

Traversing through cyberspace

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Abstract— Tourism is a rapidly growing industry. Travelling around the world is everyone's desire, and people somehow try to make it happen, whether it is a pilgrimage, a world tour, a business trip, or anything else. But it is not easily accessible to all. On the other hand, from the perspective of the tourism service providers, they found it challenging to increase their service due to a lack of resources. As a result, a need arose for transportation innovation, which was an effective catalyst for tourism's expansion and globalization, and this is where cyber-tourism enters the picture. Cybertourism has caused a shift in the traditional conceptual framework and has become a key to tourism accessibility. As a result, the main topic of this article will be online tourism, as well as its benefits and drawbacks in terms of cyber security in the digital realm.

Index Terms— Tourism, digitalization, cyber threats, cybersecurity.

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that involves the flow of people, and it is the business of luring visitors to the host nation, city, or other location, or the visitor's home country, through lodging, entertainment, and tour services. Over time, digitalization has revolutionized the way the tourism sector operates, altering the structure of the industry to make it more effective and productive. Our entire globe has been increasingly digitalized for many years. Indeed, we have become so dependent on digital components of our lives that the modern tourism industry and its future appear inconceivable without technological innovation.

II. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF TOURISM

Both the host country and the tourist are benefitted by tourism. Many countries around the world view tourism as an essential part of economic development, and governments are constantly looking for new ways to promote competitive and sustainable tourism development. Integrated tourism trends support the creation of tourism and hospitality strategies in the public and private sectors.

Every city and country in the world depend heavily on tourism for employment and income. The economies of developing nations rely heavily on the finances that tourists bring in. In many nations, tourism is seen as the key source of income. Significant social and cultural advantages come from tourism. This enables local communities to introduce tourists to their history, culture, and traditions. Tourism fosters improved nation-state relations, encourages the development of tourist-friendly infrastructure, boosts the value of developing nations' currencies, and promotes the study of new languages. Also, the standard of living in the host community rises as tourists spend money there.

For instance, in India, tourism accounts for 8.78% of all employment and 6.23% of the country's GDP. Approximately 20 million people are currently employed in the leisure industry in India. Additionally, it contributes significantly to India's foreign exchange earnings.

III. AREAS OF TOURISM INDUSTRY

Any nation's tourism industry, which includes services on land, water, and in the air like taxis, buses, trains, and aeroplanes, depends on efficient **transportation**. It is a component of the infrastructure because it must meet the needs of tourists travelling to other locations, necessitating improvements to the ships, roads, and rails.

Since visitors must have a place to rest and feel safe, the **accommodation** segment is essential to the tourism industry. Numerous tourist amenities are included, along with self-catering accommodations, affordable and upscale villas, farm stays, campgrounds, and even hostels.

Each traveller's experience is largely dependent on their **beverage and food** choices. Travellers have the opportunity to taste regional dishes and interact with the natives. And using food vloggers to promote restaurants is currently the best strategy available.

Travellers look for **recreation** as a part of their journeys, and they are typically drawn to entertainment options that they would not typically find within their own country. This includes places to go for entertainment like theatres, cinemas, sightseeing tours, and even shopping.

Other sectors that provide customers with destination services like insurance, money exchange, trip reservations, and any other service aimed at simplifying their vacation experience are either directly or indirectly related to tourism.[1]

IV. TRAVEL TECHNOLOGY

The travel and tourism industry is undergoing a rapid change in how businesses interact with their customers due to technological advances. Automation helps businesses run their daily operations more efficiently while also increasing customer engagement.

The broad term "travel technology" describes the use of IT, e-commerce, and other related technology alternatives in the tourism and leisure sectors. The objectives or motivations for implementing travel technology also include streamlining travel and associated processes, lowering costs, saving time, and giving customers an easier travel experience. Throughout the journey, technology can be used to enhance the customer experience. Smart speakers in hotels, virtual reality tours from travel companies, and new, seamless ways to check in without having to stand in line or speak with reception staff are all results of technological advances like voice search, virtual and augmented reality, face recognition technology and the Internet of Things.

V. E-TOURISM/CYBER TOURISM

Tourism is a naturally information-intensive activity, so turning it into a cyber activity seems like a perfectly acceptable option. The goal of e-tourism is to digitalize the travel industry. It is a brand-new, alternative type of tourism that heavily utilizes information technology, particularly virtual reality technology. Cybertourism can serve as a marketing tool to encourage physical tourism. The entire tourism industry is heavily reliant on e-tourism, from the registration procedure to the visitor experience and everything in between. [2]

E-tourism is frequently used during the **research and development** stages of a tourism product or service to help businesses reach potential customers and fulfil their needs and aspirations. This is done by utilizing a wealth of digital resources from stakeholders. Travellers can now research their vacation plans by themselves through websites like Instagram and Pinterest.

Online **bookings and reservations** can now be made with the snap of a finger. And with just a click of a button, it allows for the modification or cancellation of reservations, be it IRCTC or AirAsia. It makes the process simpler and easier for the visitor while enabling the company to operate more productively.

Moving on to the crucial subject of **marketing and promotion** in cyber tourism, travel agencies that want to sell people their goods and services target particular customers based on location and other pertinent demographics in their advertising. There is no longer a need for flyers or other physical forms of advertising. Additionally, it may be determined by the user's online activities; for instance, if someone starts looking into beach vacations, they might see advertisements for beach resorts in Goa or the Maldives. Again, by increasing traffic, travel influencers contribute significantly to changing the marketing industry.

virtual tourism and e-tourism

This is an illustration of e-tourism in action as a hybrid idea, virtual tourism combines the ideas of virtual reality and travel. In essence, virtual tourism enables individuals to enjoy a travel-related experience without actually leaving their homes. Virtual travel comes in a variety of shapes and levels of technological sophistication. The best example is Google Earth, which allows users to navigate a location using only their visual sense. A more advanced version involves the use of a simulator or a VR headset, which immerses the user in the scenario.

Smart tourism and e-tourism

E-tourism can take many different forms, but smart tourism is frequently one of them. It's all about smart tourism, which calls for the use of technology or digitalization, converting it to a form of e-tourism to boost productivity.

VI. UPSIDES AND DOWNSIDES

Benefits of e-tourism

Any automation in the tourism industry has helped to increase its effectiveness and smoothness with less risk of human blunders. This frequently indicates that customers are satisfied with their overall travel experiences and that the participating travel agencies are making more money and spending less on overhead. The tourism industry has undergone significant advancements in e-tourism, which has also helped the sector adopt new forms of tourism like smart tourism and virtual tourism and make some of them more environmentally friendly.

Shortcomings of e-tourism

It takes away the personal element; for instance, the interactions and personal connection that a real person could bring to the situation are unmatched by the public service provided by robots. Additionally, the widespread use of technology may reduce employment opportunities in the tourism industry, which could negatively affect the host region's economy. A website with bugs, a booking system with glitches, cyber-attacks, and the loss of customer data due to technology failures can all result in a loss of revenue and security. This brings us to the key subhead, cybersecurity.

VII. CYBER SECURITY

Cybersecurity is a major priority area for those in **travel management** professions since organizations in the industry are becoming susceptible to cyber-attacks, phishing, ransomware attacks, and other types of data breaches. Travel firms are a prominent target since they engage a large number of people and have access to a wealth of user information.

VIII. THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN TOURIST DESTINATIONS AND SECURITY

The **World Economic Forum** states that the competitiveness of national tourism systems in 2013 is influenced by *14 pillars*, including costs, availability of natural resources, cultural resources, and others. *Pillar 3* of them makes specific reference to **safety and security**, and *Pillar 9* refers to **ICT infrastructure**. Safety and security are evaluated based on factors like the economic consequences of terrorism, the dependability of the police, the economic costs of crime and violence, and traffic accidents. ICT infrastructure is evaluated in light of variables including ICT use for business-to-business and business-to-consumer transactions as well as the proportion of people who use the Internet. A closer look reveals that there is no attention given to cybersecurity.

The World Economic Forum has opted for a traditional definition of security, which is defined as a defense against material and physical harm.[3] Security is frequently understood as a defense against anything or anyone trying to hurt someone else. People are sometimes defined as being safe when they are shielded from undesired, uncontrollable outcomes. Both a security breach and a safety error in the travel and tourism sector have the potential to ruin both the trip and the sector. Due to this, the two are merged under the term "tourist surety." In a nutshell, security is just one of many aspects that affect how competitive a site is for tourists.[4]

IX. THE NEW CHALLENGE OF CYBERSECURITY FOR TOURISM DESTINATIONS

Another new challenge facing the tourism industry is cyber security. It is simple to understand that many of these goods and services are vulnerable to cyber risks if the true tourist product is a destination, which is a blend of various commodities and services.

Where the tourist purchases intermediary, travel, and lodging services, the person uses several programmes and Wi-Fi gadgets. A cyber threat could affect any of these products.

Measures:

It could be interesting to develop some specialized tools to evaluate and keep track of the cyber security policy in the travel industry. The Sapienza investigation, for instance, might be expanded to include the tourism industry by picking several important businesses and offering a Tourism Cyber Security Index. The following industries should be picked for the core businesses: intermediaries, travel, lodging, and one form of tourism supply, such as coastal, mountain, arts, etc. Additionally, the authors of the World Economic Forum Report should include some metrics that consider both the cyber security aspect and physical safety and security. Tourism hotspots must develop cyber security strategies since they are exposed to cyber hazards. To keep the organization safe, businesses must invest in cybersecurity training and numerous hardware and software tools. It is also essential to stay up-to-date on the newly updated rules and to follow data privacy laws.

X. CONCLUSION

E-tourism primarily focuses on using technology to increase the efficiency of the tourism sector. As I have presented in this article, the digitalization of tourism and hospitality can improve company prospects in terms of finances, productivity, efficacy, and other factors from the viewpoint of the travel industry. Moreover, from the aspect of the traveller, it may contribute to a more pleasurable trip. Though competitiveness depends on a number of factors, including a sense of safety and security that must extend to cyberspace is essential. Thus, cybersecurity is crucial for the sustainability of tourist destinations. In conclusion, the locale, which is the primary tourist attraction, provides a range of products and services that are most subject to cyber threats. The entire economy, including the tourism industry, is becoming more susceptible to cyber threats, and only a revised, more comprehensive policy based on increased stakeholder knowledge will address this problem.

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