Measuring the Value of Social Media Marketing from a Destination Marketing Organization Perspective

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Abstract. Even though social media is one of the most significant marketing tools in tourism, the measurement of its value is still developing. Assessing return-on-investment on social media marketing is challenging. Thus, destination marketing organizations (DMOs) are nonetheless pouring money and time in social media marketing without being aware of the results. In this study, we seek to understand what DMOs are measuring in social media marketing that they do and why. The qualitative data was gathered via semi-structured interviews among eight representatives of Finnish DMOs. The interview responses were analyzed with a theory-guided content analysis method. The results demonstrate that even though the goals for social media presence are clear, the actions taken are more of an experimental nature and undocumented. Only the basic metrics that the platforms automatically provide are used and the evaluation of financial value is difficult. However, social media marketing creates value beyond financial value. Non-measurable data like customer emotions and opinions in various channels are considered as important especially to understand customer engagement. Even though the evaluation of financial value is challenging the total value of social media marketing is considered extremely valuable. Social media marketing is utilized in decision-making by top management especially with the help of measurable data. In addition to this, non-measurable insights are utilized in product development and marketing planning.

Keywords: Destination marketing · Social media · Marketing metrics · Measurements

1 Introduction

Social media has become one of the main marketing tools in tourism, both for businesses as well as for destination marketing organizations (DMOs). However, success is difficult to measure in social media. Mariani and his team found in their interviews of Italian DMOs that DMOs take for granted that spending on e-promotion is a worthy investment [17]. DMOs are nonetheless responsible for the public money they spend. Thus, we need a deeper understanding of how DMOs perceive the value of social media marketing to understand the reasoning behind investments in social media marketing.

Performance metrics in social media marketing are fragmented [1] and there is a lot that social media marketers can measure. DMOs tend to evaluate “what can be measured instead of what should be measured”, meaning that marketing tactics are not chosen according to social media marketing strategy, but rather according to a tool that is easy to acquire and use [20, pp. 75].

There are various ways DMOs can utilize social media. It is a powerful tool that enables DMOs to accomplish their tasks such as increasing the competitiveness of the destination, enhancing marketing effectiveness and improving destination attractiveness, and following strategic management and marketing. The actions that DMOs undertake in social media marketing defines how well it can utilize social media to accomplish these tasks. This study focuses especially on actions that DMOs take themselves to reach their goals and to understand why social media marketing is conducted as it is. Examining measurements of social media value will provide insights into the topic.

Social media marketing can provide a lot of information for a destination. Tourism destinations are full of customer-based data in several sources, but they are typically unused [10]. Tourism destinations need to manage this knowledge and make it available and meaningful to others [2]. Pike [26] states that not enough research is done to control the results of destination marketing around the world. Smart tourism destinations are built on data and how that data is used to increase knowledge in the destination. For this purpose, it is paramount that we understand those who have access to various data sources in tourism destinations and how they utilize the data.

To this date, it is still relatively unknown how DMOs utilize the data they can get from social media marketing, and especially how personnel working for the DMOs perceive and use social media marketing data. This study aims to increase our understanding of the perceptions destination social media marketers have of utilizing social media data. Thus, the main research question in this study is to examine how destination marketers use data they get from social media marketing they do to make decisions based on data.

2 Social Media Data in Destination Marketing

Social media is a source of strategic information which can be utilized for developing several business strategies in the tourism sector, such as visitor satisfaction as a result of product development, solving visitor problems, learning about the visitor experience, analyzing competitive strategies as well as monitoring the image and reputation of the destination [21]. Thus, strategic management of social media is vital to a destination marketing organization [15]. According to Peters et al. [24], social media must have a distinct approach to measurement, which cannot follow the measurement systems of traditional or offline media. Also, utilizing marketing performance data in marketing decision-making impacts positively the performance. Social media channels provide various metrics such as the number of followers, engagement, reach, reactions and likes that create datasets, which allow marketers to assess the success of their actions.

From a marketing perspective, social media channels must be evaluated for their effectiveness [18]. According to Germann, Lilien, and Rangaswamy [6], many marketing managers are sceptical towards the use of performance measurement data. Thus, they tend to count on intuition and experience when making decisions. On the contrary, Agostino and Sidorova [1] state that with the adoption of different social media technologies widely, both practitioners and academics have understood the organizations' important role in measuring the contribution of social media activities in business. This applies in terms of financial input as well as the value generated by social media data from users' interactions [1].

In general, there is little research done to give guidelines for the ways of planning engagement tactics and the impacts on social media communities [11]. Nevertheless, within the emergence of digital marketing platforms and the possibility to utilize data obtained from them, the use of real-time quantitative data and statistics is increasing in the form of data-driven marketing [7, 23], [34]. Also, many times the information on marketing evaluation that destination marketers have is mainly tacit, lacking shared knowledge on marketing management [20]. According to marketing literature, this phenomenon is quite common among marketing practitioners [25].

In addition to this, several studies relating especially to traditional, offline marketing state that marketing performance measurement is usually affected by the focus on subjective measures, including brand loyalty and customer satisfaction. There are difficulties in linking them with financial metrics, which often are in the interests of top management [27, 28, 30]. According to research so far, industry practitioners in the tourism sector have inadequate knowledge about the financial returns on their investment in terms of social media marketing, leading to significant differences in the knowledge of social media assessment among DMOs [15, 17]. For example, Mariani and his colleagues found out that Italian DMOs are not measuring commercial outcomes at all [17].

Another challenge in measuring social media marketing is the impact of spillover effects, meaning that exposure to other marketing channels may influence the exposure of social media channels [16]. Also, Järvinen [12] mentions difficulties relating to the impact of marketing activity from other effects. For example, if the sales of a product or service increase as a result of a marketing campaign, it is challenging to determine which part of the total sales increase as an outcome of a particular campaign, such as campaigns relating to new products, news published about the company, price promotions or improvements in the economic situation, to name but a few [12]. Therefore, metrics, which not only listen to the core brand but also the noise across the system are needed in social media dashboards [24].

There is no point in gathering information from digital analytics unless the data obtained from it is analyzed properly [3, 25]. The research shows that with the help of analytics, which is used in assessing the performance, it is possible to generate more sales, profit and return on investment [5, 6], which are also essential goals for DMOs. Assessing the financial value is another essential part for the tourism companies to demonstrate their success in social media marketing. However, previous research suggests that industry practitioners do not have enough knowledge about the financial returns on their investment in terms of social media marketing, leading to significant differences in the knowledge of social media assessment among DMOs [15, 17].

Table 1 presents the studies focusing on social media marketing metrics. There are different methods for assessing social media performance in academic literature. According to the research so far, quantifiable measures are highly appreciated, while

Table 1. Previous studies relating to social media marketing measurement.. Paraphrasing: Lamberti and Noci [14]; Chaffey and Patron [3]; Morgan et al. [20]; Sigala [13]; Germann et al. [5]; Peters et al. [24]; Mariani et al. [17]; Järvinen and Karjaluo [11]; Agostino and Sidorova [1]; Järvinen [12].

Author(s) and year	Major findings relating to the previous study of social media marketing measurement
Lamberti & Noci 2010	The outcomes show that companies pursuing different marketing strategies adopt different kinds of MPMS (marketing performance measurement system).
Chaffey & Patron 2012	Technology already exists in making the most of digital analytics, but according to the study, the major constraints for companies in digital analytics in fact are people and resources.
Morgan et al. 2012	It is argued in the article that the KPIs (key performance indicators) used traditionally are partly unsuitable for assessing the impact of DMO digital platforms. The article suggests that traditional marketing KPIs evaluate what can be measured instead of what should be measured.
Sigala 2013	The public and private stakeholders had differing views about the roles of DMS (destination marketing system) as well as about the metrics that need to be used for evaluating DMS performance. The findings also showed that the perceptions that stakeholders had about the roles of the DMS influence their perceptions about the performance evaluation of DMS.
Germann et al. 2013	The use of marketing analytics depends on the competition in the field of business the company operates in, as well as the needs and wants of the company's customers. A suitable culture for the use of analytics in the organisation contributes to better marketing performance. Most companies will benefit from the use of marketing analytics.
Peters et al. 2013	In the study, three components of appropriate metrics for social media were developed, namely a holistic framework for social media elements and nine guidelines for social media management. Also, the theoretically driven metrics for dashboards were established, including the requirement of the new kind of input for social media and organizational changes that need to be followed when implementing social media.
Mariani et al. 2015	In the paper, factors contributing to superior level of social media activity are investigated. There are differences in the ways in which Facebook is tactically and strategically practiced among Italian regional DMOs. Different tools and ways to measure the ROI of social media are used among DMOs. Some DMOs rather rely on sentiment gained from social media instead of numbers, when assessing the impact on sales of tourism products and services.
Järvinen & Karjaluo 2015	An organization should consider the the chosen metrics, the processing of metrics data, and the organizational context surrounding the use of the system. KPIs, which can be managed and corresponds to the firm's objectives are recommended. In addition to this, the collected data should be continuously modified in order to make right decisions. In marketing metrics management, time and resources should be invested.
Agostino & Sidorova 2016	A PMS (performance measurement system) framework was developed, making a difference between metrics and methods. The measurement of financial and relational impact of social media are supported in PMS metrics, as well as the impact of social media conversations and opinions of the users. However, as social media evolves continuously, the system should be updated on a regular basis.
Järvinen 2016	In the measurement of digital marketing performance digital analytics can be used, however, its actual value is processed by the company's ability to process the data into meaningful information and thus, better performance. With digital analytics, moving to data driven marketing instead of relying on experience and intuition in decision-making is possible.

analyzing the reactions from the user sentiment is gaining more popularity among practitioners. However, the method for analyzing customer sentiment is especially challenging to find. Also, as it is the consumer who is responsible for shaping the brand and the media, DMO managers must be able to show the impact of their marketing actions against a 'clear and communicable set' of KPIs [20].

This study aims to further elaborate on how social media data is utilized in tourism destinations. To further improve this important aspect we need to understand how social media metrics are perceived and utilized by DMOs. To this day, we are lacking knowledge on what success means for DMOs in social media marketing, how data they obtain from social media contributes to this success, and how that data can help in decision-making in the DMOs.

3 Methodology

To reach the study goals qualitative research approach was chosen. Semi-guided theme interviews were with the personnel of Finnish DMOs during April, May, June, and September of 2019. In the study, altogether eight interviews (I1-I8) were conducted as data saturation was reached at that point, and new interviews did not provide any major new insights [32]. Finnish DMOs were chosen as Finland is undergoing development towards a smarter destination [33] and it was easy and efficient to find the interviewees.

The interviewees ranged from marketing managers to CEOs. Before the interview, a letter concerning the interview was sent to the interviewees to get more information about the background and practicalities of the interview, including anonymity and confidentiality, which is important in interviews where businesses and their tactics are handled [4].

Based on the literature four main themes were identified for the interviews: goals of social media marketing, how social media marketing is measured, the financial value of social media marketing, and use of social media in decision making. A pre-defined definition of success, social media marketing, or any other concept was not given to the interviewees but the goal was to understand their perceptions of these topics. All the interviews were conducted in Finnish and they typically lasted for about an hour, including the forewords and an informal discussion at the end. To focus the topic the interviews explored mainly two most used social media channels, namely Facebook and Instagram. At the time of the interviews, the number of followers and likes ranged from 6427 to 160 000 in Facebook and 4080 to 55 300 in Instagram in the social media channels of the DMOs participating in the study. Also, many of the DMOs have other channels in use, such as Twitter, LinkedIn or TikTok. In addition to this, social media channels, especially for Russian or Chinese markets, were in use in some DMOs. Some DMOs had several channels on Facebook for example in different languages. YouTube was in general regarded as a channel to store video content rather than a marketing channel.

The interviews were recorded and later transcribed. Transcribed data was analysed using content analysis. The main purpose of content analysis is to organize the data so that the essential information is not lost. It is a methodological framework, which can

be used in various ways, enabling analyzing the data in versatile manners. The analysis process is based on interpretation and reasoning, where it is possible to proceed from the empirical data to conceptual perception about the phenomenon. The analysis must be based on truthful and credible interpretation as well as justifying the decisions made in the process [27].

According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi [32], the analysis process can be either data-driven, theory-guided, or theory-driven, depending on how strongly the research and its analysis is based on theory or data. In this study, the analysis is theory-guided, also called abductive reasoning, for the research itself is based on theory and previous theory was studied before the interviews were conducted. However, it does not strictly follow a certain theory nor does not try to test a theory. In abductive research, the focus is on the meanings and interpretations, the motives, and intentions that people use in their daily lives [4, 22].

Phrases can be simplified into single expressions. This is also called coding [27]. Coding was done for the data in question by collecting single expressions into an Excel sheet. Subsequently, findings will be categorized and thus, thematized into the most important topics aroused from the data [27]. In the data of this study, the similar expressions were later unified under one. As Eriksson and Kovalainen [4] state, the analysis process took place in several simultaneous phases. As a result of the content analysis categories or typologies regarding the relevant study, questions are created. These typologies identify the perceptions of the DMO personnel regarding the study questions.

4 Findings

4.1 Goals of Social Media Marketing

Table 2 presents the ten categories of goals identified in the content analysis of the interviews that the DMOs have regarding social media marketing. Similar analyses were conducted for all the questions in the study. We can see that branding and profiling the destination and promoting the services and products are the main goals for DMOs. We can also see that different DMOs have different goals set for social media marketing. The goals are important to understand as they define what metrics and what kind of data are utilized in social media marketing. For example, I3 was the only interviewee stating that they use social media as a tool for communication with followers and fans. I3 was also the only interviewee that used social media marketing to participate in the conversations in social media channels.

Table 2. The goals of social media marketing in DMOs

	I1	I2	I3	I4	I5	I6	I7	I8
Branding/profiling the destination	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Promoting the services and products in the destination	x	x		x		x		x
Being involved in the customer journey	x			x				
Increasing the awareness/demand		x	x	x			x	
A tool for reaching/knowing the target groups and customers		x	x			x		x
A tool for communication with followers and fans			x					
A customer-service channel			x			x		
Inspiring/building long-term relationships with the audience				x		x		x
Directing customers to the website and selling					x	x		
Spreading current information/source of info						x	x	

4.2 Meeting the Goals of Social Media Marketing

How DMOs define whether or not their social media marketing is successful depends on the goals they have set for social media marketing. When asked about comparing the goals set and documented with the results gained from social media marketing, several types of ideas were received. For example, two interviewees (I1 and I3) mentioned that they tend to follow the set goals at a general level. However, they do not actively follow whether the goals have been reached. As many of the goals are on a general level without any kind of concrete measurement, it is difficult to develop models that explain factors contributing to reaching the goals. Interviewee I3 says that they tend to measure quantitative goals “three or four times a year” in a sense that “where we have succeeded and where not” (I3). Following the qualitative measures, on the contrary, has been more like “based on vibes” (I3). Interviewee (I1) has similar thoughts concerning the issue:

“Yes we compare and measure our own success on a general level and of course it is monitored, but if in the strategy we don’t have such quantitative goals, so of course, it has been impossible then to say quantitatively or so precisely that how, whether the objectives were exceeded or not..” (I1).

An interviewee mentions that they tend to compare their results with the ones of the previous year. *"Well, we compare and compare a lot to the previous year, especially if something similar has been done..."* (I6) Last, one interviewee says that the main purpose for providing the information about the results is for the partner companies operating within the destination: *"Partners, in other words, the companies that are involved, if they are satisfied with what information is available to them, then at the moment it has been just enough for us."* (I7).

Some interviewees (I1 and I2) state that the metrics used are considered basic metrics. However, according to the interviewee, this type of measurement relates more to the measurement on content production, stating that the measurement is *"Not so much the final product, which is to bring passengers or bring tourists to the destination, it does not measure the final goal but the success of the content work"* (I1).

Another interviewee has a similar opinion concerning the issue: *"If marketing is difficult to measure, then the relationship between marketing and sales is even harder to measure,"* (I2) continuing with *"...how much marketing is generating sales, as in our area with 200 travel companies, it is quite difficult to prove how much our branding campaign, for example, how much money it brings to a single company."*

Only one of the interviewees (I5) stated that they use ROI for calculating the success of their social media marketing. One interviewee (I2) stated that they make calculations before each campaign to set goals to be achieved. Also, two of the interviewees (I3 and I6) stated that creating financial models for calculating marketing success remains a challenge since the DMO does not practice sales.

Some of the interviewees (I3 and I6) brought out the challenge of calculating sales or marketing success since their main purpose is to brand the destination in social media instead of selling. An interviewee thinks that *"Yeah looks like its kind of hard to measure what value you put to the benefits related to the image"*. (I6).

Most DMOs in this study do not currently have any financial models to measure the success of social media marketing. Yet, according to the findings, the DMOs, in general, are interested in acquiring them in the future. On the contrary, one of the interviewees (I1) stated their critical attitude towards financial models, and whether they are needed:

"I'm not really sure of anything is like that if it is that the value of an action is defined as something but not based on the actual trade it has, but on a certain value and like that, even if it was 20,000 €, there have been 300 people out there doing that function, so whether that's a sensible measure, that's just what I was thinking about." (I1).

Another interviewee (I6) has similar thoughts concerning the issue, pointing out that the financial measures have not been calculated, but it is rather something that has been reflected in the organization:

"Well it is not really that computational, it has been more of what has been reflected, that we have invested this much into this and now these are the results, and then we kind of think about it either during campaigns or after and then, in a way, many times the things is that we do not sell anything. So, Visit xx does not sell anything alone". (I6).

4.3 Effects of Social Media on Decision-Making

According to the findings, several notions arose concerning decision-making based on social media marketing in DMOs. The mentioned issues included the notions that the management understands the role of social media marketing (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6 and I8), the DMOs utilize social-media marketing in decision-making (I1, I3, I6 and I8), social media is utilized in marketing planning (I1, I5 and I6), partner companies in the destination are kept informed in terms of plans regarding social media marketing (I2, I4 and I8), as well as measuring the financial value is in the interests of the board (I2, I3, and I5). Other issues mentioned were that social media measurement will increasingly be a tool for management (I1).

According to interview findings, it was mentioned in nearly all the interviews (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5, I6 and I8) that the management understands the role of social media marketing in marketing of the destination. Especially three interviewees said social media is (I1) or will be (I4) utilized in decision-making and budgeting (I1, I4, I6) as well as in investments (I8). One interviewee states that *"probably in budgeting and like marketing planning and well really in everything, it's such a central part of everything we do, I don't really come up with anything where it's left out like that. Or where you could exclude it."* (I1).

Another type of finding in the interviews is that the decisions in social media are made regarding the use of resources. Interviewee I4 states, that especially time resources can be justified when those working with marketing in DMOs can demonstrate how much time has been spent on certain operations.

"And yes, those are the choices, let us say about just moving something in-house. As you can see, it does not come from a two-hour weekly work, but requires eight hours at a minimum. In a way, with these results, I hope that we can also support such resources and other decision making." (I4).

One interviewee stated opposing thoughts concerning the top management's (or board's) role in social media marketing. According to the interviewee (I7), also the management must understand the role of analytics and strategic management. There is no point in collecting social media data if the management is not interested:

"So, if the whole organization's decision-making is spoken of, yes, there never has been a question of what those numbers have been, that is to say, it would be quite different to put pressure on them if they were interested, but if I don't know if analytics and figures are going to be utilized, it is also useless to pay for collecting them." (I7).

5 Discussion and Conclusions

This study paints an interesting in-depth picture of the everyday challenges DMOs face to build a smarter knowledge destination based on data they receive from various sources. In this specific case, the focus was on social media data and measuring the success of social media marketing. Even though tourism and marketing literature is abundant of models to measure digital marketing and social media marketing, virtually none of these are utilized by the DMOs in this study. This suggests a relatively wide

academic-practitioner gap in social media marketing metrics. It would also seem that relatively little development has happened during the past four years as the results in many regards are similar to what Mariani and his colleagues found [17]. However, in one aspect significant change can be identified. The connection between marketing and sales is becoming easier to measure and four DMOs in this study are developing their capabilities in this regard.

Interestingly we allowed the DMOs to define themselves what they mean by social media marketing and what are they emphasizing in it. The results show that they focus the most on owned and paid media, while earned media gains much less attention. This is an interesting observation as earned media can be regarded as one of the most influential sources of information when tourists are making destination decisions. Only three DMOs actively follow what is written about the destination in social media. This implies that there is a disconnect between social media marketing strategy and customer experience strategy at the destination. Social media is seen as a promotion channel instead of using it as a source of intelligence and two-way interaction with the tourists. We can also see from the data that the locals are in no way a stakeholder for social media marketing in DMOs. Not a single DMO mentioned any measurements regarding people living in the destination region.

According to the findings, the so-called basic metrics that the social media platforms automatically provide are used for measuring the results of social media marketing, as they can be easily acquired and implemented inside social media channels. This supports the finding made in the study by Morgan et al. [20], which suggests that tools for social media measurement tend to be chosen according to the easiness of adoption and use. This finding is also consistent with the finding of the study by Peters et al. [24], stating that especially small companies are likely to be in favour of the basic metrics. However, in the worst-case scenario, simple metrics (e.g. likes, followers) in measurement can mislead marketing efforts in a way that it may even be harmful to the organization's goals [24]. Nevertheless, based on the findings of this study, it is challenging to evaluate whether the metrics selected are the most appropriate for the DMOs' social media marketing and their goals.

In their studies, Hays et al. [8] and Järvinen and Karjaluo [11] highlight that metrics selection varies between the organizations, referring mainly to web analytics in digital marketing in general. The findings of this study report similar findings. Even though there were similarities in the measurement techniques, it still seems that different types of measurement techniques are highlighted depending on the DMO. The study by Agostino and Sidorova [1] provided similar types of results in the metrics selection, stating that choosing the metrics for marketing measurement is fragmented among DMOs. This is natural, as the goals may differ among DMOs. Not just one metrics system exists in social media measurement, but rather, organizations need to define their measurement systems, which are in line with the strategy [11, 24].

As to the financial value, several DMOs of the study agreed that it is an important factor also in social media marketing. However, it is difficult to measure, especially if the DMO's main task is to brand the destination instead of selling products or services. When a DMO moves from marketing into sales it seems to affect the way all marketing is structured and measured. Measuring the financial value becomes easier when the DMO practices sales in their digital marketing channels, since the results of marketing

become more measurable. However, social media improves also website traffic [13, 19]. In this way, visitors and ultimately customers can be directed to the website, where they may end up buying tourism services. This demonstrates the complexity of branding versus direct sales in destination marketing, something that has not received enough attention in destination marketing literature.

The findings revealed that in social media marketing other measures, mainly the so-called qualitative measures are also important, and not just financial. This finding is in line with the study by Agostino and Sidorova [1] stating that both practitioners and academics have understood the organizations' importance for measuring the contribution of social media practices in business purposes, referring to both financial contributions as well as the value generated by social media data from users' interactions. Also, Huang et al. [9] state that by communicating with customers in social media channels, companies and destinations can get valuable information on competitive advantage and the desires that customers have. This will help marketers in getting new ideas and utilizing them in planning their products and services for customers' needs. From the study in question, similar types of conclusions can be made.

The findings show that social media marketing is generally taken into consideration in decision-making and its role is usually understood also by the board or top management of the DMO. This finding is in line with Mariani et al. [17] and Agostino and Sidorova [1] suggesting that the DMOs understand the importance of social media marketing today. Also, the findings show that social media often plays its role when deciding about budgets as well as investments both in social media and otherwise. The findings also implicate that especially with the help of social media analytics and other data, the board can be convinced about new decisions, as well as in justifying timely resources or future actions. The findings suggest that measuring the financial value is clearly in the interests of the board of the DMOs, as with the help of analytics, it is possible to generate more sales, profit and return on investment. This finding is in line with the studies by and Germann et al. [5] and Germann, Lilien, Fiedler, and Kraus [6] stating that web analytics in general offer objective and quantitative metrics, which can be easily communicated to top management.

In addition to metrics and analytics, the findings suggest that social media discussions are utilized in DMOs, thus benefiting from it in the decision-making. Social media acts as a tool for learning about the preferences and feelings of customers, which can consequently be utilized in decision-making.

For future research, the results of this study open up new possibilities and directions. For example, identifying the importance of goals is crucial if social media marketing and the use of data want to be improved. Goals need to be developed together with social media marketing knowledge. Also when researching social media marketing at the destinations the complexity of the phenomenon needs to be understood. Stakeholders and their expectations, goals, capabilities of the personnel, resources available and many other factors all influence social media marketing practices in DMOs. There is also still a demand for a more critical assessment of social media success. For example, the responsible use of public funds [17] was not mentioned by the respondents. DMOs acknowledge that they need to be able to demonstrate the quality of their marketing but are having difficulties in understanding it themselves. However, the opinions of the funding companies became important among

DMOs that are funded by tourism businesses. The question of whether or not the funding companies have any better understanding of the success of the DMO social media marketing still remains. The financial value of social media marketing is the top priority for DMOs, but in the future, the possibilities of social media marketing in reaching non-financial goals, such as engagement of the locals with the tourism industry, should be explored further.

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