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Tourist Engagement in the Digital Age: The Catalytic Role of Content Marketing for Sustainable Destination Promotion

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Abstract

This research article aims to assess the impact of content marketing on promoting sustainable tourism for a specific destination. We will examine how the creation and dissemination of digital content (photos, videos, social networks) influence tourists' perceptions and encourage them to adopt more responsible behaviors. The methodology will combine a literature review on both concepts (content marketing and sustainable tourism) with an empirical case study of the Moroccan city destination Agadir. The study proposes a quantitative approach based on an online and on-site questionnaire administered to a large sample of tourists who have stayed in Agadir. The analysis of the data collected using statistical techniques will measure the correlation between exposure to promotional digital content and tourists' propensity to engage in sustainable tourism activities. The expected results should make it possible to identify strategic recommendations for the Regional Tourism Council (CRT) of Agadir, the Moroccan National Tourism Office (ONMT) and private stakeholders, in order to optimize their communication campaigns and strengthen the image of the city as a destination that respects the environment and local culture.

Keywords : Content Marketing, Sustainable Tourism, Tourist Destination, Engagement, Tourists.

Introduction

The internet era and new technologies have changed consumers' daily lives. Access to information, the need for immediacy, social media, mobility, big data, etc., offer more choices to customers, and now there are consumers who are connected and use the internet for all their activities. Everything has been disrupted by the digital tsunami (Lejealle and Delécolle, 2017).

Furthermore, digital marketing is a relatively new discipline in terms of its operational practice and theoretical vision. Companies are being pushed to develop new business practices to face the competition and improve their competitiveness and profitability. New digital forms are emerging, such as "content marketing," and companies can only succeed by prioritizing the customer experience. To do this, they must take into account the fact that the customer journey has been digitized before, during, and after the purchase, and that the amount of support has also multiplied. Therefore, content marketing aims to encourage consumers to follow the company's digital marketing philosophy.

According to surveys conducted by Hootsuite and We Are Social, in 2021, there are 4.66 billion internet users, 4.2 billion social media users, and 5.22 billion mobile users worldwide. The average online time is 6.54 hours. They spend several hours a day discussing countless topics, including branding.

Communication is no longer one-sided. Many brand discussions originate from social media and can become a notorious source of business or, conversely, destroy its brand image and reputation long ago. There are numerous examples of brands and companies reviewing their content strategies and the content they choose to share on these platforms.

Currently, content marketing is the main focus of marketers' online activities (emarketer 2017). This new concept allows marketers to adapt to the new society. Marketing aims to achieve goals of creating purchasing and consumption desires. The abuse of traditional marketing has led to a profusion of advertising that tires consumers and makes it difficult for a company to face fierce competition. It is in this new framework that content marketing was born.

I-Content Marketing for Destination Development

As digital technologies and social media have revolutionized the way tourist destinations are promoted and consumed, content marketing has emerged as an essential digital marketing tool that attracts tourists through compelling narratives. Tourism is no longer simply about products, but about experiences, stories, and communities.

1. Digital Marketing and the Transformation of Tourism Communication

Digital marketing encompasses various marketing activities carried out using online platforms such as websites, emails, mobile applications, social media, search engines, and digital advertising. Alaoui, Asbai, and Benammi (2018) provide details on digital marketing and argue that it can be a more accurate and less expensive advertising method, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). As a result, the Moroccan tourism industry has taken steps to implement digital strategies to reach an international audience from diverse cultural backgrounds.

To be effective, tourism content marketing strategies must integrate the following five elements: (1) interesting and engaging content; (2) mobility; (3) social media; (4) personalization; and (5) responsive website design. As digital technologies have evolved, marketing paradigms have shifted from a product-centric approach (Marketing 1.0) to an experience-centric approach (Marketing 3.0), and then to the use of data to inform marketing decisions (Marketing 4.0) (Kotler et al., 2017). Within these models, there is a desire to shift from transactional to relationship marketing, and to give content a crucial role in attracting and retaining customers.

2. The Strategic Role of Content Creators in Tourism

Content creators and social media influencers play a key role in how individuals plan their trips and perceive potential destinations. The work of Charbti & Sghiri (2021) shows how influencers create emotional connections and inspiring stories that resonate with their online audience. Visual storytelling is achieved through photos, videos, and travel diaries that inspire followers to feel curious, confident, and interested in the destination.

Mekdad et al. (2024, 5-6) conducted a systematic literature review on influencer marketing in the tourism context. Their research confirmed that influencers influence consumer behavior through their perceived authenticity, trustworthiness, and relevance. For example, they cited studies that concluded that when the influencer's identity (so to speak) matches the target audience's preferences, the effect on users' travel intentions is much greater (Venciūtė, et al., 2023; Xu, et al., 2020). Their analysis also highlighted that social media platforms Instagram and TikTok have certainly contributed to positive and effective destination promotion, which is particularly important for current and future generations.

The same influencer marketing strategy encourages co-creation or user-generated content, where users/buyers act as brand ambassadors for the attractions they visit, thus exposing tourism brands to a much wider audience than a simple television advertisement.

3. Content marketing as a lever for sustainable tourism and territorial attractiveness.

Content marketing is not limited to simple sales; it can also play a role in the debate on responsible and sustainable tourism. By emphasizing local heritage, traditions, sustainable resource management, and a truly authentic experience, content marketing will encourage content producers to engage in the creation of conscious travelers, whose travels will be more responsible and sustainable. Frochot & Legohérel (2014) propose that tourism marketing should evolve toward a more sensory and relational approach, as the destination communicates through its prescriptive qualities. It is a story worth telling, whose meaning contains the enigma of graphic characteristics that negotiate the motivations of the narrator and the recipient. The elements that make up the digital ecosystem (websites, applications, social networks, influencers) can be powerful in optimizing and improving a territory's profile and competitiveness (attractiveness). Alaoui et al. (2018) point out that "more than 68.5% of the Moroccan population was an internet user in 2016," and therefore, the more people use the internet, the stronger their use becomes. This is particularly relevant considering the proliferation of users who favor mobile devices, seeking a one-stop shop for their purchases, information gathering, trip planning, and sharing.

4. Opportunities and Challenges of Content-Driven Tourism Promotion

While influencer and content marketing offer obvious advantages, they also pose challenges such as a lack of transparency around sponsored content, bias in recommendations, and the creation of appropriate metrics and methodologies to assess impacts (Mekdad et al. 2024). The 4M model—Make, Manage, Monitor, Measure—could provide a strategic framework to ensure the consistency and effectiveness of influencer campaigns (Bury 2020).

Ultimately, effective content marketing in tourism lies in striking a balance between digital innovation, in terms of media, platforms, and content, and human authenticity. Destinations and brands that successfully cultivate authentic relationships with travelers by creating relevant content, aligning their values, and eschewing marketing communications in favor of travel stories will be the most visible and highly valued in the world in a competitive environment.

II-Empirical study

1. Introduction

The evolution of digital technologies and the proliferation of social media have radically transformed the tourism industry. Tourists are no longer passive recipients of information but have become active content creators and decision-makers, influenced by online content before, during, and after their travel experiences. In this context, destinations are increasingly challenged to design marketing strategies that not only attract attention but also foster engagement, loyalty, and responsible behavior among tourists. Content marketing has emerged as a particularly powerful tool in this transformation, enabling tourism actors to communicate through photos, videos, texts, and influencer collaborations that reflect the identity and values of a place.

With more than 4.5 billion social media users worldwide, platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok have become essential channels for promoting tourism experiences and shaping destination images. These platforms are not only used to disseminate content, but also to generate interaction and engagement from users—through likes, comments, shares, and tags. The quality and relevance of this digital content can significantly influence tourists' decisions and behaviors, especially in the context of sustainable tourism, where authenticity, local culture, and environmental responsibility are valued.

Despite growing interest in the subject, little empirical research has explored the relationship between the attractiveness of different content formats (photo, video, text), engagement behaviors (like, comment, share, tag), interest in digital marketing, and tourist socio-demographic factors (age, gender, platform preference, etc.)—especially in emerging destinations like Agadir, Morocco. Furthermore, the extent to which tourists' digital behaviors reflect deeper engagement with sustainable tourism values remains under-investigated.

The main objective of this study is to analyze how content marketing—across different formats and platforms—influences online tourist engagement, with particular attention to sustainable destination promotion. It aims to assess the degree to which users are attracted to various types of content, how they engage with it, and whether their interest in digital marketing reinforces this engagement. The study also examines the influence of demographic variables and brand familiarity (e.g., knowledge of "TAGHAZOUT BAY" page) on tourists' digital behaviors.

The central research questionguiding this work is as follows :

To what extent can content marketing influence tourist engagement behavior and contribute to the promotion of sustainable tourism in the digital age?

To address this question, and based on the structure of the data collected, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

- **H1**: All forms of content attractiveness (photo, video, text) have a significant and positive effect on all types of tourist engagement behaviors (like, comment, share, tag).
- **H2**: There are significant correlations between each type of content and each engagement behavior, indicating multidimensional relationships.
- **H3**: Tourists who express a higher interest in digital marketing are more likely to engage intensively with tourism-related content.
- **H4**: The combination of content attractiveness and digital marketing interest significantly predicts overall engagement in a multiple linear regression model.
- **H5**: Socio-demographic variables (gender, age, region, occupation) and platform preferences have a significant influence on engagement levels and content preferences.
- **H6**: Awareness of and positive perception of the page " TAGHAZOUT BAY" are associated with higher levels of engagement and content receptiveness.

These hypotheses will be tested through statistical analysis using SPSS, based on a structured dataset including 18 distinct variables covering behavioral, perceptual, and demographic dimensions.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Approach

This study adopts a quantitative and correlational research design, aiming to explore the relationship between digital content marketing and tourist engagement behavior in the context of sustainable destination promotion. The approach is grounded in the analysis of perceptual, behavioral, and demographic variables collected through a structured questionnaire. A Likert scale format was used for most items to ensure measurement standardization, and the statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS.

2.2 Population and Sample

The study targeted active social media users who interact with tourism-related content online. Respondents were recruited through a non-probability convenience sampling method**,** with the questionnaire disseminated via digital channels including Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp groups, and direct sharing in tourism-related communities. The final sample included [to be completed] valid responses. Participants came from various Moroccan regions and represented a diverse range of age groups, genders, professional statuses, and digital behaviors.

2.3 Variables Measured

The questionnaire comprised 18 variables, grouped into six major categories to ensure comprehensive coverage of the topic:

2.3.1. Social Media Usage Profile

- **V1. Use of Social Media**: A dichotomous variable indicating whether the respondent uses social media (Yes/No).
- **V2. Time Spent on Social Media**: An ordinal variable capturing the average daily time spent on social media (e.g., less than 1 hour, 1–2 hours, etc.).
- **V3. Preferred Content Type**: A nominal variable identifying the type of content preferred (e.g., humorous, informative, entertaining).
- **V4. Preferred Platform**: A nominal variable indicating the preferred social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube).

2.3.2. Content Attractiveness (Likert Scale 1–5)

- **V5. Photo Content Attractiveness**
- **V6. Video Content Attractiveness**
- **V7. Text Content Attractiveness**

These variables measure the degree to which each type of content attracts the user during publication.

2.3.3. Engagement Behavior (Likert Scale 1–5)

- **V8. Engagement via Likes**
- **V9. Engagement via Comments**
- **V10. Engagement via Sharing**

- **V11. Engagement via Tagging**

These indicators reflect how respondents express their interaction and participation with online content.

2.3.4. Interest in Digital Marketing

- **V12. Digital Marketing Interest**: A Likert-scale variable measuring the level of interest in digital marketing content.

2.3.5. Brand Awareness

- **V13. Awareness of "TAGHAZOUT BAY" Page**: A dichotomous variable (Yes/No).
- **V14. Perception of Marketland Content**: An ordinal (or Likert-scale) variable assessing the respondent's opinion of the page's content.

2.3.6. Demographic Variables

- **V15. Gender**: Nominal (Male, Female, Other).
- **V16. Age**: Ordinal categories (e.g., 18–25, 26–35).
- **V17. Occupation**: Nominal (Student, Employee, etc.).
- **V18. Region of Residence**: Nominal (name of region).

All Likert-scale questions used a 5-point scale:1 = Very Low / Not at all Interested**,**

5 = Very High / Very Interested**.**

2.4 Statistical Methods Used

The exploratory data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26, focusing on two main statistical techniques adapted to the type and objective of each variable block:

2.4.1. **Frequency Analysis** was applied to the majority of categorical and ordinal variables in order to explore the distribution of responses. This includes:

- **Digital Profile Variables (V1–V4)** such as social media usage, time spent, preferred content type, and platforms.
- **Digital Marketing Interest (V12)** and **Brand Awareness (V13–V14)**.
- **Sociodemographic Information (V15–V18)** including gender, age group, occupation, and region.
- These frequency distributions allowed for a detailed descriptive profile of the sample and revealed dominant trends in user behavior.

2.4.2. **Reliability Testing using Cronbach's Alpha** was performed on the two groups of Likert-scale variables to assess the internal consistency of each construct:

- **Content Attractiveness (V5–V7), measuring perceived appeal of photos, videos, and text, yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .800, indicating high reliability.**
- **Digital Engagement (V8–V11), assessing types of interaction such as likes, comments, shares**, and tags, produced a Cronbach's alpha of **.699**, which is considered acceptable for exploratory purposes.

These two complementary methods—descriptive frequencies and reliability analysis—offered a clear overview of user preferences and behaviors, while validating the internal coherence of the measurement scales used in the questionnaire.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Exploratory Study

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the participants' digital behavior and their interaction with online tourism content, an exploratory data analysis (EDA) was conducted using SPSS. The questionnaire comprised 18 variables, structured into six analytical blocks: digital profile, content attractiveness, digital engagement, interest in digital marketing, brand awareness, and sociodemographic information. Each block was subjected to a specific exploratory technique based on the nature of the variables—descriptive statistics for frequencies and percentages, and reliability analysis for multi-item constructs. This approach allowed for a detailed profiling of users, their preferences, and their patterns of online interaction, thereby laying the groundwork for the confirmatory testing of the study's hypotheses.

3.1.1. Digital Profile

The analysis of variables V1 to V2 reveals a strong digital presence among respondents.Nearly all participants reported using social media (99.0%), confirming the platform's widespread adoption within the sample. In terms of daily usage (V2), the majority of respondents (62.9%) reported spending more than three hours per day on social media, indicating high digital exposure. This intensive engagement suggests a fertile ground for digital content strategies aimed at capturing users' attention across platforms.

Table 1. Social Media Usage Profile (V1–V4)

Variable	Categories	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
V1. Do you use social media?	Yes	104	99.0
	No	1	1.0
V2. Time spent on social media per day	Less than 1 hour/day	12	11.4
	Between 1h and 2h/day	10	9.5
	Between 2h and 3h/day	17	16.2
	More than 3h/day	66	62.9
V3. Preferred content type	Informative	84	80.0
	Commercial	8	7.6
	Entertaining	7	6.7
	Humorous	6	5.7
V4. Preferred platforms	Instagram + Facebook (only)	20	19.0
	Instagram + Facebook + TikTok	15	14.3
	Instagram + Facebook + LinkedIn	11	10.5
	Others (Mixed)	59	56.2

3.1.2. Content Attractiveness

Table 2 highlights the perceived attractiveness of different content formats—photos, videos, and texts—among respondents. Video content (V6) was rated as "very high" in attractiveness by over half of the participants

(50.5%), followed closely by photo content (V5) with 43.8%. In contrast, text content (V7) received a more mixed evaluation: only 15.2% considered it "very high," while the largest proportion (29.5%) rated it as "moderate." Notably, a significant share also rated text content as “low” or “very low” (28.5% combined), indicating relatively weaker engagement compared to visual formats. These findings suggest a clear preference for visual media—especially videos—as the most compelling type of content in digital communication.

Table 2. Content Attractiveness (V5–V7)

Attractiveness Level	Photo Content (V5)	Video Content (V6)	Text Content (V7)
Very low	16 (15.2%)	13 (12.4%)	14 (13.3%)
Low	4 (3.8%)	6 (5.7%)	16 (15.2%)
Moderate	12 (11.4%)	12 (11.4%)	31 (29.5%)
High	27 (25.7%)	21 (20.0%)	28 (26.7%)
Very high	46 (43.8%)	53 (50.5%)	16 (15.2%)

3.1.3. Digital Engagement

Table 3 presents the distribution of digital engagement behaviors across four key actions: liking (V8), commenting (V9), sharing (V10), and tagging (V11). Liking emerges as the most frequent form of engagement, with 42.9% of respondents reporting “very high” levels and 21.0% reporting “high” levels. Commenting follows a similar trend, with 55.2% indicating either high or very high engagement. Sharing behavior is more evenly distributed, with the largest share (39.0%) reporting “high” engagement, yet only 13.3% rated it as “very high.” Tagging, on the other hand, shows a more moderate pattern, with 39.0% rating their behavior as “moderate” and only 19.0% selecting “very high.” These results suggest that passive forms of engagement (likes, comments) are more prevalent than active or social forms (shares, tags), reflecting common interaction habits on digital platforms.

Table 3. Digital Engagement (V8–V11)

Engagement Level	Like (V8)	Comment (V9)	Share (V10)	Tag (V11)
Very low	16 (15.2%)	17 (16.2%)	14 (13.3%)	9 (8.6%)
Low	4 (3.8%)	7 (6.7%)	9 (8.6%)	9 (8.6%)
Moderate	18 (17.1%)	23 (21.9%)	27 (25.7%)	41 (39.0%)
High	22 (21.0%)	25 (23.8%)	41 (39.0%)	26 (24.8%)
Very high	45 (42.9%)	33 (31.4%)	14 (13.3%)	20 (19.0%)

3.1.4. Marketing Interest

Table 4 illustrates participants' level of interest in digital marketing. A majority of respondents (55.2%) reported being interested in digital marketing, indicating a generally favorable disposition toward tourism-related promotional content. A smaller portion of the sample (11.4%) expressed no interest, while a significant proportion (33.3%) remained neutral or did not provide a clear response. This distribution suggests that while interest in digital marketing is predominant among the participants, a notable segment remains disengaged or undecided, which could influence their level of interaction with content on digital platforms.

Table 4. Interest in Digital Marketing (V12)

Interest Level	Frequency	Percentage
Not interested	12	11.4%
Interested	58	55.2%
Missing/Neutral	35	33.3%

3.1.5. Page Awareness

Table 5 presents the participants’ awareness of the brand “TAGHAZOUT BAY” and their perception of its content. Just over half of the respondents (55.2%) reported being familiar with the page, while 44.8% indicated no prior knowledge of it. In terms of content perception (V14), the vast majority (72.4%) found the content to be

"very interesting," and 15.2% rated it as "rather interesting." Only 1% considered the content "not very interesting," while 11.4% did not provide a clear opinion. These results suggest that among those who are aware of “TAGHAZOUT BAY” the page is generally well-received, indicating a strong potential for content-driven engagement.

Table 5. Brand Awareness and Perception (V13–V14)

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
V13. Knowledge of “TAGHAZOUT BAY ”	Yes	58	55.2%
	No	47	44.8%
V14. Content perception	Very interesting	76	72.4%
	Rather interesting	16	15.2%
	Not very interesting	1	1.0%
	Unclear/Missing	12	11.4%

3.1.6. Sociodemographic Data

Table 6 outlines the sociodemographic distribution of the sample across four key variables. The gender breakdown shows a predominance of male respondents (62.9%) compared to females (37.1%). In terms of age (V16), the majority are between 18–25 years old (53.3%), followed by those aged 26–30 (28.6%), and smaller proportions in older age groups. The occupational profile (V17) indicates a balanced representation of students (36.2%) and employees (33.3%), with entrepreneurs comprising 21.9%, and others (including housewives and retirees) accounting for 8.6%. Regionally (V18), most participants reside in Casablanca-Settat (58.1%), followed by smaller clusters from Rabat-Salé-Kénitra (10.5%), Fès-Meknès (8.6%), and other regions (22.8%). This profile reflects a digitally active, young, and urban-centered sample.

Table 6. Sociodemographic Characteristics (V15–V18)

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
V15. Gender	Male	66	62.9%
	Female	39	37.1%
V16. Age group	18–25 years	56	53.3%
	26–30 years	30	28.6%
	31–45 years	12	11.4%
	Under 18	2	1.9%
	Over 46	5	4.8%
V17. Occupation	Student	38	36.2%
	Employee	35	33.3%
	Entrepreneur	23	21.9%
	Others (Housewife, Retired, etc.)	9	8.6%
V18. Region	Casablanca-Settat	61	58.1%
	Rabat-Salé-Kénitra	11	10.5%
	Fès-Meknès	9	8.6%
	Others	24	22.8%

3.2. Reliability Analysis Using Cronbach's Alpha

To assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used in this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for both constructs: *Content Attractiveness* and *Digital Engagement*.

3.2.1. Content Attractiveness:

The Cronbach's alpha for the three items measuring attractiveness toward different content types (photo, video, and text) was 0.800, which indicates good internal consistency. According to common psychometric standards, a value above 0.8 is considered acceptable and suggests that the items are sufficiently correlated to form a reliable scale.

Table 6.Cronbach's Alpha for the Content Attractiveness Scale

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of elements
,800	3

3.2.2. Digital Engagement:

The construct measuring digital engagement behaviors (liking, commenting, sharing, and tagging) yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.699**,** which is on the threshold of acceptability. While slightly below the conventional cutoff of 0.70, it may still be considered adequate for exploratory research**,** especially in social science studies where constructs may be multidimensional.

Table 7. Cronbach's Alpha for the Digital Engagement Scale

Alpha of Cronbach	Number of elements
,699	4

Overall, the reliability analysis supports the internal consistency of the measurement instruments used, particularly for content attractiveness, and allows for meaningful interpretation of the results in the subsequent confirmatory analyses.

To conclude, the exploratory analysis revealed significant patterns in how users consume and engage with digital tourism content. The digital profile block (V1–V4) highlighted a strong presence on social media, with Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok being the most used platforms. Content attractiveness scores (V5–V7) showed higher engagement with visual formats, particularly videos, as confirmed by a strong internal consistency (α = 0.800). Similarly, the engagement construct (V8–V11) demonstrated acceptable reliability (α = 0.699), justifying its use in further analysis. Interest in digital marketing (V12) and brand awareness variables (V13–V14) provided preliminary insights into consumer-brand relationships in the tourism sector. Lastly, sociodemographic data (V15–V18) offer a nuanced view of the audience composition, essential for segmentation strategies. Overall, the exploratory phase supports the methodological soundness of the survey instrument and informs the direction of confirmatory analyses to follow.

3.3. Confirmatory Analysis

This section aims to statistically verify the first three hypotheses derived from the conceptual framework, focusing on the relationships between content attractiveness**,** digital engagement behaviors**,** and interest in digital marketing. While the exploratory phase provided descriptive insights into the sample's profile and preliminary variable patterns, this phase involves inferential tests to confirm assumed associations and causal directions based on prior theoretical assumptions.

Specifically, we focus on the following hypotheses:

- **H1** posits that the perceived attractiveness of various content formats—photos (V5), videos (V6), and texts (V7)—significantly influences engagement behaviors, namely liking (V8), commenting (V9),

sharing (V10), and tagging (V11). A multiple linear regression model is applied to test the predictive power of each content type on these engagement dimensions.

- **H2** investigates the strength and direction of the relationships between each form of content attractiveness and each engagement behavior using Spearman correlation**.** This non-parametric method is preferred due to the ordinal nature of the data and its robustness against non-normal distributions.
- **H3** explores whether individuals expressing greater interest in digital marketing (V12) tend to engage more with digital content. This is also assessed using Spearman correlation**,** and optionally by comparing engagement levels across interest categories if the variable is recoded into binary or ordinal groups.

These analyses serve to empirically validate key assumptions of the study and provide a foundation for further testing of the remaining hypotheses.

3.3.1 Hypothesis H1 – The Effect of Content Attractiveness on Engagement Behaviors

This first confirmatory hypothesis (H1) postulates that the attractiveness of digital content—specifically photo, video, and text formats—has a significant and positive impact on various tourist engagement behaviors on social media. These engagement actions are conceptualized as likes (V8), comments (V9), shares (V10), and tags (V11). In order to test this hypothesis, four separate multiple linear regression analyses were conducted, each targeting one engagement variable as the dependent outcome, while content attractiveness variables—photo (V5), video (V6), and text (V7)—served as independent predictors. This approach allowed for a nuanced understanding of how different forms of content influence specific types of online engagement.

Table 8. Regression Coefficients Predicting "Like" Behavior Based on Content Attractiveness

Coefficients[a]						
Modèle		Coefficients non standardisés		Coefficients standardisés	t	Sig.
		B	Erreur standard	Bêta		
1	(Constante)	,270	,270		,998	,321
	To what extent are you attracted to photo content when published?	,162	,084	,161	1,918	,058
	To what extent are you attracted to video content when published?	,691	,087	,675	7,968	,000
	To what extent are you attracted to text content when published?	,045	,077	,039	,575	,567
a. Variable dépendante : How do you express your engagement with content? [Like]						

Table 9. Regression Coefficients Predicting "Comment" Behavior Based on Content Attractiveness

Coefficients[a]						
Modèle		Coefficients non standardisés		Coefficients standardisés	t	Sig.
		B	Erreur standard	Bêta		
1	(Constante)	,880	,370		2,381	,019
	To what extent are you attracted to photo content when published?	,371	,116	,375	3,209	,002

	To what extent are you attracted to video content when published?	,211	,119	,210	1,779	,078
	To what extent are you attracted to text content when published?	,116	,106	,102	1,096	,276
a. Variable dépendante : How do you express your engagement with content? [Comment]						

Table 10. Regression Coefficients Predicting "Share" Behavior Based on Content Attractiveness

Coefficients[a]						
Modèle		Coefficients non standardisés		Coefficients standardisés	t	Sig.
		B	Erreur standard	Bêta		
1	(Constante)	1,862	,365		5,105	,000
	To what extent are you attracted to photo content when published?	,163	,114	,192	1,426	,157
	To what extent are you attracted to video content when published?	,008	,117	,010	,072	,943
	To what extent are you attracted to text content when published?	,252	,105	,259	2,408	,018
a. Variable dépendante : How do you express your engagement with content? [Share]						

Table 11.Regression Coefficients Predicting "Tag" Behavior Based on Content Attractiveness

Coefficients[a]						
Modèle		Coefficients non standardisés		Coefficients standardisés	t	Sig.
		B	Erreur standard	Bêta		
1	(Constante)	3,264	,360		9,076	,000
	To what extent are you attracted to photo content when published?	,196	,112	,245	1,743	,084
	To what extent are you attracted to video content when published?	-,319	,115	-,390	-2,760	,007
	To what extent are you attracted to text content when published?	,193	,103	,210	1,873	,064
a. Variable dépendante : How do you express your engagement with content? [Tag]						

The results of the regression on the "like" behavior revealed a strong and statistically significant influence of video content attractiveness ($\beta = 0.675$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that users who perceive video content as more attractive are much more likely to react with likes. The photo content variable displayed a marginal effect ($\beta = 0.161$, $p = 0.058$), suggesting a possible positive trend, albeit not conclusive at the conventional significance level. In contrast, the attractiveness of text content did not exhibit any significant effect on this form of

engagement (p = 0.567). These findings suggest that video-based posts, possibly due to their dynamic and emotionally appealing nature, are more effective in triggering immediate reactions such as likes.

As for the "comment" behavior, the analysis demonstrated that attractiveness to photo content had a statistically significant and positive effect (β = 0.375, p = 0.002). Video content showed a marginal association (p = 0.078), whereas text content remained statistically non-significant (p = 0.276). This indicates that visually engaging photos are more likely to encourage users to leave comments, likely due to their aesthetic or emotional appeal. Comments may require a greater level of engagement than likes, and the visual stimulus of photos appears to better facilitate this.

In the case of "share" behavior, the regression model showed that text content attractiveness had a significant positive influence (β = 0.259, p = 0.018), while both photo and video content did not reach significance levels. This suggests that users tend to share content they perceive as informative or valuable in textual form, likely because such content is more conducive to knowledge dissemination or personal endorsement. The finding supports the idea that while visual content captures attention, textual content may be more effective in prompting sharing, which involves a deliberate action of redistribution.

Interestingly, for the "tag" behavior, the results indicated a significant **negative** association with video content (β = –0.390, p = 0.007), meaning that more attractive video content is actually less likely to result in user tagging. Text and photo content attractiveness displayed only marginally significant effects in a positive direction (text: p = 0.064; photo: p = 0.084). This counterintuitive result suggests that while video content draws attention, it may not foster the type of interpersonal interaction (i.e., tagging friends) that text or image content potentially facilitates. It is possible that users view video content more passively and are less inclined to involve others through tagging.

In summary, the results partially validate Hypothesis H1 by demonstrating that different types of content attractiveness influence digital engagement behaviors in varying ways. Video content emerges as a strong driver of likes, but surprisingly reduces tagging activity. Photo content proves effective in prompting comments, while text content encourages sharing. These differentiated patterns underscore the complexity of digital engagement and highlight the importance of content format when designing social media marketing strategies. Future research may explore interaction effects or the moderating roles of user preferences and platform-specific algorithms to refine these insights.

3.3.2 Hypothesis H2 – Correlational Analysis Between Content Attractiveness and Engagement Behaviors

The second hypothesis (H2) posits the existence of statistically significant associations between each form of content attractiveness—namely photo, video, and text—and various digital engagement behaviors, including likes, comments, shares, and tags. To explore these relationships, a Spearman rank-order correlation analysis was conducted, which is appropriate for ordinal data and does not assume normal distribution. This analysis allows for the identification of monotonic relationships between the independent and dependent variables.

Table 12. Matrice de corrélation de Spearman entre l'attractivité du contenu et les comportements d'engagement touristique

Corrélations									
			To what extent are you attracted to photo content when published?	To what extent are you attracted to video content when published?	To what extent are you attracted to text content when published?	How do you express your engagement with content? [Like]	How do you express your engagement with content? [Comment]	How do you express your engagement with content? [Share]	How do you express your engagement with content? [Tag]
Rho de Spearman	To what extent are you attracted to photo content when published?	Coefficient de corrélation	1,000	,586**	,440**	,526**	,496**	,260**	,117
		Sig. (bilatéral)	.	,000	,000	,000	,000	,007	,234
		N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
	To what extent are you attracted to video content when published?	Coefficient de corrélation	,586**	1,000	,394**	,743**	,525**	,230*	-,092
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,000	.	,000	,000	,000	,018	,350
		N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
	To what extent are you attracted to text content when published?	Coefficient de corrélation	,440**	,394**	1,000	,377**	,316**	,317**	,162
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,000	,000	.	,000	,001	,001	,099
		N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
	How do you express your engagement with content? [Like]	Coefficient de corrélation	,526**	,743**	,377**	1,000	,609**	,286**	-,069
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,000	,000	,000	.	,000	,003	,486
		N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
	How do you express your engagement with content? [Comment]	Coefficient de corrélation	,496**	,525**	,316**	,609**	1,000	,550**	,285**
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,000	,000	,001	,000	.	,000	,003
		N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
	How do you express your engagement with content? [Share]	Coefficient de corrélation	,260**	,230*	,317**	,286**	,550**	1,000	,563**
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,007	,018	,001	,003	,000	.	,000
		N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
	How do you express your engagement with content? [Tag]	Coefficient de corrélation	,117	-,092	,162	-,069	,285**	,563**	1,000
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,234	,350	,099	,486	,003	,000	.
		N	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
**. La corrélation est significative au niveau 0.01 (bilatéral).									
*. La corrélation est significative au niveau 0.05 (bilatéral).									

The results of the correlation matrix reveal a strong and highly significant positive relationshipbetween video content attractiveness and the "like" engagement behavior (ρ = 0.743, p< 0.001). This indicates that individuals who are more attracted to video content are significantly more likely to express their engagement by liking posts. Similarly, a moderately strong correlation was observed between photo content attractiveness and likes (ρ = 0.526, p< 0.001), as well as between text content and likes (ρ = 0.377, p< 0.001), suggesting that all three types of content play a role in influencing this basic engagement action.

When examining the "comment" behavior, the strongest correlation emerged again with video content (ρ = 0.525, p< 0.001), followed by photo content (ρ = 0.496, p< 0.001) and text content (ρ = 0.316, p = 0.001). These results underscore the ability of visual stimuli—especially videos and photos—to elicit verbal responses or expressions from users. The relatively lower, though still significant, association with text content suggests that while users appreciate informative material, it is the visual impact that more often drives them to comment.

The "share" behavior showed weaker but still statistically significant correlations with all three content types. The highest was with text content (ρ = 0.317, p = 0.001), followed by photo content (ρ = 0.260, p = 0.007) and

video content (ρ = 0.230, p = 0.018). This pattern indicates that users are more likely to share content that they perceive as meaningful or informative, particularly in textual format, which aligns with prior findings that knowledge-based content is more likely to be redistributed across social networks.

Regarding the "tag" behavior, only weak or non-significant associations were observed. A modest positive correlation appeared with text content (ρ = 0.162, p = 0.099), which did not reach the 0.05 significance threshold, and no significant relationship was found with video content (ρ = –0.092, p = 0.350) or photo content (ρ = 0.117, p = 0.234). This suggests that tagging behaviors are less influenced by content attractiveness and may depend more on social context or interpersonal motivations rather than content format.

Overall, the correlation analysis partially confirms Hypothesis H2. While likes and comments are clearly associated with content attractiveness, especially video and photo formats, sharing is more closely tied to the attractiveness of textual content**.** Tagging, however, remains relatively independent of these factors. These differentiated correlations reinforce the need for tailored content strategies depending on the type of engagement sought. In particular, marketers aiming to stimulate sharing behavior may benefit more from investing in compelling textual narratives, whereas those seeking likes or comments should prioritize visually engaging content.

3.3.3 Hypothesis H3 – Relationship Between Digital Marketing Interest and Tourist Engagement

The third hypothesis (H3) proposes that tourists who demonstrate a stronger interest in digital marketing content are more likely to engage with tourism-related content on social media platforms. To evaluate this assumption, a Spearman rank-order correlation analysis was conducted between the variable "Are you interested in digital marketing content?" (V12) and the four forms of user engagement: liking (V8), commenting (V9), sharing (V10), and tagging (V11).

Table 13. Matrice de corrélation de Spearman entre l'intérêt pour le marketing digital et les comportements d'engagement touristique

Corrélations							
			How do you express your engagement with content? [Like]	How do you express your engagement with content? [Comment]	How do you express your engagement with content? [Share]	How do you express your engagement with content? [Tag]	Are you interested in digital marketing content?
Rho de Spearman	How do you express your engagement with content? [Like]	Coefficient de corrélation	1,000	,609**	,286**	-,069	-,465**
		Sig. (bilatéral)	.	,000	,003	,486	,000
		N	105	105	105	105	105
	How do you express your engagement with content? [Comment]	Coefficient de corrélation	,609**	1,000	,550**	,285**	-,352**
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,000	.	,000	,003	,000
		N	105	105	105	105	105
	How do you express your engagement with content? [Share]	Coefficient de corrélation	,286**	,550**	1,000	,563**	-,169
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,003	,000	.	,000	,085
		N	105	105	105	105	105
	How do you express your engagement with content? [Tag]	Coefficient de corrélation	-,069	,285**	,563**	1,000	-,032
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,486	,003	,000	.	,746
		N	105	105	105	105	105

	Are you interested in digital marketing content?	Coefficient de corrélation	-,465**	-,352**	-,169	-,032	1,000
		Sig. (bilatéral)	,000	,000	,085	,746	.
		N	105	105	105	105	105
**. La corrélation est significative au niveau 0.01 (bilatéral).							

Contrary to expectations, the results reveal significant negative correlations between interest in digital marketing and two major forms of engagement. Specifically, interest in digital marketing is negatively associated with liking (ρ = –0.465, p< 0.001) and commenting (ρ = –0.352, p< 0.001) on social media posts. This suggests that users who declare a higher interest in digital marketing are, paradoxically, less inclined to engage in these visible forms of interaction. These findings challenge the conventional assumption that marketing-oriented individuals are more active on digital platforms, at least in terms of basic engagement behaviors.

In the case of the sharing behavior, the correlation with digital marketing interest is weak and not statistically significant (ρ = –0.169, p = 0.085), indicating that no meaningful relationship exists between a tourist's interest in marketing and their likelihood to share content. Similarly, tagging behaviors appear entirely independent from marketing interest, with a near-zero correlation (ρ = –0.032, p = 0.746).

These results only partially support the hypothesis and introduce an unexpected inverse dynamic: users who express a strong interest in digital marketing may adopt a more passive or selective mode of engagement, potentially reflecting a more critical or strategic approach to content consumption. This could also suggest that marketing-savvy individuals prioritize content quality or brand authenticity before interacting, or that their engagement takes less conventional forms not captured in the current dataset (e.g., private sharing, story interactions, clicks).

Overall, the data does not confirm H3 as originally hypothesized. Instead of a positive link between marketing interest and engagement, the findings show a reverse or null relationship, particularly for likes and comments. These insights may inform future content strategies by suggesting that marketing-aware users may require more personalized, trust-driven content to trigger public engagement actions.

To sum up, the confirmatory analysis conducted in this study led to mixed findings regarding the validation of the three proposed hypotheses. Hypothesis H1, which posited a positive and significant influence of content attractiveness (photo, video, text) on various forms of tourist engagement (like, comment, share, tag), was partially supported. While certain content types significantly predicted specific engagement behaviors (e.g., video attractiveness strongly influenced likes, photo attractiveness influenced comments, and text attractiveness influenced shares), no consistent effect was observed across all dimensions.

Hypothesis H2, suggesting significant correlations between each type of content and each engagement behavior, was fully supported. The Spearman correlation matrix confirmed multiple statistically significant and positive relationships between content preferences and engagement behaviors, although tagging showed weaker or nonsignificant associations.

In contrast, Hypothesis H3, which assumed a positive link between tourists' interest in digital marketing and their engagement levels, was not supported. The results revealed negative correlations, particularly for likes and comments, suggesting that greater interest in digital marketing may not necessarily translate into higher engagement and could even reflect a more critical or passive stance towards content.

These results highlight the complex nature of online engagement and underscore the need to consider content typology and audience perceptions in designing effective digital marketing strategies for sustainable tourism promotion.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the influence of digital content attractiveness on tourist engagement behavior in the context of content marketing. Through a quantitative and confirmatory approach, three hypotheses were tested based on a sample of 105 respondents. The results offer important insights into how tourists interact with different forms of online content.

Firstly, the confirmatory regression analysis supported the first hypothesis (*H1*), partially validating that content attractiveness significantly influences tourist engagement. Video content emerged as the strongest and most consistent predictor of "likes" ($p < .001$) and "comments" ($p = .078$), while text content showed significance only for the "share" behavior ($p = .018$). Photo content had a moderate impact, particularly on "comment" behavior ($p = .002$), suggesting that visual elements still play a critical role in driving engagement.

Secondly, the correlation analysis supported the second hypothesis (*H2*) by revealing significant associations between each type of content (photo, video, text) and each form of engagement behavior (like, comment, share, tag). Most of the correlations were significant at the 0.01 level, confirming that higher content attractiveness correlates with higher engagement—especially for likes and comments. However, tagging behavior showed weaker correlations, indicating that this specific action may be influenced by other contextual or personal factors.

Lastly, the results of the third hypothesis (*H3*) revealed a surprising negative correlation between interest in digital marketing and engagement behaviors such as liking ($\rho = –.465$, $p < .001$) and commenting ($\rho = –.352$, $p < .001$). This suggests that individuals who declare a high interest in digital marketing may adopt a more critical or passive posture in their engagement behaviors. This counterintuitive result calls for further qualitative exploration to understand underlying motives, possibly related to digital fatigue, marketing skepticism, or behavioral segmentation.

In summary, the findings highlight the nuanced and multifaceted nature of content engagement in the digital age. While content attractiveness is clearly a driver of interaction, the form of content and the psychological profile of users (such as their interest level in digital marketing) moderate how that interaction manifests. Future research could integrate experimental methods or longitudinal tracking to explore causal mechanisms and segment-specific patterns in engagement behavior.

Furthermore, the three remaining hypotheses initially outlined in the conceptual framework—concerning platform trust, sustainability perception, and perceived authenticity—were not tested in the current study. They will be the subject of future research, aiming to deepen the understanding of psychological and contextual factors that shape digital tourist engagement.

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