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Copywriting Strategies in Tourism Facebook Fan Page Marketing: Investigating the Role of Gender Differences^{1,2}

(Received Jul 05, 2022; First Revision Aug 31, 2022; Second Revision Oct 20, 2022;
Accepted Nov 07, 2022)

Purpose – This study aimed to determine what types of tourism Facebook fan page content are suitable given a target tourism product. Specifically, we examined the copywriting strategies used to create good Facebook fan page content. In addition, we were interested in exploring the role of gender in this type of decision-making.

Design/methodology/approach – We collected and analyzed Facebook postings of a leading Taiwanese travel agency. We collected a total of 547 posts from January 1, 2013, to May 31, 2014. These posts were classified into 168 tourist products.

Findings – The results of the research show that males prefer copywriting that contains rational advertisement appeals in posts while females prefer copywriting that contains emotional advertisement appeals in posts. Moreover, males prefer posts on tourism products that focus on sensation-seeking attractions, whereas female prefer posts that focus on sensation-avoiding attractions. We further found that posts that have a better fit between copywriting strategies and tourism products based on gender preferences can perform better in terms of total reach and greater numbers of comments, likes, and shares.

Research limitations/implications – This study finds that social media marketers should consider genders when designing marketing campaigns on corporate Facebook fan pages. Furthermore, gender differences also affect the design of copywriting for the product being marketed and the advertising appeals being used.

Practical implications/Social implications – This research demonstrates how to design a proper copywriting strategy based on gender differences. The results can benefit the tourism industry by equipping it with the theoretical principles to guide practitioners' decisions.

Originality/value – While most of related studies are mainly focused on user-generated content strategy rather than firm-generated content strategy, this research adopts the perspective of the firm to facilitate our understanding of copywriting strategies on the firm's owned social media platform.

Keywords – Facebook fan page, Social media, Copywriting strategy, Gender difference

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¹ This paper is based on our previous work "A Study of Gender Differences in Preferences of Tourism Facebook Fanpage Posts," published in the proceeding of 2017 Pacific-Asia Conference of Information Systems.

² This study was supported by MOST Project No. 104-2410-H-004-122-MY2.

DOI:10.6656/MR.202304_42(2).ENG001

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旅遊業臉書粉專行銷貼文之文案策略：從性別差異著眼 3,4

(Received Jul 05, 2022; First Revision Aug 31, 2022; Second Revision Oct 20, 2022;
Accepted Nov 07, 2022)

研究目的：本研究從性別差異觀點著眼，試圖瞭解不同的旅遊商品是否適合不同型態的文案策略。

研究方法/方法：我們收集台灣某大旅行社粉絲頁貼文以進行研究。共蒐集 547 個貼文，橫跨 168 個產品。

研究結果：性別偏好取向使得在男性顧客群中適合使用理性訴求的文案策略促銷感官刺激高的旅遊商品，而在女性顧客群中適合使用感性訴求的文案策略促銷感官刺激低的旅遊商品。

研究限制/啟發：性別為影響行銷文案設計以及行銷目標產品選擇之重要因素。

理論/實務/社會意涵：本研究理論上可增進臉書粉絲頁經營策略的相關研究，實務上對旅行社臉書經營者提供行銷文案的指引，從而提高粉絲頁的經營績效。

創見/價值：本研究有別於過往研究注重使用者生成內容策略，而是從企業角度了解企業生成內容策略。

關鍵字：臉書粉絲專頁、社群媒體、文案策略、性別差異

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³ 本研究奠基於前一份研究“A Study of Gender Differences in Preferences of Tourism Facebook Fanpage Posts”，發表於 proceeding of 2017 Pacific-Asia Conference of Information Systems。

⁴ 本研究由科技部計畫編號 104-2410-H-004-122-MY2 獎助。

1. Introduction

Social media has become increasingly essential for marketers. According to a recent research report on social media statistics (GlobalWebIndex 2021), 77 percent of Internet users mainly use social media to look for more information on brands. Meanwhile, 64 percent of Internet users typically learn about new brands or products via social media. Facebook remains the world's most-used social media platform, with 2.91 billion active users worldwide. On average, Facebook users spend 19.6 hours per month on the Facebook App (Chaffey 2022), and companies publish approximately 7.5 Facebook posts per day. In addition, users in general like 11 posts, leave 5 comments on posts, and click on 12 posts per month (Hootsuite 2021). Research has indicated that the main reason users join a brand's Facebook fan page is to follow its funny posts, stay informed about company activities, get updates on future products, communicate their disappointment with the brand, and show their support for the brand to their friends (Gaber, Elsamadicy, and Wright 2019).

The importance of social media to tourists' decision-making as well as to tourism management and marketing has also been confirmed (Liu et al. 2020). One Internet report, published prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, found that 84 percent of millennials plan their vacations based on someone else's travel posts and that 34 percent of them complete their bookings after viewing posts (Mentionlytics 2020). Another pre-pandemic figure reported by Statista revealed that over one third of people use social media for travel inspiration and ideas, with 60 percent sharing their own content from holidays or travels (Palmer 2021). Research from Bennett (2012) also indicated that 52 percent of travelers have changed their plans after researching their trip on social media sites and half of travel companies claim that direct bookings have been generated from social media. These results show that social media serves as an interactive platform to help consumers obtain product information or recommendations from other people, especially for travel products.

Similarly, companies are likely to benefit from using social media as a marketing channel to approach potential consumers. Many tourism and hospitality companies use Facebook fan pages as a tool to communicate with customers. For example, TourRadar's Facebook fan page reaches over 1.2 million people every month, and the company claims that its fan page has doubled its conversion rate and halved its cost per booking over a 12-month period (Prabowo 2019). STA Travel has made a good example of Facebook target advertising on its Facebook fan page. When the movie "Eat, Pray, Love" debuted, STA Travel made good use of the movie's popularity by successfully boosting tourism to India's meditation centers by 20 percent (Alfalfa Content Generator 2022). Social media marketing has gained increasing importance as a component of the portfolio of strategies employed by tourism companies.

Despite widespread consensus among marketers of the need to engage customers on social media platforms, many companies face the challenge of strategizing their social media appearance and involvement, especially the creation and distribution of compelling content to attract and/or retain customers (Li, Larimo, and Leonidou 2021). According to Jarvinen and Taiminen (2016), different social media content should be created for marketing different goods or services. A failure to meet customer needs at any level or in any segment will directly affect the effectiveness of the aggregate marketing system. Among all marketing segmentation strategies, gender has been identified as a critical factor, one related to differences in consumers' cognitive processes, decision-making strategies, and relationship building (Rialti et al. 2017; Simon 2001). Past literature on tourism has considered gender-based segmentation strategies. For example, studies have indicated that among western couples and families, women are more likely to be the primary leisure vacation planners and tourism decision-makers (Mottiar and Quinn 2004). Therefore, learning about the interests and activities of potential visitors from a gendered perspective is vital to the planning and marketing of tourism resorts (Meng, Tepanon, and Uysal 2008). Gender-blind marketing has been found to be a main cause of consumer dissatisfaction (Westwood, Pritchard, and Morgan 2000). Although the gender effect has been extensively studied in traditional marketing areas, its influence on Facebook fan page marketing is not well known. To our knowledge, few studies have discussed the effectiveness of Facebook fan page marketing or content strategies, nor have they investigated this issue from the gender perspective.

Therefore, this study aimed to determine what types of tourism Facebook fan page content are suitable given a target tourism product. Specifically, we examined the copywriting strategies used to create good Facebook fan page content. In addition, we were interested in exploring the role of gender in this type of decision-making. The following questions were investigated:

- (1) Do people of different genders have different preferences for Facebook fan page content?
- (2) Do people of different genders have different preferences when choosing tourism products?
- (3) When designing social media content strategies, do we need to promote different tourism products by using different advertising appeals in copywriting because of gender?

2. Conceptual Background

2.1 Copywriting Strategies in Facebook Fan Page Posts

As we consider Facebook fan pages as a platform to communicate with consumers, each post on these pages can be regarded as a marketing message, one which aims to transmit timely and valuable content to attract and/or retain customers. In order to make the marketing content effective, copywriting strategies are implemented to grab readers' attention (Zulkify and Firdaus 2014). According to Cambridge Dictionary (2022), copywriting is defined as "the words for advertising material." It is the act of "writing persuasive marketing and promotional materials that motivate people to take some form of action," (American Writers and Artists Institute 2022) and thus copywriting is a goal-driven content production strategy. Prior copywriting papers take three different positions on the study of effective copywriting strategies:

- Input system: in this case, researchers consider antecedents that act as inputs to the copywriting strategies. For example, Reid and Rotfeld (1976) investigate the impact of copywriters' capabilities and Stafford and Day (1995) study the influence of product types and medium types.
- Copywriting system: the copywriting strategy itself is the focus for analysis. Most of the prior literature takes this approach, with a particular interest in the elements that constitute a successful copywriting such as creativeness (Hartnett et al. 2016; Politz 1975; Wood 2009), credibility (Moldovan 1984), self-referencing (Burnkrant and Unnava 1995), informational & transformational factors (Crask and Laskey 1990), and narrative structure (Alibakhshi and Srivastava 2022; Feng, Xie, and Lou 2019).
- Outcome system: this stream of research looks at the outcome measures of copywriting strategies. For example, Swinyard and Patti (1979) have developed a communication hierarchy framework of evaluating copywriting effectiveness.

While a significant number of studies take just one position, a more integrated view within literature is absent. In this research, we classified copywriting strategies based on the goals in advertisement. The literature has indicated two types of advertising goals: informativeness and entertainment (Ducoffe 1996). Informativeness describes the utilitarian value of advertisements, i.e., whether the advertisements help consumers to acquire sufficient product information to better accomplish shopping tasks (Edwards, Li, and Lee 2002). On the other hand, advertisements can be entertaining, fulfilling consumers' demand for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional release (Ducoffe 1996). Such entertainment is usually defined in terms of the hedonic value of advertisements, i.e., whether the advertisement can make consumers' shopping process enjoyable (Edwards, Li, and Lee 2002).

Past literature has connected these two types of advertising value via rational appeals and emotional appeals, which refer to two different advertising methods employed to communicate with customers. Rational appeals advertisements emphasize informativeness. As such, these kinds of advertisements focus on product or service advantages, providing measurable benefits, such as quality, value, and performance, for consumers (Peter and Donnelly 2018). On the other hand, emotional appeals advertisements emphasize entertainment, creating a state of heightened psychological arousal by suitable positive (e.g., love, relax) or negative (e.g., fear, anger) feelings to permit consumers to receive advertising messages (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, and Kleiser 2019).

While considering copywriting strategies in Facebook fan pages, copywriters need to decide which type of advertising appeals should be incorporated into their posts for customer engagement. For example, the Cola Tour Facebook fan page post below shows copywriting that contains rational appeals for the purpose of promoting a Snoopy Museum tour in Tokyo (Figure 1a). In another example, copywriters for Cola Tour have created an emotional post that encourages travelers to plan on a northern lights trip (Figure 1b). Because copywriting can be constructed in either a rational or an emotional format, social media specialists or copywriters often struggle with determining appropriate copywriting strategies for communicating with potential customers. However, this issue is seldom discussed in the past literature.



(a) Copywriting that contains rational appeals



(b) Copywriting that contains emotional appeals

Figure 1 Copywriting Strategies in Facebook Fan Page Posts

2.2 Sensation Seeking in Tourism

People have different preferences in choosing tourism products. One common method for classifying travelers' preferences is based on the concept of "sensation seeking." Zuckerman et al. (1964) developed the sensation-seeking concept, which assumes that individuals experience a unique state in which they are neither bored nor overwhelmed with excitement. Zuckerman and colleagues defined sensation seeking as "the need for varied, novel, and complex sensations and experiences and the willingness to take physical and social risks for the sake of such experience" (Zuckerman, Eysenck, and Eysenck 1978, p.10). Based on this concept, individuals can be classified as "sensation seekers" and "sensation avoiders." Sensation seekers are people who want to seek out new experiences or thrills (Hamer and Copeland 1999), to participate in high-risk, natural-area activities (Breivik 1996), to disclose personal thoughts and feelings (Franken, Gibson, and Mohan 1990), to prefer adventure travel (Gilchrist et al. 1995), and/or innovative vacations (Wahlers and Etzel 1985).

Recent studies have related sensation seeking to adventure tourism (e.g., Fuchs 2013; Meng and Han 2018). These studies have defined adventure tourism as sensation seeking activities that involve a combination of adventure and excitement pursued in an outdoor environment. Some publications have found tourist behaviors to be different in adventure tourism (i.e., high sensation-seeking activities). For example, Galloway et al. (2008) found that people are more engaged in high sensation-seeking activities. Fuchs (2013) observed that sensation seekers among backpackers were less concerned about social threats (e.g., crowded and commercialized places) and more concerned about activities that they might have been attracted to in the first place. Raggiotto and Scarpi (2021) found that sensation seekers have variety seeking and exploratory tendencies, with repeated travel to the same destination leading them to experience boredom.

2.3 Gender Effects in Social Media Marketing and Tourism

Gender is often used to segment a market. Previous studies have revealed that females are more risk-averse (Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, and Arcodia 2017) and emotional (Yelkur and Chakrabarty 2008), while males are more adventurous (Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, and Arcodia 2017) and utilitarian (Han et al. 2019). Therefore, these studies concluded that tourism marketers should develop gender-sensitive online communication strategies. For example, Kim, Kim, and Han (2007) studied gender differences in online travel information searches and found that the key information that attracts male attention is different from that which attracts female attention. Wang, Qu, and Hsu (2016) found that women tended to assess the affective image of destinations more favorably than men, while men tended to have a more favorable assessment of the cognitive image of destinations.

In addition, prior studies have found that the choice of tourism products may differ by gender (e.g., Gilchrist et al. 1995; Lee and Kim 2018; Thrane 2016). For example, Holland and Rayman (1986) indicated that male tourists are more realistic and social and thus prefer attractions different from those preferred by female tourists. Gilchrist et al. (1995)

found that male tourists tended to prefer adventurous activities more so than female tourists. Frew and Shaw (1999) demonstrated that gender can determine the preference for some attractions. Thrane (2016) found that female tourists preferred longer trips than did male tourists. Lee and Kim (2018) indicated that the level of consumer involvement (in terms of sincerity, excitement, competence, and ruggedness) was higher among female travelers than male travelers. While previous studies have investigated gender effects on advertisement and on the choice of tourism products, few studies have considered whether different genders have different attitudes toward the marketing of tourist products on Facebook fan pages. Such a study is important because it can help companies create differentiated advertising campaigns to promote tourism products.

3. Conceptual Framework and Hypothesis Development

3.1 Conceptual Framework

Based on our research objectives and literature review, a conceptual framework was developed, as shown in Figure 2. We sought to identify suitable copywriting strategies for tourism products based on gender preference and to demonstrate that a proper copywriting strategy can enhance the performance of Facebook fan page posts (e.g., lifetime post total reach and numbers of likes, clicks, and shares). Therefore, we examined different gender preferences for (1) copywriting strategies that contain different types of advertising appeals in Facebook fan page posts and (2) tourism products that target different types of tourist attractions in Facebook fan page posts. Furthermore, we were interested in investigating (3) whether the performance of posts would improve when the copywriting strategies matched individual preferences for tourism products based on gender.

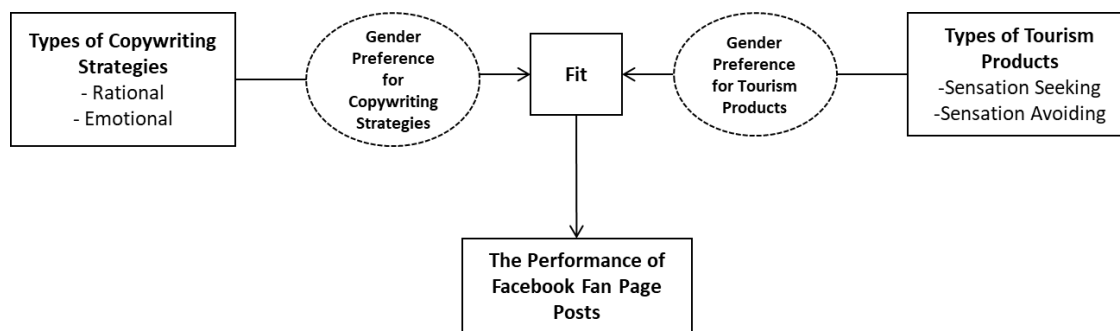


Figure 2 Conceptual Framework

3.2 Hypothesis Development

Following Ducoffe's (1996) advertising value model, many studies have indicated that gender differences affect value as described in the model. Such differences also impact web advertisements and web searches in the tourism context. For example, Sun et al. (2010) showed that males prefer informativeness in web advertisements, whereas females prefer entertainment in web advertisements. Kim, Kim, and Han (2007) found that men were more likely to seek information related to "flight," "accommodation," "rental car," and "weather," while women tended to view more sites that contained "entertainment," "local information," "restaurant," and "map" information. In general, the key information that attracts male attention is closer to informativeness (e.g., "flight" and "accommodation"), whereas women are more likely to be attracted to entertainment information (e.g., "entertainment" and "restaurant"). Because rational appeals advertisements emphasize informativeness and emotional appeals advertisements focus on entertainment (Mothersbaugh, Hawkins, and Kleiser 2019; Peter and Donnelly 2018), it is reasonable to consider that copywriting strategies that contain rational appeals would attract male tourists, while those that contain emotional appeals would attract female tourists. Therefore, our hypothesis is as follows:

H1. On Facebook fanpages, males prefer a copywriting strategy that contains rational advertising appeals, while females prefer one that contains emotional advertising appeals.

Past literature has found that males have higher scores of sensation seeking than do females (e.g., Farley 1991; Zuckerman et al. 1964). For example, Gilchrist et al. (1995) found that adventure tourists are high sensation seekers and demonstrated that male adventure tourists tended to be more sensation seeking than females. Pizam et al. (2004) reported that, among a sample of Israeli students who showed a higher propensity for engaging in risky vacation activities, males had higher sensation-seeking scores than females. Cave and Ryan (2007) suggested that a sense of conflicting emotions and non-achievement appeared more frequently among female backpackers and adventure tourist than among their male

counterparts, who appeared to be supremely confident and somewhat hedonistic. These data seem to provide evidence that males are more motivated by achievement-oriented goals and the values of “mastery, assertiveness, and self-efficacy” (Cave and Ryan 2007) and are thus more likely to be sensation seekers. Thus, we developed the following hypothesis:

H2. On Facebook fan pages, males prefer tourism products that contain sensation-seeking tourist attractions, while females prefer tourism products that contain sensation-avoiding tourist attractions.

Kim, Lehto, and Morrison (2007) emphasized that placing the appropriate message on the right outlet that targets the appropriate segment of consumers is very important to marketers’ success. Marketers may benefit from creating gender-sensitive content and presentations as part of their efforts to cater to consumers’ traits and preferences. Similarly, it would help Facebook fan page marketing if managers could find suitable advertising campaigns to promote specific tourism products for a specific consumer segment. In our research, we anticipated that male consumers would tend to prefer a rational copywriting strategy on Facebook fan pages and would more likely be sensation seekers. On the other hand, we suspected that female consumers would tend to prefer an emotional copywriting strategy on Facebook fan pages and would more likely be sensation avoiders. Thus, the gender-fit relationship can be displayed as shown in Figure 3. We expected that, if Facebook fan page managers can promote sensation-seeking tourism products through rational copywriting in male groups, the performance of these posts on Facebook fan pages would improve because the strategy would fit male preferences. Similarly, if Facebook fan page marketers promoted sensation-avoiding tourism products through emotional copywriting in female groups, then the performance of these posts on Facebook fan pages would improve because this strategy would better fit female preferences. Thus, we formulated the following hypotheses:

H3. If marketers promote tourism products that contain sensation-seeking tourist attractions through rational copywriting in male groups, then the performance of Facebook fan page posts will improve.

H4. If marketers promote tourism products that contain sensation-avoiding tourist attractions through emotional copywriting in female groups, then the performance of these Facebook fan page posts will improve.

Types of Advertising Appeals in Copywriting Strategies	Emotional	Fit in female preferences	Not fit
	Rational	Not fit	Fit in male preferences
		Sensation avoiding	Sensation seeking

The Preferences on Types of Tourist Attractions

Figure 3 Gender-Fit Relationship

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Case Background

The tourism industry has grown and developed into one of the largest businesses in the world because of increased interest in leisure activities. For outbound tourism in Taiwan, the official tourism bureau (2019a) has indicated that Taiwanese citizens made 17,101,335 trips abroad in 2019, with each citizen spending NT\$47,802 per trip. Moreover, approximately 55 percent of Taiwanese citizens have sought the assistance of travel agencies, whereas less than 2 percent would entrust their domestic travel plans to travel agencies (Taiwan Official Tourism Bureau 2019b). In view of the importance of international travel for travel agencies, we focused on this type of travel products in our case.

The company in our case is a leading Taiwanese travel agency, referred as Company A for the purpose of anonymity.

Founded in 1978, Company A sells outbound and inbound international travel and domestic travel, self-guided travel, corporate travel, and other travel-related services through its three subsidiary companies, one of which is responsible for online sales. When Web 2.0 applications have emerged as key communication tools in tourism, Company A started exploiting them for customer engagement. In September 2009, Company A launched its own Facebook fan page as a digital marketing channel to reach prospective consumers—the page currently has more than 780,000 Facebook fans.

Based on our interview with the e-commerce managers of Company A, we learned that they have encountered problems in developing effective campaigns for a particular tourist product. They employ ad hoc copywriting strategies, which are mostly based on heuristic methods. Moreover, they lack direct evidence to measure the performance of these strategies, which has affected the budgetary allocations for e-commerce expenses to a great extent. Therefore, the e-commerce managers collaborated with us to identify suitable copywriting strategies for managing tourism Facebook fan pages.

According to prior literature on the categories of social media applications (Bernoff and Li 2008; Li and Soonius 2012), there are five primary usages of social media with direct links to different business purposes: listening, talking, energizing, supporting, and managing. Table 1 summarized how Company A uses Facebook across these five categories. Because talking and energizing strategies are more directly linked to marketing and sales of products and services, which are the interest of this research, we identified those most suitable for examination in the current research.

Table 1 Classification of Company A’s Facebook Campaigns

Five Uses of Social Media (Business Purposes)	Description	Description of Company A’s Facebook Campaigns	Observation Objects in This Study
Listening (Research and Development)	Companies use social media to listen to their customers for product and service research and development.	The company uses a “review app” that allows consumers to give ratings and opinions about their products and services. There are currently more than 4,300 reviews on the Facebook page, and anyone can respond to them.	
Talking (Marketing)	Companies use social media for marketing purposes, such as spurring the interest of customers and increasing the awareness of the brand and companies’ activities.	The page talks about daily life and shares moods with customers while uploading cheerful photos.	
		The fan page runs a contest with a tempting incentives, creates short and enticing videos, posts cute images with a sense of playfulness, and uses humorous words and sweet quotes to drive customer engagement. Moreover, the page provides links to related products for customers.	√
Energizing (Sales)	Companies use social media to directly or indirectly sell products and services to their customers.	The company directly posts special offers and links on Facebook.	√
Supporting (Customer Support)	Companies use social media to provide customer service and technical support.	When customers raise concerns about their products or services, the company quickly addresses them.	
Managing (Operations)	Companies use social media to attract new employees and improve the operational efficiency.	Company A does not use Facebook as an internal tool for sharing knowledge or recruiting new employees.	

Regarding the determination of how to measure the performance of Facebook campaigns, Hoffman and Fodor (2010) suggested that managers should consider not only short-term goals such as increasing sales in the next month via a social media marketing campaign or reducing costs next quarter due to more responsive online support forums, but also the long-term returns of significant consumer investment in social media. They proposed three objectives to be considered: brand awareness, brand engagement, and word of mouth. Brand awareness means that company’s brand gains increased exposure every time a consumer encounters the company campaign. Brand engagement is highly related

to whether consumers are willing to engage in social media campaigns and produce user-generated content. Word of mouth means that once consumers are aware and engaged, they may communicate their opinions, positive or negative, to other consumers. While Hoffman and Fodor (2010) listed metrics for the performance of social media in general, we found relevant measures in Company A’s Facebook fan page administration panel. We summarize these metrics in Table 2.

Table 2 The Metrics of Social Media Performance and Corresponding Measures on Facebook

Metric	Description	Corresponding measures on Facebook	Definition
Brand awareness	Number of impressions	Lifetime post total reach	The number of people who saw a page post (unique users)
Brand engagement	Number of comments	Comment	The number of comments on a single post
	Number of “likes” on friends’ feeds	Like	The number of likes on a single post
Word of mouth	Number of reposts/shares	Share	The number of shares of a single post

Source: Adapted from Hoffman and Fodor 2010.

4.2 Measurements and Data Collection

To examine our proposed research framework (Figure 2), the constructs for advertising posts’ appeals, tourism products, and the performance of Facebook fan page posts are defined in Table 3.

Table 3 Definition of Constructs

Items	Definition
Rational appeals (RA) (Adjusted from Zhang et al. 2014)	The extent to which informativeness posts are used to highlight a trip’s utilitarian values, such as quality, benefits, and efficiency.
Emotional appeals (EA) (Adjusted from Zhang et al. 2014)	The extent to which entertainment posts are used to create a state of heightened psychological arousal for escapism, diversion, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional release.
Sensation seeking (SS) (Adjusted from Pizam et al. 2004)	The extent of which tourist attractions are described with emphasis placed on exploring strange places, doing frightening things, having new and exciting experiences, experiencing customs and cultures different from those in a traveler’s own environment, traveling to adventurous places, or having unexpected surprises.
Sensation avoiding (SA) (Adjusted from Pizam et al. 2004)	The extent to which tourist attractions are described with emphasis placed on going to a familiar place, doing leisurely activities, or traveling to peaceful places in a traveler’s own environment.
Performance (PM) (Adjusted from Hoffman and Fodor 2010)	The extent to which lifetime total reach and numbers of comments, likes, and shares of the post increase.

We collected data from posts made on Company A’s Facebook fan page from January 1, 2013, to May 31, 2014. All of the collected posts contained promotional information for particular tourism products. That is, these posts contained hyperlinks to the company’s online store, on which consumers could receive more information about the tourist attractions and place orders for particular tourism products (Table 2). Due to the non-disclosure agreement with the collaborating firm and the fact that users’ gender information cannot be crawled without users’ permission on Facebook, we were unable to collect the most recent data for analysis. However, this research aims to develop a general model for understanding gender preference in Facebook fan page posts, the results of the findings are assumed applicable in normal business conditions, at least remaining effective before the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. To further validate this assumption, we compare social media and tourism industry statistics from 2013 to 2018 (Table 4), there is no significant difference across years.

Table 4 Social Media and Tourism Industry Statistics

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Year-on-year change in the daily time spent on social networking ¹	+3.8%	-0.8%	+2.4%	+4.4%	+0.5%	-2.5%
Share of Facebook in social media platforms in Taiwan ²	94.03%	94.84%	93.15%	98.42%	97.65%	93.61%
Year-on-year change in global social media users ³	+10.7%	+11.4%	+18.4%	+16.1%	+10.0%	+7.9%
Year-on-year change in the number of outbound travels from Taiwan (Million) ⁴	+8.3%	+11.32%	+10.70%	+7.27%	+6.33%	+2.76%
Ratio of male to female Taiwanese outbound travelers ⁴	1.13	1.09	1.06	1.01	0.99	0.97

Source: 1. Hootsuite (2021); 2. Statista (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1240058/taiwan-market-share-of-facebook/>); 3. Datareportal report (<https://datareportal.com/reports/a-decade-in-digital/>); 4. Tourism statistics database of the Taiwan tourism bureau (<https://stat.taiwan.net.tw/>).

We collected a total of 547 posts, which we classified into 168 tourist products. We hired 27 coders to read and analyze the copywriting of these posts based on the advertising appeal classification scheme (Appendix Table A1) adapted from Albers-Miller and Stafford (1999). Three coders analyzed each post identify all of the appeals present in the copywriting. Each coder evaluated 110 posts on average. If the post contained more rational appeals, then it was determined to be rational—otherwise, it was emotional. We used the Cohen's kappa (κ) coefficient (Cohan 1960) to evaluate the inter-rater agreement and confirm whether the categories classified from the coders were consistent (Table 5). The analysis showed very high consistency among the coders. Thus, we used the classifications to conduct further research.

We hired another two coders to analyze the corresponding 168 tourism products in the posts. The coders were provided with tour product itineraries posted on Company A's website (a sample of which is listed in Appendix Table A2). The coders rated each product by using the measurements we defined (Appendix Table A3). The coders rated each item based on a 5-point Likert scale. Any tourist product that had an average score above 3 was identified as a sensation-seeking product—otherwise, it was determined to be a sensation-avoiding product. The inter-rater reliability assessment is shown in Table 5. The Kappa value was 0.682, demonstrating good consistency among the coders.

Lastly, we assessed the performance of the Facebook fan page for each post from Facebook insights and from total reach and numbers of likes, comments, and shares from different genders by writing programs using Facebook API.

Table 5 Inter-Rater Reliability

Agreement Between Coders	Percent Agreement	Cohen's Kappa	Standard Error	P Value	Degree of Agreement*
Judgement on Appeals					
Coder A1 vs. Coder A2	83%	0.786	0.035	0.000***	Good

Agreement Between Coders	Percent Agreement	Cohen's Kappa	Standard Error	P Value	Degree of Agreement*
Coder A2 vs. Coder A3	85%	0.673	0.045	0.000***	Good
Coder A1 vs. Coder A3	84%	0.888	0.027	0.000***	Very good
Judgement on Products					
Coder P1 vs. Coder P2	64%	0.682	0.059	0.000***	Good

Source: Landis and Koch (1977).

* Significant at $p < 0.1$; ** Significant at $p < 0.05$; *** Significant at $p < 0.01$.

5. Data Analysis

First, we identified the gender preference for each post according to total reach and numbers of likes, comments, and shares. If a post had more female fans (in terms of greater reach and more likes, comments, and shares by female members), then we classified this post as a female-preferred post. Since Company A's Facebook fan page has more female fans than male fans, we used a z-score to eliminate the difference in proportions. Among the 547 posts we have collected, 289 posts are classified as male-preferred posts and 258 as female-preferred posts. For each post, we calculated the percentage of emotional appeals identified in the copywriting. Because each post had more emotional appeals than rational appeals on average (6 versus 4), we used a z-score to standardize the number of appeals identified in each appeal category. We termed the number as the E/R Score. Thus,

$$E/R \text{ Score} = \frac{\text{standardized number of emotional appeals}}{(\text{standardized number of emotional appeals} + \text{standardized number of rational appeals})} \quad (1)$$

A higher E/R Score meant that this post contained relatively more emotional appeals in its copywriting than other posts. The descriptive statistics of the E/R Score for each post are summarized in Table 6. The results showed that the mean of males' E/R Score was 0.2902, which was smaller than the mean of females' E/R Score 0.3974. This meant that female-preferred posts had relatively more emotional appeals in the copywriting than did male-preferred posts.

Similarly, for each corresponding product, we determined its sensation-seeking score as evaluated by the coders. We converted the score to z-values because each coder may have had different grading standards. We termed this number as the S/A Score. To determine the gender preferences for that product, we checked the initial post and then calculated its gender preference. The descriptive statistics for the S/A Score are shown in Table 6. The S/A Score had higher means in the male-preferred posts. This meant that male-preferred posts promote more sensation-seeking products while female-preferred posts promote more sensation-avoiding products.

Table 6 Group Statistics for E/R Score and S/A Score

	Gender	N	Mean	Std.
E/R Score	Male-preferred posts	288	0.2902	1.6544
	Female-preferred posts	261	0.3974	1.6336
S/A Score	Male-preferred products	75	3.5307	0.767
	Female-preferred products	93	3.1311	0.759

To better observe the data distribution, we selected those posts for which the performance was greater than one standard deviation from the others and drew a four-cell chart (please see Figure 4). As Figure 4 shows, the posts with better performance are concentrated in the top-left and bottom-right cells, suggesting that gender preference plays a role in copywriting strategies and product selections.

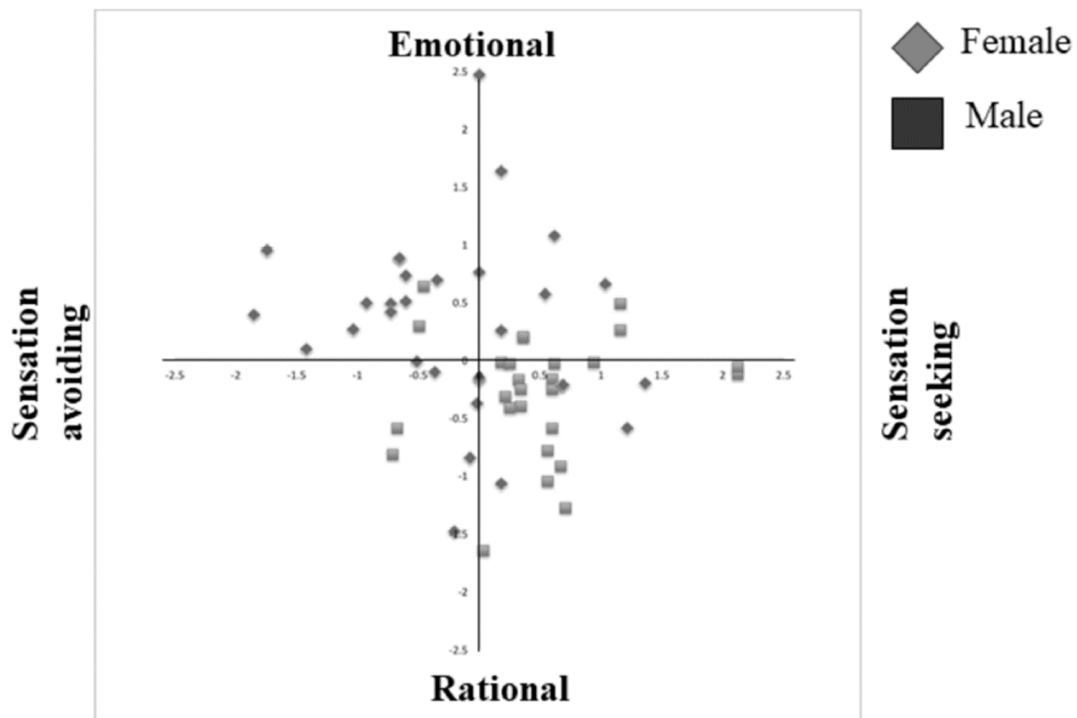


Figure 4 E/R-S/A Classification Map

To further justify our findings, we used an independent two-sample t-test to confirm whether female-preferred posts had higher E/R Score than male-preferred posts (H1), and whether male-preferred posts had a higher S/A Score than female-preferred posts (H2). The results are shown in Table 7. Both H1 and H2 are supported.

Table 7 E/R Score and S/A Score Independent Samples T-Test

	t-test for Equality of Means	
	t	Sig. (one-tailed)
E/R Score	1.647	0.0501*
S/A Score	3.425	0.0003***

* Significant at $p < 0.1$; ** Significant at $p < 0.05$; *** Significant at $p < 0.01$.

We then used a two-sample t-test to confirm whether posts that fit gender preference (i.e., male-preferred posts that have a lower E/R Score and higher S/A Score, and female-preferred posts that have a higher E/R Score and lower S/A Score) have better customer performance than posts that do not fit gender preference (H3 and H4). The results are shown in Table 8. Table 8 shows that when a post fits gender preference, it has a higher mean of performance in terms of total reach and numbers of comments, likes, and shares. The table also shows that the performance between fit posts and not-fit posts is significantly different. H3 and H4 are supported.

Table 8 Statistics for Performance of Posts

Performance	Fit?	Mean	Std.	t	Sig. (one-tailed)
Lifetime post total reach	Yes	13788.01	9009.879	1.766	0.0390***
	No	12159.87	7362.812		
Comment	Yes	6.55	15.824	2.931	0.0018***

Performance	Fit?	Mean	Std.	t	Sig. (one-tailed)
	No	3.71	5.627		
Like	Yes	627.67	312.136	3.604	0.0002***
	No	508.33	306.590		
Share	Yes	16.42	21.594	1.990	0.0235***
	No	12.15	14.298		

* Significant at $p < 0.1$; ** Significant at $p < 0.05$; *** Significant at $p < 0.01$.

6. Discussion

Although social media has become a key marketing communication channel, few studies have examined social media content strategies (Li, Larimo, and Leonidou 2021). In general, there are two different types of social media content—namely, “firm-generated” or “marketer-generated” content and “user-generated” content. Most of related studies are mainly focused on user-generated content strategy rather than firm-generated content strategy (Chang et al. 2018; Tiago and Verissimo 2014). To fill this research gap, this research adopts the perspective of the firm to facilitate our understanding of copywriting strategies on the firm’s owned social media platform. One important question that can help guide a firm’s efforts is, “What types of products being marketed through a particular copywriting strategy can stimulate greater reach and more likes, comments, or shares of that post?” Our study thus addressed the concern of “fit” in social media content strategies, thereby providing an interesting starting point for future research on the subject. Consistent with the results of our findings, social media copywriting is more effective when the copywriting content uses rational appeals to promote sensation-seeking tourist attractions and emotional appeals to promote sensation-avoiding tourist attractions. Our results further indicate that the rationale behind this strategy is that male tourists prefer rational appeals advertisement and sensation-seeking tourism products while female tourists prefer emotional appeals advertisement and sensation-avoiding tourism products. Conclusively, this study finds that social media marketers should consider genders when designing marketing campaigns on corporate Facebook fan pages. Furthermore, gender differences also affect the design of copywriting for the product being marketed and the advertising appeals being used.

The practical implications of this study is as follows. First, since our analysis provided empirical support for the use of gender differences as a guideline to design social media content, we suggest that firms actively study gender preferences across product categories to create suitable copywriting content. Second, this study provides managers a foundation on which to evaluate the content before posting. Moreover, the results of our findings offer guidance on the creation and distribution of social media content to engage potential and existing customers. By attracting audiences with personalized content, the improvement in customer awareness, engagement, and word of mouth may ultimately boost product sales (Malthouse et al. 2013).

In the context of the tourism industry, while the strategic importance of social media for tourism competitiveness has been widely discussed in tourism and hospitality research (Leung, Law, and van Hoof 2013), further depth of social media effective use, particularly from the firm’s perspective, has been limited. In most papers, social media effective use is either a pre-given descriptor or defined but without additional depth beyond the definition. A few researchers go further to explain “what” effective use is about and “why” it is important in tourism industry (e.g., Liu et al. 2020), but they did not develop further to clearly state “how” to achieve effective use. As suggested in the previous section, industry practitioners have limited knowledge on the development of effective social media content. Thus, this research is in line with this requirement by demonstrating how to design a proper copywriting strategy based on gender differences. The results can benefit the tourism industry by equipping it with the theoretical principles to guide practitioners’ decisions.

7. Conclusions and Limitations

The past decade has a dramatic rise of social media use. According to the latest statistics research summary for 2022 (Chaffey 2022), its popularity is still growing, from a 4.2 billion user base in January 2021 to 4.62 billion in January 2022. The continued social media growth gives digital marketers even more opportunities to connect with their audience. Travel and tourism are no exception when we have seen how social media has fundamentally shaped travelers’ decision making and tourism operations and management. Yet, to date, there has been scant research in tourism that systematically examine the social media content strategy and its connection to tourism products. This research has sought to fill this research gap, starting with a gender perspective to study effective copywriting strategies in Facebook fan page marketing for a given tourism product. In line with the requirements of owned social media context where firms play an active role in content generation, the research framework specially considers elements relevant to a firm’s initiated communication (e.g., marketing campaign posts) through its own site, rather than a customer-initiated

communication (e.g., blog posts or customer reviews) through a third-party site. The latter is found in most of the extant literature.

Although this research has theoretical and practical implications, it nonetheless has some limitations. When the data were collected from only one case company for 547 posts and 168 products, the generalization issue arises, which deserves further study in the future. In addition, we focused on the performance of posts (i.e. total reach and numbers of likes, comments, and shares) when examining the effectiveness of copywriting strategies. Direct marketing performance, such as product sales, can be considered in the future research to further examine the impact of gender differences on sales, the key indicator to measure return on investment. Moreover, this research only considers the posts that directly link to product sales, we were unable to account for the effectiveness of copywriting strategies among posts that serve other business purposes (e.g. market research, brand development, and customer support). Future research can perhaps investigate the performance of copywriting strategies through different types of posts. In addition to data availability, this research only examined gender preferences in two types of advertising appeals and travel products. Future researchers can extend the coverage of appeals and products and thereby improve our understanding of gender effects in online social media. Besides, our research context is set on Facebook, whether the results can be generalized to other social media platforms deserves further study. We note that not all social media platforms collect gender information (e.g., WhatsApp, Instagram). Researchers can start from those social media platforms that gender identity is necessary for sign up (e.g., YouTube). Moreover, we acknowledge that gender difference may not be a binary variable, with users categorized as either male or female. Since 2014, Facebook has allowed users to choose among male, female, and 56 additional custom genders (Griggs 2014). The multi-gender marketing strategy opened a new avenue for future research.

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Appendix

Table A1 Rational and Emotional Advertising Appeals for Tourism Products

Appeals	Description	Rational/ Emotional
Effective	The post makes me feel the trip can achieve my goal effectively (e.g., relaxing and new experience).	Rational
Durable	The post makes me feel the enjoyment from the trip is durable.	Rational
Productivity	The post makes me feel the trip uses time productively.	Rational
Community	The post makes me feel I can do many great new things with other travelers in this trip.	Emotional
Convenient	The post makes me feel the trip would be a convenient journey.	Rational
Cheap	The post makes me feel the trip is a good deal	Rational
Distinctive	The post makes me feel the trip contains distinctive events.	Emotional
Popular	The post makes me feel the trip is very popular	Emotional
Modern	The post makes me feel the trip delivers a modern atmosphere	Rational
Plain	The post makes me feel the trip arrangement is plain and simple.	Emotional
Traditional	The post makes me feel the trip would be a lifetime journey.	Emotional
Magic	The post makes me feel the trip would be a magical journey.	Emotional
Neat	The post makes me feel the trip has neat planning.	Rational
Wisdom	The post makes me feel taking this trip would be a wise choice.	Rational
Relaxation	The post makes me feel I can relax in this trip.	Emotional
Enjoyment	The post makes me feel I can get enjoyment out of this trip.	Emotional
Natural	The post makes me feel the trip is full of natural charm.	Rational
Safety	The post makes me feel the trip is safe.	Rational
Maturity	The post makes me feel the trip is suitable for mature travelers.	Emotional
Youth	The post makes me feel the trip offers ways to enjoy youth.	Emotional

Appeals	Description	Rational/ Emotional
Tamed	The post makes me feel the trip can tame my spirit.	Rational
Adventure	The post makes me feel the trip is full of adventure.	Emotional
Freedom	The post makes me feel I can enjoy the freedom in this trip.	Emotional
Independence	The post makes me feel I can enjoy the independence in this trip.	Rational
Family	The post makes me feel I can enjoy family time in this trip.	Emotional
Healthy	The post makes me feel the trip contains healthy activities.	Rational
Dear	The post makes me feel that the trip organizer is thoughtful.	Emotional
Casual	The post makes me feel that the trip is a casual journey.	Emotional
Technological	The post makes me feel that technology is well used to create personally suitable trip recommendations.	Rational
Status	The post makes me feel that the trip is an exclusive VIP-style journal.	Emotional

Table A2 A Sample of Tour Product Itinerary

非洲四國越野探險～波札那奧卡萬戈三角洲、無人鹽沼，辛巴威尚比亞維多利亞大瀑布，南非約翰尼斯堡**19日**

19-Days Off-Road Adventure in Four African Countries
～Okavango Delta, Makgadikgadi Pan, Victoria Fall Zimbabwe & Zambia, Johannesburg

Day 1	桃園Taoyuan>香港Hong kong>約翰尼斯堡Johannesburg
Day 2	香港Hong Kong-約翰尼斯堡Johannesburg
Day 3	約翰尼斯堡Johannesburg—720KM—喀拉哈里Kalahari
Day 4	喀拉哈里Kalahari—258KM—喀拉哈里布希曼人Kalahari Bushmen
Day 5	克拉哈里布希曼人Kalahari Bushmen—392KM—奧卡萬戈三角洲Okavango Delta
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Day 19	香港Hong Kong—台北Taipei

Table A3 Measurement for Sensation Seeking

Items	Measurement
SS1	This trip contains destinations where I can explore new things.
SS2	This trip contains activities that offer thrills.
SS3	This trip may become an unpredictable vacation.
SS4	This trip is adventurous.
SS5	This trip allows me to experience new and different things.

Source: Adapted from Hoyle et al. 2002; Lee and Crompton 1992.