

THE EFFECT OF VIDEO PRESENTATION ON HOTEL BOOKING INTENTIONS: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

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ABSTRACT: *The tourism industry has been growing tremendously throughout the world especially during the last two decades. The number of international tourists is forecasted to reach 1.4 billion travelers in 2020. In 2016 only, the hotels worldwide made a revenue of 550 billion U.S. dollars. These figures show the importance of the tourism industry in the general and hotel sector in particular and their significant contribution to the world economy. Consequently, hoteliers are forced to enhance their website design by exploring the factors that affect the booking intention and through understanding the behavior, the needs and the expectations of the travelers since they are in desperate need of solutions to overcome the current challenges and potential risks. The purpose of this study is to develop a conceptual framework to explore the factors that influence the online hotel booking intention and examine the relationship between video presentation and online booking intention utilizing Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) as a theoretical framework.*

Keywords: Technology acceptance model (TAM), hotel online booking intentions, video presentation.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is fascinating how technology and the Internet have changed our modern life and the way we travel. It is for sure that the number of Internet users has been growing at an incredible rate for the last two decades. According to [1], the number of internet users worldwide had increased from 1.03 billion in 2005 to 3.58 billion users in 2017. This helped Electronic Commerce (E-commerce) to flourish and become a strong virtual marketplace. [2] estimated that the number of global online shoppers to be around 2.14 billion in 2021, while the number of global online shoppers was 1.32 billion in 2014. Moreover, the total worldwide revenue of online sales was 2.3 trillion U.S. dollars generated by 1.66 billion online shoppers in 2017 and it is expected for the revenue to be doubled and reach 4.48 trillion U.S. dollars internationally in 2021 [3]. Around 31 percent of total online sales were created by travel and tourism products when online shoppers around the world spent 564 billion U.S. dollars on traveling and tourism products in 2016. The sales of online travel shopping are expected to be increased to 817.54 billion U.S. dollars in 2020 [4].

However, intangibility is the main feature that distinguishes services products from regular and physical products [5]. It means that online purchasers are experiencing some sort of uncertainties about the desired products since they are intangible [6]. However, purchasing services over the Internet is even more complicated since the online customers are not sure if the purchased products will match their expectations [7]. Therefore, within online hotel booking, more requirements are needed to overcome the uncertainties and ambiguities due to the intangible nature of service products such as booking a hotel room [8]. The hoteliers are keen to develop their website design to attract more customers or at least to maintain their market share. They could influence the customers by adding and creating a vivid video presentation on their website where online customers can obtain detailed information regarding the features of the hotel rooms and facilities [9]. As a result, the customers would feel familiar and attached to what they expect before they intend to make the booking because they may demand more extensive information and video presentation [10].

Furthermore, [12] described how the format of visual presentation such as video content was different from

regular photo presentations. The result of their study showed that the video presentation had a stronger effect than images since it provided a higher level of information. Therefore, this research will aim to fill the gap by expanding the literature of the technology acceptance Model (TAM) within the hospitality area in general and online hotel booking in particular. The study will propose to investigate the relations between the main variables within TAM and the factors that influence the hotel consumer behavior in the context of online hotel booking and focus on how video presentation helps reduce these uncertainties by examining its effects on online hotel booking.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

[13] [14] [15] Davis developed the framework of the technology acceptance model (TAM), which was built on the theory of reason action (TRA) of Ajzen and Fishbein and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) of Ajzen. It studies the behavior of computer users and their acceptance of a certain technology through recognizing the relationships between perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) [13]. Even though these two factors affect the attitude of information technology users [16], PEOU also has a significant relationship with PU on technology adoption [17]. While PU is determined as the main factor in information technology for boosting the task of effectiveness, PEOU is defined as the main factor for using technological systems without any efforts. The strong relationship between these factors is based on the assumption that using a certain system is useful once it is easy to use [15].

Whilst TAM was adopted for predicting the actual usage of ICT at workplace [13], TAM has kept extending by adding different variables to the original framework and has been utilized in different fields such as organizational culture in the field of email usage [19], trust in the field of purchasing online travel products [15], e-shopping quality, enjoyment and trust in the field of online shopping [20], perception of privacy risk and intrusiveness concerns in the field of online purchasing [21], satisfaction and perceived interactivity in the field e-library [22], and compatibility in the field of using information technology in higher education institutions [23].

Other researchers decided to integrate TAM with other models and/or theories to deliver deeper explanation of online consumer behavior. For example, [24] combined TAM and TPB to study the online booking for traveling consumers, [14] combined TAM, TPB, and IDT to investigate the factors that influence the intention of online travel product buyers.

Above and beyond, the TAM model has been utilized by many studies in the field of e-tourism [15]. Regarding studying users' acceptance of information technologies, TAM is considered to be one of the most effective theoretical models [13].

Even though others [24], stated that TAM was generally recognized in most of the previous research and confirmed to have a strong outcome on online purchasing intention, they also reported some certain limitations in the TAM model. The main deficiency of original TAM is the excluding of other factors and elements that have an impact on the behavior of online purchasers [25]. [26] also claimed that TAM did not "fully reflect the variety of user task environments" (p.218). Moreover, [27] extended TAM by adding external factors to the framework to "improve the viability and predictive nature of TAM, and enable its application in the environment of online shopping" (p.106). Furthermore, [15] advised other researchers to extend the framework of TAM by including external influences and to examine their effects within an experimental environment for further validation.

2.2 Hotel Booking Intention

Likewise, although many papers studied the influence of ICT and online business on purchase intention, it is essential to study the impact of "website information and design" (p.541) on purchase intention [28]. Websites have become the most important communication channel for both hoteliers and consumers due to the rapid development of ICT and the Internet. E-travelers usually surf the net to seek for information related to his/her travel product such as video presentation [29]. The reason why online consumers always make their decision of purchasing based on visual presentation is that they are not able to examine the products physically [15].

Therefore, it is important to examine the relationship between intention and actual behavior. In the field of tourism and hospitality, the intention of booking a hotel room online (purchase intention) is considered to be an important predictor of the actual booking behavior [30].

2.3 Video Presentation

Many studies have revealed and emphasized the significance of ICT in presenting products and services within the online purchasing environment. An online product that presented in a superior format may lead to purchasing intention [31]. Moreover, many studies suggest that a product presentation is essential and important within the online business world [32]. For example, a study of [33] explains how a useful presentation of products could make online consumers interested in visiting online stores and how it helps them in making purchasing decisions where the products are out of reach physically. They find out that product presentations in the form of a product's image will enhance the online customers' behavioral intentions through positive emotions.

[34] studied the online product presentation within the website and its effect on purchasing intention based on the presentation format. The layout of the visual image could

be either static ("product not in motion" (p.705)) or moving ("product in motion" (p.705)). They described that visual presentation in the form of "product in motion" (p.705) had a positive impact on purchasing intention and reducing the perceived risk.

Another study emphasizes the importance of online product presentation since the product information is very vital to online customers for its impact on their purchasing decision [35]. Furthermore, it concluded that online businesses always need to know how to provide a better product presentation and information to their customers even if they have to customize the product presentation based on gender. Some [36], support the idea that the product presentation can help online consumers examine the products virtually without touching them. The end product of their study illustrates how videos, as a form of product presentation, can have positive impacts on online customers' purchasing intentions. Moreover, the positive effect on purchase intention is caused by the enhanced quality of product imagination when the product information is demonstrated vividly via videos.

Another research, conducted by [37], studies the four formats of product presentation within the online purchasing environment: static pictures, video without narration, video with narration, and virtual product experience. They evaluate the impact of these formats on online consumers' understanding of the products and their intention to revisit the website. The result of their study states clearly that video and virtual product experience have more influence on online users than static pictures.

On the other hand, another research reveals information on how online websites using the same philosophy of actual retail shops in regards to product presentation [38]. However, they suggest conducting more studies on the influence of visual merchandising on online customers since there is a lack of academic research within the same scope.

In [39], the authors examined the visual merchandising of thirty-two websites for fashion firms by investigating the web content to study the impact of visual merchandising on online consumers. The outcomes of their research recommend online shops to enhance the visual appearance of products to their website to enhance the positive atmosphere and shopping experience for their customers. Moreover, they argue that visual images, especially the three-dimensional visual presentation, can generate positive shopping experience and reduce the perceived risk for online consumers.

In hospitality studies, [40] investigate the effect of visual presentation within the context of destination marketing. They found out that telepresence was an important element on the website because online travelers need to picture the selected location in their minds before traveling. The features of a video clip or photograph could stimulate telepresence for online tourists.

3. CONCEPTUAL MODEL AND PROPOSITION

The current research will adopt the extended TAM model based on previous literature. Many studies adopted the TAM model in their research to examine the intention of online shoppers [14, 15, 41]. In the original TAM, the intentions of users are controlled by two major factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. To revalidate and inspect the effect of video presentation on

online booking intention, the following conceptual model is proposed (Figure 1).

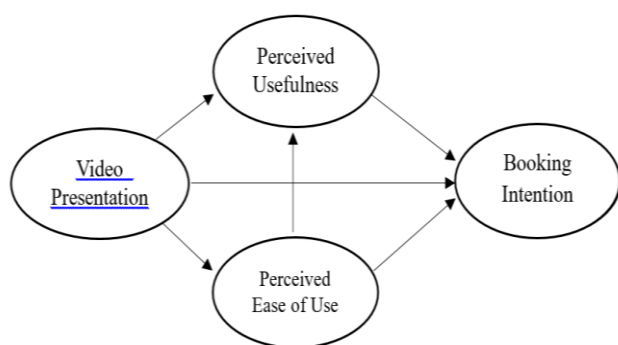


Fig. 1: Proposed Conceptual Model

Adopted from Davis (1989)

As it is mentioned previously, various studies support the notion of a positive impact of PU and PEOU on online booking intention.

3.1 Perceived Usefulness

According to [13], PU is one of the main constructs in TAM and is considered to be the core factor for information technology for boosting the task of effectiveness. It has been studied frequently in many research areas as it influences intentional behavior. In the field of hotel booking environment, several studies argue that PU is the most influential construct on intentional behavior. Therefore, the proposed proposition is:

P1: Perceived usefulness has a positive influence on online booking intention.

3.2 Perceived Ease of Use

Like PU, EOU is another important construct in TAM. It is described as a factor for using technological systems without any efforts [13]. In TAM, Davis finds that PEOU has a positive relation with PU because it is believed that using a certain system is useful once it is easy to use. Even though some scholars support the concept regarding the positive impact of PEOU on user's intention directly [17], others find an insignificant relationship between PEOU and users' intention [42]. About a study conducted by others [13], a notion that can be developed based on the online customers will have an intention to book a hotel room online if the factors are easy to use. Hence, the following propositions are proposed:

P2: Perceived ease of use has a positive influence on booking intention.

P3: Perceived ease of use has a positive influence on perceived usefulness.

3.4 Video Presentation

Many researchers studied web quality and its positive influence on PU and PEOU. One of the elements of web quality is visual presentation such as a video clip that has an important role in providing rich information. Elsewhere [44], some experimented to study the effect of visual presentation of the product on online consumers' purchasing intention. The outcome of their study supports the notion that the visual presentation has a positive impact of intentional behavior. In some studies related to E-

commerce, the visual presentation is treated as one of the important features within website quality [45]. [46] conducted a study to explore the effect of the online features on purchase intention within the online setting and argued that the feature of visual presentation within website quality had a positive impact on PU and PEOU. Besides, it is found that hotel customers rely on product presentations where PU and PEOU are major components of user interface which has a strong relationship with video presentation [47]. Likewise, [20] had research on exploring the factors that influenced online consumers' behavior. Therefore, the following propositions are proposed:

P4: Video presentation has a positive influence on online booking intention.

P5: Video presentation has a positive influence on perceived usefulness.

P6: Video presentation has a positive influence on perceived ease of use.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The main objective of this proposed conceptual model is to explore the elements that impact the online hotel booking intention and to suggest studying the effect of video presentation on online booking intentions through perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. The current paper may provide insights that could be useful to the major stakeholders in the hotel industry; hoteliers, hotel customers, and researchers. In the research field, future studies may contribute to the theory by integrating additional variables to TAM. Moreover, the study may recommend exploring the video presentation in-depth within the hotel website environment and hotel booking intention due to changes in other factors such as social economics and consumer behavior toward technology which will lead to the future research area. As for the hotel industry, the hotelier and online travel agencies may need to change their website design according to the future findings to gain more customers or to maintain their business at least.

In conclusion, this study will attempt to explore the factors related to a video presentation that influences the online hotel's intentional booking and to examine the relations between the identified factors and the variables within TAM.

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