

# **Role and Impact of Social Media in International Pilgrimage Tourism in India: A Case Study on Sri Lanka**

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**Abstract:** The world tourism has seen crossing 1 billion entries by 2018, agreeing to the world travel showcase. And as a result, the relationship between travel and innovation is closer than ever, with business proceeding to turn to social media to advance their administration and reach clients more intimately and individually way. By striking the nearness of the web in today's world, social media can be one of the most viable instruments of goal promoting and promoting. The social media demonstrated to be a major communication vehicle that spread over the locale like a fierce blaze. The tourism industry is one of the sectors that have beneficated the foremost form the web and the result from social media has gotten of online travel bookings stands roughly at 30% within the current advertising situation. This figure is certainly empowering as it sums up to \$8 billion and is anticipated to rise within the close future.

Those people who are living in India, They can check all the information about the tour such as packages and offers that are provided to attract the visitors to plan their visit across India. Social media has become more popular in promoting the industry, attract visitors, and help them in planning their trip.

**Keywords:** Internet, Social Media, Tourism Marketing, Online-Travel Agency, International pilgrimage

**Introduction:** All branches of the tourism sector, involving non-secular tourism had to cooperate with the media regularly; through the media, industry can execute their traveling applications to larger regions. News and comments within the media approximately destination may be strong on the selections of particularly those who are going to plans to travel. ( Subash, 2019)

This is very helpful for the tourism industry and other travellers for trip planning to increase the number of customers by knowing their feedback when they came back from their trips. The detail generated by other travellers is playing very crucial role in the analysis and decision- making process.

Social media is a greater tool for promoting and marketing for all types of businesses. It has pros and cons also if social media is used improperly that may be outcome harm than good. Social media developed by internet technology effectively. Social media are being supported a higher rate into each part of a journey, starting from reservation to discover where to eat.

Social media is also an advantage for the tourism sectors; the industry has a relay long term relationships with its customers through destination reputation, consumer opinion, the spread of information, and positive word-of-mouth advertising.

### **Relationships between social media and international pilgrimage tourism:**

A social media outlet is a way to the development of the business community, which grow around the Universe and offering their customers the right to build up their self-content if any country wants also sent them.

There is a huge sum of goals and locales that are by their nature or chronicled esteem of intrigued for residential and outside guests. Guests from all over the world partaking in noteworthy journeys bounded to these goals.

New technology like social media is also impacting on international pilgrimage tourism. This tool is much more interactive and effective. Web 2.0 social tools are important to the tourism sector.

### **Literature Review:**

Tourists that share their experience with others on social media after came back from travel that can help others in taking a final decision from destinations to hotels and restaurants. The primary objective of this study is to analyze the importance of the role that social media can play in the development and promotion of religious tourism. It is evidence social media play a crucial rule in the tourism sector. (M. Murat YEŞİL 2013). Through the communication and technologies, provides the right information that helps in develop the relationship with the clients. Online word of mouth (e WOM) is playing a crucial role in a growing number of tourists who uses modern electronic methods. It is observed through a survey that about 50% of persons are likely to download the travel application for searching about the destination before leaving the place. (Radmila Zivkovic et.al 2014)

The researcher wants to describe the part of travel agencies to promote non-secular tourism in Sri Lanka. Interview and personal observation methods are used for data collection from ten numbers of travel agencies, eight number of Buddhist and Hindu venues, five Yoga, meditation centers , 50 spiritual tourists participated in this study. The locating of research shows that there are a large funding and terrible motivation barrier to promote spiritual Sri Lanka by way of the travel corporations. (Arachchige Rasika 2017)

It is observed by the researchers that the effect of social media advertising on the making of brand equity of Sri Lanka as a destination for international guests. There are two factors of electronic media advertising efforts like interaction and trendiness that are badly impacting

on brand fairness of Sri Lanka as a destination. It is usually suggested with the aid of the researchers that entrepreneurs of Sri Lanka must be aware about interplay and trendiness of social media. (Mohamed Ismail and Mujahid Hilal 2019).

Organizations depend on the conversation with travellers through numerous channels to market their merchandise and build customer relationships (poon,1993). Indeed, social media have grown to be considered one of the most effective means for travellers to are seeking for information and share travelling experiences(cox et al.2009, Gretzel 2006; Yoo & Gretzel 2008) When discussing the significance of social media in the tourism, India cannot be ignored.

Social media impact on tourism industry and also help to reach with people all over India direct through social media. It is an application in which the information is generated by the customers about their journey, how was the experience when they returned from the tour. Social media is a digital platform where tourists can share their feedback, thought, improvements , and suggestions also. (Mayank and Bijendra,2019)

### **Objectives of the study:**

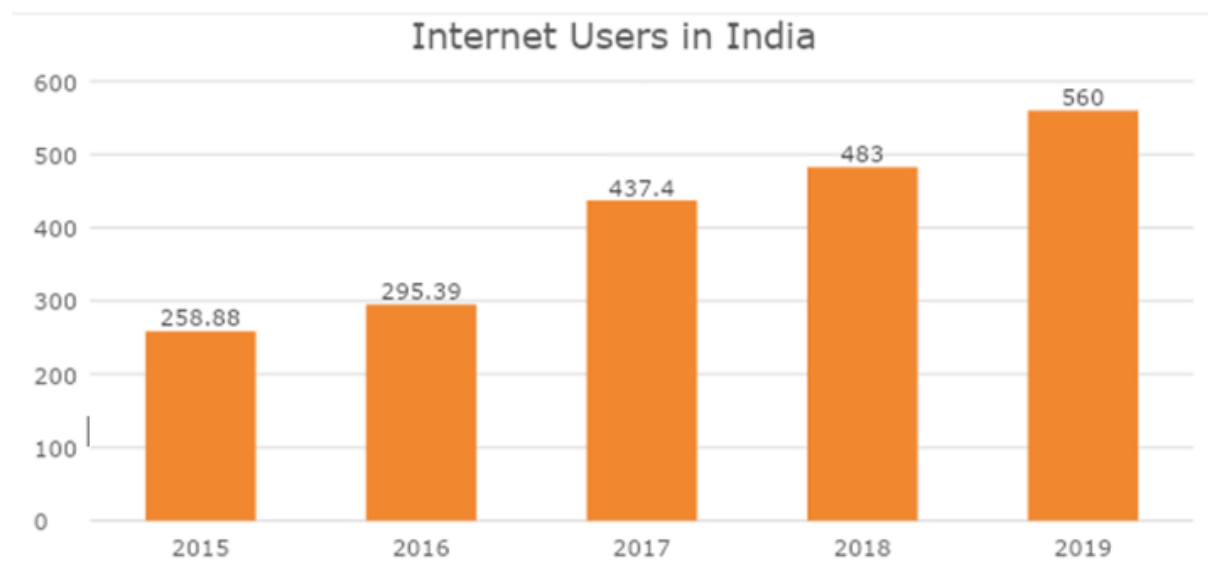
1. To study about awareness of social media approach in tourism.
2. To find out the impact of the Social Media Marketing approach in the tourism development of Sri Lanka.
3. To analysis that social media app is providing the right information to customers?

**Research methodology:** The methodology is based on secondary data from the well-founded sources with personal observation. Secondary data is collected from Journals, books, articles in Journals and newspapers. To examine the role and impact of social media on pilgrimage tourism in India (Sri Lanka), accurate search has been done by online sources and social websites. The study tries to analysis the input of social media in selecting pilgrimage sites in Sri Lanka as destinations. To find out it's a contribution in choosing destinations as

their trip or collect information regarding Pilgrimage tourism attraction in Sri Lanka and building the image at the world tourism market.

**Impact of social media marketing in Sri Lanka and India tourism:** Social media impact in India tourism and also impact in Sri Lanka. There are 132.42 crores (1.3 Billion) in which 43 crores live in an urban areas and rest 89.42 crores live in rural areas. There are 560 million users are using social media as of 2020. It is higher than the US total population.

The development of social media in India brought a new change in today's era. Social media users have increased by 1 million new users every day in each year. Few popular social networking sites are using by India like Youtube, Snapchat, Twitter, LinkedIn, Quora, Pinterest , and Tumbler ,etc.



**Source:** <https://sannams4.com/digital-and-social-media-landscape-in-india/>

**Internet users in Sri Lanka:** There are 21.9 million people in Sri Lanka and 6.20 million social networking users in Sri Lanka in January 2020. Social media and digital marketing has become more important now-a-days and ability to influence users. It appears especially in Sri

Lanka, typically getting to drive to figure with and is developing exceptionally quickly. The websites will offer instant information to their customers.



**Source:** <https://www.slideshare.net/DataReportal/digital-2019-sri-lanka-january-2019-v01>

Social media is an advantage for the tourist industry that easily collects the feedback of that tourist who already visited the places. There is various ways of response such as questionnaires and surveys. Another benefit of social media that can help in any improvements is requiring a particular place so improve easily. Social media has made travel simpler.

**Conclusion:** The above study is concluded that most of the population now days are using social media to acquire the information for the reservation and planning for visits across India. Social media also make an impact on people decisions. It gives a wide zone of organizing to communicate with individuals all over the nation. It is noticeable that Sri Lanka population not connected with social networking than India so they need to survey it. Social media rapidly growth connects with media that can easy to check. Advertising is also a way of attracting the population in Sri Lanka.

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