

How can destinations get engagement on Instagram? Artificial Intelligence as a tool for photo analysis

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Abstract

What type of content should be published on Instagram to get more engagement? This article highlights the different characteristics that the images of tourists show on Instagram with the most engagement, that is likes and comments. Understanding the behavior in a destination helps tourism managers in marketing strategies. Based on the stimulus-organism-response model, a content analysis of 49,540 photographs shared by tourists that received 3,734,384 likes and 133,497 comments is carried out. By combining the content analysis with Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric tests, the results show that the different characteristics found in the images imply different amounts between comments and likes, demonstrating that the behavior of users on Instagram is influenced by the different attributes of the images. Specifically, images that feature people get more engagement than destination-focused ones. Additionally, scenes such as gastronomy and nature get less engagement than scenes such as old and new heritage, outdoors, and entertainment. Specifically, photos with people get greater rate of comments than likes, and if the format is selfie, they also get more comments. The implications of this research directly affect destination managers, offering clues about the content generated by tourists that produces the most engagement, thus attracting potential tourists and Instagram users.

Keywords: Destination image; SOR model; Instagram; Visual computing, Selfie; Neural networks.
