Overall, ten interview transcripts were translated, transcribed and analyzed, identifying the key themes. We tried to keep the sample size small so that each case would have a distinct narrative (Robinson et al, 2014), focusing on the subjective and individualized characteristics of each interview.

Regarding the latter, there is qualitative empirical research with a smaller sample size conducted on owners and employees using semi-structured interviews (Kraus et al, 2019).

Approaching the overarching topic inductively, we do not test a specific theory but let relevant themes emerge from our data (Creswell, 2005). In this light, the literature review is utilized as an overview of the field, avoiding establishing a theory/hypothesis to be tested whilst the latter could be part of a future research project when the area is more comprehensive (Apostolopoulos et al, 2025).

4. Findings

In the results section, the following six themes have been identified: (1) The strategic role of social media, (2) communication management and customer engagement, (3) performance and ROI measurement, (4) benefits and competitive advantage, (5) operational challenges and constraints, (6) future trends & innovation issues. The number of respondents appeared in this section constitutes just an indicative example of quotes (highlighting we would say the most insightful views), which is a very common practice in qualitative finding analysis (Gittins et al, 2025; Henderson et al, 2020). Additionally, the wordcount limit (5000 words including references) didn't leave much space for encompassing more, especially for an empirical study like the particular one which features in-depth personal interviews.

4.1 The Strategic Role of Social Media

All interviewees currently perceive social media as a strategic tool and integrate the relevant social media platforms into their operations whilst utilizing them to achieve long-term goals, mostly towards brand awareness and new partnerships formation.

“Definitely we utilize social media for strategic reasons, things have changed” (I1)

“It’s not just a promotional tool, it’s part of our strategic design and implementation” (I7)

“Since it’s undeniable a valuable instrument for enhancing our brand reputation and awareness, we try to use it that way” (I8)

Within their managerial duties, they consider social media a notable instrument in making decision-making processes and tactical choices

“Social media offers a robust pipeline to strategically improve your position in the market by

making the proper decisions. See how many enterprises succeed exclusively though Tik Tok. However, it's not an easy process, it must be part of your strategic vision from the very beginning' (12)

"I would say, the usage of social media became the last few years a main responsibility of the administration generally, of course along the marketing department, but now it's clear more than ever how important they are in achieving long-term goals. For me, LinkedIn is most effective platform concerning that type of endeavors" (19)

4.2 Communication Management and Customer Engagement

Most of the participating owners and managing directors have assessed the integration of social media towards this issue very effectively as the brand recognition is continuously enhanced via targeted social media campaigns while mentioning that new audiences are reaching out more easily.

"Social media help definitely. The promotion of our services can be easily established while we are looking for potential partnerships." (16)

"Since we are definitely more visible now via the usage of social media, we are mostly getting feedback from customers, subsequently we have the capability to improve our services and at the same time to strategically set new goals." (110)

"We extensively use Facebook since it's the number most popular platform in Cyprus. The feedback and evaluations of our services on our services are very helpful to sometimes change our long-term strategy' (15)

"Specifically, we formed a significant partnership with a local but very popular football club. The owners saw one of our campaigns, which was actually related to promoting our facilities and hosting events, long story sort, we talked directly through Instagram platform closing later on a remarkable timely deal." (17)

4.3 Performance and ROI Measurement

Interviewees claim that it's easy and hard at the same time to measure such performance. In terms of achieving specific long-term goals, the financial outcomes could be compared to ROI process.

"We constantly track how many direct bookings resulted from our social media activities using analytical tools and calculating the return on investment (ROI) on advertising expenditure. This refers mostly to accommodation services" (11)

"When it comes to renting rooms it's easy I suppose, but as far as the other dimensions of our operations like restaurant, cafeteria, spa area, oftentimes you really don't know if they have reached you via social media, I mean due to the very sort of service offered to specific customers such as local citizens. However, we try to measure the grow and attractiveness of our services through indicators such KPIs" (Key Performance Indicators) (17)

"You need time, more human resources and data to measure the impact of social media on your undertaking" (14)

"The metrics that we mostly pay attention are related to the relevant users' share of our posts or time they spend on our pages. However, you need to be careful which feed leads to customer engagement, and this has to do with the consistency of posting on social media platforms" (18)

4.4 Benefits and Competitive Advantage

Respondents stated that receiving feedback via customers' evaluations and rating helps them to launch new services while increasing their visibility.

"Social media enhance the visibility of our presence. But if a hotel business needs to achieve long-term goals featuring major outcomes it needs many financial resources, marketing experts and doing this consistently (12)

"With regard to achieving long-term goals, some proved benefits constitute the increase of customer trust in terms of gaining and retaining consumer trust which very impactful on loyalty." (I7)

"More visible, a fact that creates further opportunities" (I7)

"Among others, there is obviously a rise in direct bookings without depending on external partners. We reduce costs like that." (I10)

4.5 Operational Challenges and Constraints

There exist different points of view among respondents towards the existing hurdles in the field. This diversity is derived from the fact that not all types of hotels inherently face the same challenges, and the deployment refers to other aspects, not only the social media and long-term strategy.

"I mean, luxury hotels need to allocate more financial resources for social media usage since the content must be compatible with the whole image and equal to any previously implemented campaigns. We talk about high-quality content, there is no other way, trust me on this one." (I7)

"The lack of expert workforce to undertake that kind of processes" (I2)

"I would say, it's more than one, we need staff heavily engaged in marketing and maybe strategic planning, worktime as well as capitals." (I3)

"Boutique hotels like ours should create a story strictly related to our hospitality concept and maintaining on that every day through the relevant digital content on social media. This is a micro-enterprise and believe me it's not easy, mostly due to the existing lack of capitals in order for us to invest on digital advertising generally" (I4)

"For small businesses the emerging cost for actions like that are not affordable" (I6)

4.6 Future Trends and Innovation Issues

Respondents argue that over the last years technology has changed everything. They also feel that more about to come in this field and assess innovation as the key factor for hospitality sector to overcome any challenges in the future.

"New digital platforms within social media offer more options and sometimes without huge expenses, especially when mixed with AI tools" (I5)

The digital environment that has been shaped brings opportunities and the respective strategic moves should be adapted accordingly, although most of the interviewees admitted that the Cypriot hotel sector lacks digital applications within their operations.

"If we utilize the emerging wave of social media and how the users think and react over, then it might be easy to focus on specific content options that could reach out for new partnerships." (I6)

"I suppose that as we continue to rely, for instance, on the feedback we receive from our customers through innovative ways offered by social media, such as creating our own high-quality videos, tracing exceptional ideas for creating outstanding content and monitoring specific indicators, we could reduce strategic planning and marketing expenses". (I9)

5. Discussion

The six identified themes from the results section set the stage for future deeper interpretation of the results in relation to existing literature and precisely defining the contributions in the research field of social media usage in the hotel industry, and the wider tourism industry. For example, the present research provides ample evidence that

The findings of the present study confirm the previous results of Nusair et al (2019) that hospitality companies can use social media analytics to take better decisions using the data provided by the SM. For example, our interview partner I2 confirms that "Social media offers a robust pipeline to strategically improve your position in

the market by making the proper decisions.”

The results of the present study confirm that SM can be used as an instrument for increasing sales, as previously suggested by Cartwright & Raddats (2021). Our informant I10 stated that ‘Among others, there is obviously a rise of direct bookings without depending on external partners. We save costs like that.’ However, previous literature also suggests that SM can be used not only as a one-way communication tool, but also as strategic tool for two-way (Web 2.0) communication, thereby useful for a variety of business purposes such as customer service and stakeholder relationships (Kim and Chae 2018; Paunovic et al. 2022). In that sense, our informants I6 confirms that: “Social media help definitely. The promotion of our services can be easily established while we are looking for potential partnerships.” (I6). Informant I7 even expands the evidence by stating that: ‘Specifically, we formed a significant partnership with a local but very popular football club. The owners saw one of our campaigns, which was related to promoting our facilities and hosting events, long story sort, we talked directly through Instagram platform closing later on a remarkable timely deal.’ (I7)

Managers often use SM to collect customer information and share this information across departments (Garrido-Moreno, et al., 2018). However, in the present research no evidence was found of organization-wide or cross-departmental information sharing. This should be further investigated by future research. Having in mind the complex nature of the research phenomenon, future research should focus on using mixed-methods or multiple methods of research projects regarding social media in the hotel industry. This could provide reach evidence and higher reliability of the results compared to the present studies in the field.

6. Conclusions

Findings indicated the crucial role of social media in establishing robust brand presence and sales activity on the market. However, it is also evident that SM is largely recognized by the interviewees as a strategic asset to achieve broader business goals inside Web 2.0, not just seen as a promotional tool for Web 1.0. However, the level of strategic integration varies across the concrete enterprises, depending mostly on the organization size, leadership mindset, and resource availability. Lastly, hotels that consistently treat social media with a focus on a long-term vision, exhibit increased customer engagement and loyalty, more effective reputation management, new partnerships formation, and stronger adaptability to market shifts or successive crises.

Ethics Declaration

We hereby declare that no ethical clearance is required for the research / not applicable

AI Declaration

We hereby declare that no AI usage has been carried out throughout the conduction of the study and the preparation of the relevant manuscript.

References

- Aichner, T., Grünfelder, M., Maurer, O. and Jegeni, D., (2021) “Twenty-five years of social media: a review of social media applications and definitions from 1994 to 2019”. *Cyberpsychology, behavior, and social networking*, Vol. 24 No.4, pp. 215-222.
- Alves de Castro, C. and Carthy, A., (2021). “The evolution of the internet and social media: A literature review”.
- Apostolopoulos, S., Papanikolaou, C., Dimitrakopoulos, P., & Walmsley, A. (2025, September) “Forming B2B Sales Strategies: Digital Challenges, Mutual Benefits and Supportive Partnerships Establishment. In European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship” (pp. 22-30). *Academic Conferences International Limited*.
- Apostolopoulos, S., Makris, I., & Stavroyiannis, S. (2022) “Healthcare innovation in Greece: the views of private health entrepreneurs on implementing innovative plans”, *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, Vol 8, No.2, p.78.
- Appel, G., Grewal, L., Hadi, R. and Stephen, A.T., (2020) “The future of social media in marketing”, *Journal of the Academy of Marketing science*, Vol.48, No.1, pp. 79-95.
- Aung, K. T., Razak, R. A., & Nazry, N. N. M. (2021) “Establishing validity and reliability of semi-structured interview questionnaire in developing risk communication module: A pilot study. *Edunesia” Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, Vol. 2 No.3, pp. 600-606.
- Belás, J., Amoah, J., Dvorský, J. and Šuleř, P., (2021) “The importance of social media for management of SMEs”, *Economics and Sociology*.

- Bowen, G. and Bowen, D., (2016) "social media: strategic decision-making tool. In *Competitive social media marketing strategies*, (pp. 94-111). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.
- Cartwright, S., Liu, H. and Raddats, C., (2021) "Strategic use of social media within business-to-business (B2B) marketing: A systematic literature review" *Industrial Marketing Management*, Vol. 97, pp. 35-58.
- Chu, S.C., Deng, T. and Cheng, H., (2020) "The role of social media advertising in hospitality, tourism and travel: a literature review and research agenda", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 32, No.11, pp. 3419-3438
- Creswell, J. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches; Sage Publications: Newbury Park, CA, USA, 2005.
- European Commission, 2020, available at <https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/42921>, accessed 24/11/2025
- Galati, A., Crescimanno, M., Tinervia, S. and Fagnani, F., (2017) "Social media as a strategic marketing tool in the Sicilian wine industry: Evidence from Facebook", *Wine Economics and Policy*, Vol. 6, No.1, pp. 40-47.
- Garrido-Moreno, A., García-Morales, V.J., Lockett, N. and King, S., (2018) "The missing link: Creating value with social media use in hotels", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol 75, pp. 94- 104.
- Gittins, P., Apostolopoulos, S., Anastasopoulou, E. E., & Apostolopoulos, N. (2025). Responding to Greece's constrained agricultural context: Farm diversification strategies used by family farmers. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 113, 103522.
- Han, L., Mingying, H. and Peng, Z., (2025) "The influence of social media marketing on the quality of hotel services and the behavioral intentions of tourists". *Acta Psychologica*, Vol 255, p. 104881.
- Henderson, F., Steiner, A., Mazzei, M., & Docherty, C. (2020). Social enterprises' impact on older people's health and wellbeing: exploring Scottish experiences. *Health Promotion International*, 35(5), 1074-1084.
- Hudson, S. and Thal, K., (2013) "The impact of social media on the consumer decision process: Implications for tourism marketing", *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, Vol 30, No (1-2), pp.156- 160.
- Katemliadis, I., Papatheodorou, A., Doumi, M. and Karachalis, N., 2025. Drivers of efficient destination management in times of transition: Key findings for Destination Development Management and Marketing Organisations (DDMMOs). *Tourism and Hospitality*, 6(5), p. 244.
- Kim, W.H. and Chae, B., (2018) "Understanding the relationship among resources, social media use and hotel performance: The case of Twitter use by hotels", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol 30, No 9, pp. 2888-2907
- Kraus, S., Gast, J., Schleich, M., Jones, P., & Ritter, M. (2019). Content is king: How SMEs create content for social media marketing under limited resources. *Journal of Macromarketing*, 39(4), 415-430.
- Leung, X.Y., Sun, J. and Bai, B., (2017) "Bibliometrics of social media research: A co-citation and co-word analysis" *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol 66, pp. 35-45.
- Leung, X.Y., Sun, J. and Bai, B., (2021) "Social media research in hospitality and tourism: a causal chain framework of literature review" *Tourism and hospitality management*, Vol 27, No 3, pp. 455-477.
- Lu, Y., Chen, Z. and Law, R., (2018) "Mapping the progress of social media research in hospitality and tourism management from 2004 to 2014" *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, Vol 35, No2, pp. 102- 118.
- Makris, I., Apostolopoulos, S., Giannopoulos, V., Dimitrakopoulos, P., & Charalampakis, P. (2025) "The Impact of Formal and Informal Institutional Elements on Land Mobility Within Rural Greece" *Sustainability*, Vol 17, No 12, pp. 4412.
- Morosan, C., (2014). Toward an integrated model of adoption of mobile phones for purchasing ancillary services in air travel. *International journal of contemporary hospitality management*, 26(2), pp. 246-271.
- Nusair, K., Butt, I. and Nikhashemi, S.R., (2019) "A bibliometric analysis of social media in hospitality and tourism research" *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol 31, No 7, pp. 2691-2719.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3rd ed., Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Paunović, I., Apostolopoulos, S., Miljković, I. B., & Stojanović, M. (2024) "Sustainable rural healthcare entrepreneurship: A case study of Serbia", *Sustainability*, Vol 16, No3, pp. 1143.
- Paunovic, I., Obermayer, N., & Kovari, E. (2022) "Online branding strategies of family SME wineries: a Hungarian German comparative study" *Journal of Family Business Management*, Vol 12, No3, pp. 450- 467.
- Prodromou, A., Apostolopoulos, N., Masouras, A., Apostolopoulos, S., & Katemliadis, I. (2025, September) "Exploring Digital Innovation Issues in Luxury Hospitality Enterprises Towards EU Funding Status. In European Conference on Innovation and Entrepreneurship" (pp. 566-574). Academic Conferences International Limited.
- Qalati, S.A., Ostic, D., Sulaiman, M.A.B.A., Gopang, A.A. and Khan, A., (2022) "Social media and SMEs' performance in developing countries: Effects of technological-organizational-environmental factors on the adoption of social media", *Sage Open*, Vol 12, No2, p.21582440221094594.
- Robinson, O.C. Sampling in Interview-Based Qualitative Research: A Theoretical and Practical Guide. *Qual. Res. Psychol.* 2014, Vol. 11, 25–41.
- Saxena, A. and Khanna, U., (2013) "Advertising on social network sites: A structural equation modelling approach" *Vision*, Vol 17 No.1, pp. 17-25.
- Statista, 2025, available at https://www.statista.com/topics/1164/socialnetworks/?srsltid=AfmBOopgGqPQpFjQgN1ZTnVimgtGsTevS-qy0gBcC40ULZb_sLlmeRi, accessed 24/11/2025
- Thomas, D. R. (2006) "A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data", *American journal of evaluation*, Vol 27, No.2, pp. 237-246

- Voorveld, H.A., Van Noort, G., Muntinga, D.G. and Bronner, F., (2018) "Engagement with social media and social media advertising: The differentiating role of platform type", *Journal of advertising*, Vol 47, No1, pp. 38-54.
- Wang, X., Wang, Y., Lin, X. and Abdullat, A., (2021) "The dual concept of consumer value in social media brand community: A trust transfer perspective", *International Journal of Information Management*, Vol 59, p. 102319.
- Wardati, N.K. and Mahendrawathi, E.R., (2019) "The impact of social media usage on the sales process in small and medium enterprises (SMEs): A systematic literature review", *Procedia computer science*, Vol 161, pp. 976-983.