

Exploring the Research Landscape of Marketing Communication in Tourism: A Bibliometric Analysis

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Abstract

The purpose of this investigation is to map the current state of marketing communications studies in the tourism industry. In this article we used a bibliometric analysis technique. Scopus data indicated that there were 195 documents concerned with marketing communications in the tourism industry. Furthermore, data analysis was carried out using VOSviewer and Excel. This analysis involves identifying relevant keywords, co-occurrence analysis, citation analysis, and network visualization. Our findings provide an overview of research trends, prominent authors, influential journals, and key themes in the tourism marketing communications domain. The results highlight the growth in research output in this area and reveal emerging topics and research gaps. Moreover, this research uncovers collaborative networks and knowledge flows among researchers and institutions. This bibliometric analysis helped shed light on the dynamic nature of the tourism industry's marketing communications research landscape. This study serves as a valuable resource for researchers, practitioners and policy makers interested in advancing marketing communications strategies for tourism development. The practical implication of the findings is that by understanding research trends related to tourism marketing communication, tourism practitioners can adopt more effective marketing communication strategies to promote tourist destinations, increase interaction with customers, and gain a competitive advantage.

Keywords: marketing communication, tourism, bibliometric analysis, research landscape, trends, collaboration networks

1. Introduction

The promotion of locations and the moulding of tourist attitudes and behaviors rely heavily on marketing communications. Attracting travelers and establishing a favorable reputation in the competitive tourism industry require concerted public relations activities (Bornhorst et al., 2010; Kadir et al., 2022; Santoso & Negoro, 2019). Through strategic marketing communications, information about tourism attractions, services, facilities, and experiences can be conveyed clearly and attractively to potential tourists (Rafa'al & Sangadji, 2023). In addition, the way a destination is marketed can also influence how visitors feel about it, whether through advertisements, promotions, social media, or other marketing campaigns (Amin & Priansah, 2019; Reino & Hay, 2011; Utami et al., 2022). A well-communicated message can influence positive perceptions of the destination, thereby increasing the chances of tourist visits (Amin & Priansah, 2019; Reino & Hay, 2011; Santoso & Negoro, 2019). In addition, marketing communications can also shape tourist behavior, such as influencing their decision to visit, spend time, or spend money in a tourism destination (McCartney et al., 2008; Pizam & Mansfeld, 1999; Uysal, 1998). In other words, marketing communication serves as a bridge between tourism destinations and tourists, providing relevant, interesting information, and influencing their perceptions and actions in choosing the destination they will visit.

As the tourism sector continues to evolve, understanding the landscape of marketing communication research in tourism is important to identify emerging trends, evaluate research productivity, and identify knowledge gaps. Bibliometric

analysis offers a comprehensive and systematic approach to examining the existing literature, uncovering patterns, and figuring out where a subject of study is headed and how it got there. Moreover, using bibliometric techniques, we will examine a vast collection of scholarly publications related to marketing communication and tourism. This analysis will cover a specific period of time, allowing us to uncover the evolution of research in this area and identify key influential authors, journals, and research themes.

Understanding the research landscape related to marketing communications in the tourism industry has practical implications for researchers and practitioners. For researchers, it provides an overview of existing knowledge, identifies research gaps, and highlights emerging research directions. This information can guide researchers in focusing their efforts on areas that warrant further investigation and contribute to the advancement of marketing communication strategies in tourism. On the other hand, practitioners can benefit from the insights gained from this analysis by aligning their marketing communication practices with current trends and best practices identified in the literature.

This research attempts to add to the literature in the field of marketing communications within the tourism sector using a bibliometric analysis. In addition to illuminating the existing research landscape, the results will point the way toward new avenues of inquiry and potential areas of cooperation. In the end, we hope that this study will help us get a deeper appreciation for the role that marketing communications play in the tourism industry and the development of sustainable tourism practices.

2. Method

This research utilizes international publication data on marketing communication in the tourism sector derived from the Scopus database (www.scopus.com). The reason we chose Scopus as a reference database is because Scopus is considered one of the world-class indexers and provides very complete metadata for all papers registered in it (Wahid et al., 2022). The search process on the Scopus page uses the keywords "marketing communication" and "tourism" with the categories of article title, abstract, and keywords. In addition, article searches also impose several restrictions, namely (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("marketing communication") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("tourism")) AND (LIMIT-TO (PUBSTAGE, "final")) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, "ar")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, "English")) AND (LIMIT-TO (SRCTYPE, "j")). Using these keywords and constraints, a total of 195 related documents were found.

The data found and successfully collected were then saved in RIS or CSV formats and imported into the VOSviewer application. This software was chosen because it is often used for bibliometric analysis in several international journals (García-Orozco et al., 2020; Tamala et al., 2022; Tarragona et al., 2020). As a result, the researcher proceeded to utilize the VOSviewer in order to examine, visualize, and assess data from marketing communication publications within the tourism industry. This analysis includes aspects such as co-occurrence of author keywords, journal bibliographic pairs, institution bibliographic pairs, and country bibliographic pairs. Dewi et al., (2021) explained that bibliometric analysis consists of five stages, which can be seen in the following figure.

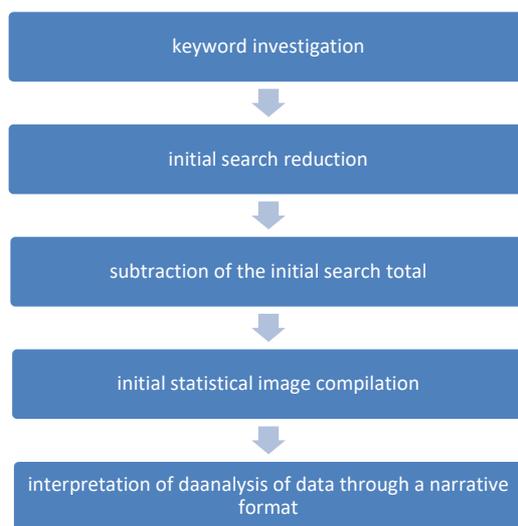


Figure 1. Bibliometric analysis steps

The five steps of bibliometric analysis are depicted in the preceding diagram. In the first step, the researcher determines what terms they will use "marketing communication in tourism". The second stage involves an initial search reduction, where the keywords assigned in the previous stage are used to search the Scopus database. In the final phase, the researcher narrowed the initial search by excluding relevant papers by adjusting the threshold in the VOSviewer

program. In the fourth phase of the data analysis process, we performed preliminary statistical processing, grouping together related pieces of information such as bibliographic institution pairings, journal and document co-occurrences, and author keyword co-occurrences into subject descriptions. The final stage, which is the data interpretation stage in the analytical narrative, involves the researcher interpreting the data from the visualizations obtained using VOSviewer, which can then be further developed by the researcher.

3. Results

Research on marketing communication in tourism has experienced significant development from 1993 to 2023. It can be seen that the growth of publications related to this topic indexed in Scopus reached its highest peak in 2022 with 23 publications, which accounted for 11.79% of the total publications (Table 1).

Table 1. Publications per Year on Marketing Communication in the Field of Tourism in the Scopus Database

Publication Year	Amount	Percent (%)	Publication Year	Amount	Percent (%)
1993	<u>1</u>	0.51	<u>2009</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>5.13</u>
1994	<u>2</u>	1.03	<u>2010</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3.59</u>
1995	<u>1</u>	0.51	<u>2011</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2.05</u>
1996	<u>1</u>	0.51	<u>2012</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3.08</u>
1997	0	0.00	<u>2013</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3.59</u>
1998	<u>2</u>	1.03	<u>2014</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4.10</u>
1999	0	0.00	<u>2015</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2.05</u>
2000	<u>1</u>	0.51	<u>2016</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2.56</u>
2001	0	0.00	<u>2017</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>7.69</u>
2002	<u>3</u>	1.54	<u>2018</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>6.15</u>
2003	<u>2</u>	1.03	<u>2019</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>8.72</u>
2004	<u>3</u>	1.54	<u>2020</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>8.72</u>
2005	<u>2</u>	1.03	<u>2021</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>9.74</u>
2006	<u>3</u>	1.54	<u>2022</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>11.79</u>
2007	<u>5</u>	2.56	<u>2023</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>6.67</u>
2008	<u>2</u>	1.03	<u>Total</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>100</u>

Table 1 and Figure 2 show the growth of international publications related to marketing communication in tourism from 1993 to 2022. This information demonstrates a rising trend in the number of publications, with 2022 recording the highest growth of 23 publications, which accounts for 11.79% of the total. 2021 also showed a significant number with 19 publications (9.74%), followed by 2020 with 17 publications (8.72%), and 2019 with the same number of 17 publications (8.72%). This movement exemplifies the expanding curiosity about marketing communication in the field of tourism, with the goal of bettering our knowledge of how to communicate effectively in this sector. This information paints a clear picture of the growth and importance of research in this area within the time period analyzed.

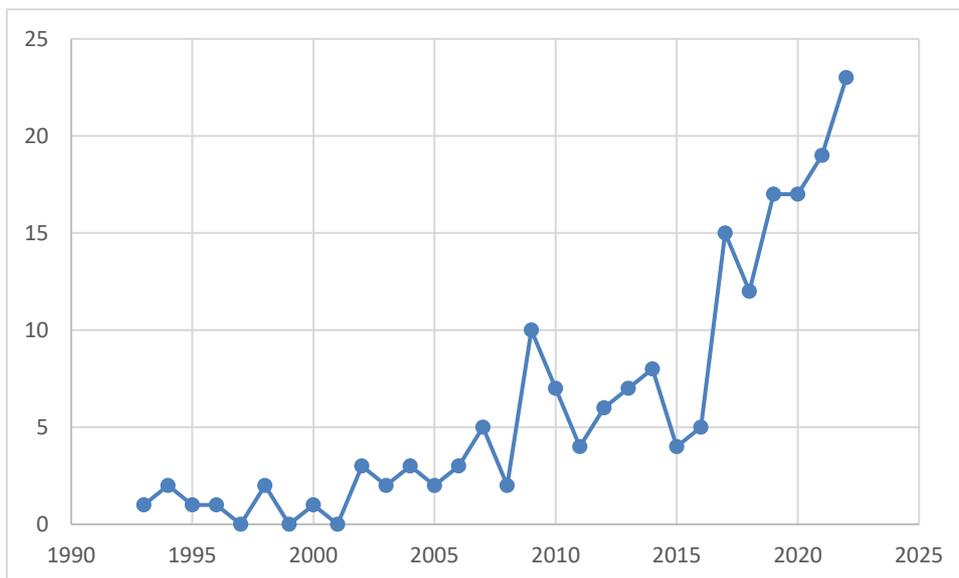


Figure 2. Graph of the development of article publications on marketing communication in tourism

Source title Marketing Communication and Tourism Division

Based on the search results using the keywords "marketing communication" and "tourism", and considering the limitations in terms of putage "final", doc type "article", language "English", and source type "journal" on Scopus, we managed to find 195 related publications. With this number, it is known that the Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing is the journal that publishes the most international articles on marketing communication in tourism, with a total of 10 publications. Furthermore, in the following table, we can find fifteen core journals that publish articles on marketing communication in tourism.

Table 2. Top 15 journals that published articles about marketing communication in tourism in the Scopus database

Core Journal	Document
Journal of Travel And Tourism Marketing	10
Tourism Management	9
Current Issues In Tourism	6
Journal of Vacation Marketing	6
Sustainability Switzerland	6
Journal of Destination Marketing And Management	5
Tourism Management Perspectives	5
African Journal of Hospitality Tourism and Leisure	4
Anatolia	3
Event Management	3
International Journal of Culture Tourism and Hospitality Research	3
International Journal of Hospitality Management	3
Journal of Travel Research	3
Marketing Intelligence and Planning	3
Tourism Review	3

Based on Table 2 and Figure 3, it can be seen that after the Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing, there are a number of other publications that also publish articles related to marketing communication in tourism. These publications include Tourism Management (9 publications), Current Issues In Tourism (6 publications), Journal of Vacation Marketing (6 publications), Sustainability Switzerland (6 publications), Journal of Destination Marketing and Management (5 publications), Tourism Management Perspectives (5 publications), African Journal of Hospitality

Tourism and Leisure (4 publications), as well as Anatolia, Event Management, International Journal of Culture Tourism and Hospitality Research, International Journal of Hospitality Management, Journal of Travel Research, Marketing Intelligence and Planning, and Tourism Review, each with 3 publications.

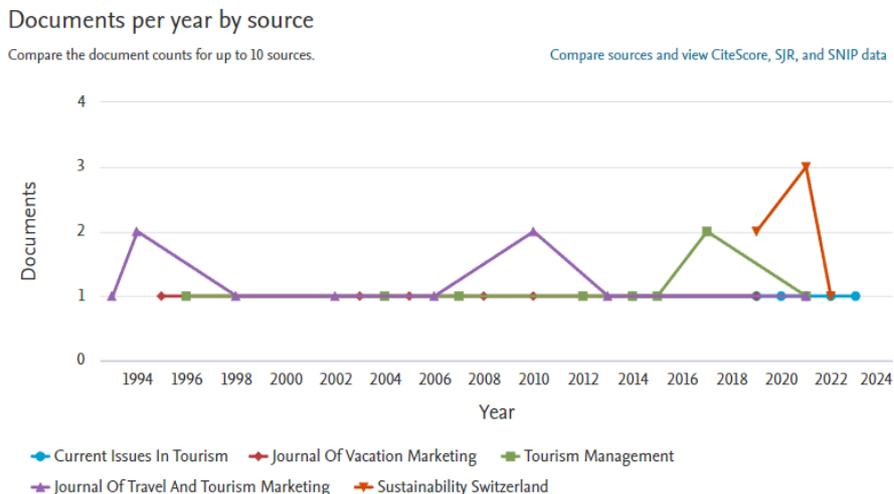


Figure 3. Core journals related to marketing communication and tourism in the Scopus database

Affiliates involved in publications related to marketing and tourism communications

Among several institutions involved in publications related to tourism marketing and communication, there are 10 affiliates with the highest document count, ranging from 3 to 5 documents. These 10 institutions can be found in the following table.

Table 3. Ten institutions involved in publications related to marketing communications and tourism

Author Affiliation	Document
Universitat de València	5
Hong Kong Polytechnic University	5
Purdue University	5
Queensland University of Technology	5
College of Health and Human Sciences	5
The University of Queensland	4
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	3
Newcastle University	3
Doğuş Üniversitesi Istanbul	3
Sapienza Università di Roma	3

Based on Table 3 and Figure 4, it shows that Universitat de València, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Purdue University, Queensland University of Technology, College of Health and Human Sciences are the institutions that publish the most research results on marketing communication in tourism, namely five publications. The next rank that publishes the most research on marketing communication in tourism is The University of Queensland with a total of four publications. The University of Queensland collaborates the most with the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Newcastle University.

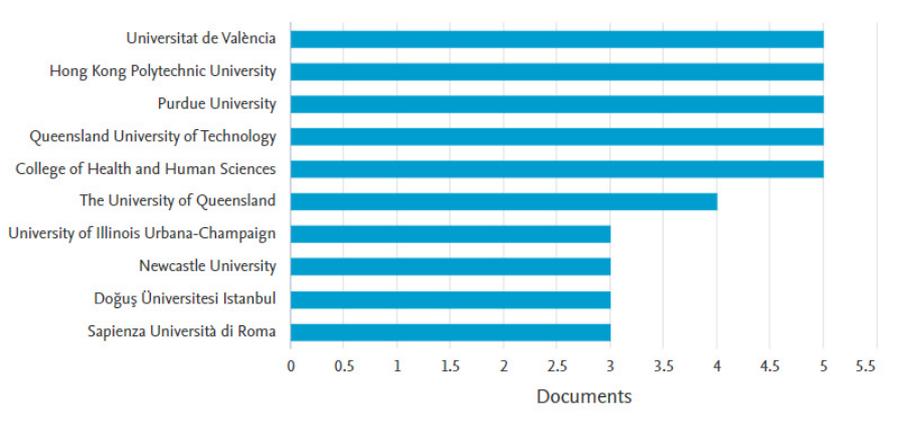


Figure 4. Publication affiliations related to marketing communications and tourism

Productivity of Marketing Communication Researchers in Tourism

Scopus index analysis of the productivity of 10 researchers related to marketing communication and tourism from 1993 to 2023 shows that they are equally productive, with a range of 2–4 documents published (Table 4).

Table 4. Productivity of Marketing Communication Researchers in Tourism

Author	Document
Pike, S.	4
Šerić, M.	4
Fesenmaier, D.R.	3
Koc, E.	3
Vogt, C.A.	3
Abdullah, K.	2
Ahmed, F.	2
Björk, P.	2
Chen, W.K.	2
Day, J.	2

Table 4 and Figure 5 show that Pike, S. and Šerić, M. have the same productivity level with four publications each. Meanwhile, Fesenmaier, D.R., Koc, E., and Vogt, C.A. achieved a productivity level of three publications. Abdullah, K., Ahmed, F., Björk, P., Chen, W.K., and Day, J. have each published two publications.

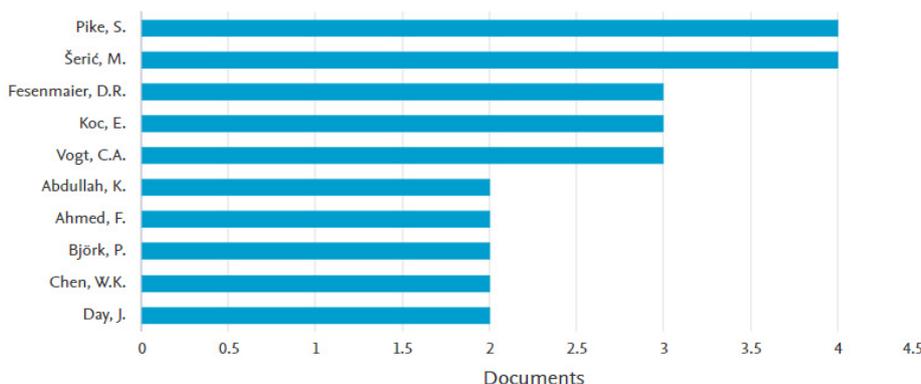


Figure 5. Productivity of Marketing Communication Researchers in the Tourism Sector

Document by country or territory

The contributor of marketing communication research results in the field of tourism indexed by Scopus with the largest number is the United States, followed by Australia, Indonesia, and the United Kingdom (Table 5).

Table 5. Compare the document counts for up to 10 countries/territories

Country	Document
United States	30
Australia	20
Indonesia	17
United Kingdom	17
China	12
Spain	12
Italy	10
Malaysia	8
Turkey	8
Taiwan	7

Table 5 showed that the largest country contributing to the publication of marketing communication research results in the field of tourism is the United States, with a total of 30 publications. Then followed Australia (20 publications), Indonesia (17 publications), the United Kingdom (17 publications), China (12 publications), Spain (12 publications), Italy (10 publications), Malaysia (8 publications), Turkey (8 publications), and Taiwan (7 publications). Figure 6 shows that the thicker the yellow color, the more marketing communication publications there are in tourism.

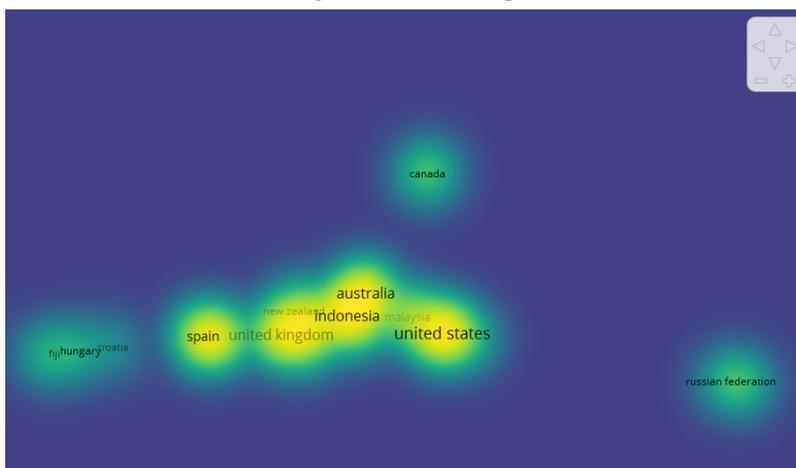


Figure 6. Map of the development of publications related to marketing communication in the tourism sector

Subject Publication of Marketing Communication in Tourism

The number of publications of marketing communication research results in the tourism sector based on subjects indexed by Scopus in 1993–2023 shows that the subject of Business, Management and Accounting is the highest subject. Then, followed by the subject of Social Sciences, Environmental Science, and Economics, Econometrics and Finance. The number of research publications in the field of instrumentation can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Publication Subjects Related to Marketing Communications in the Tourism Sector

Subject Area	Document
Business, Management and Accounting	143
Social Sciences	88
Environmental Science	20
Economics, Econometrics and Finance	17
Computer Science	13
Arts and Humanities	9
Energy	9

Engineering	8
Earth and Planetary Sciences	7
Agricultural and Biological Sciences	4
Mathematics	4
Psychology	4
Decision Sciences	3

Figure 7 shows that the subject of publications related to tourism marketing communication from 1993 - 2023 is Business, Management and Accounting (42.6%). Then, followed by Social Sciences (26.2%), Environmental Science (6.0%), Economics, Econometrics and Finance (5.1%), Computer Science (3.9%), Arts and Humanities (2.7%), Energy (2.7%), Engineering (2.4%), Earth and Planetary Sciences (2.1%) and Agricultural and Biological Sciences (1.2%).

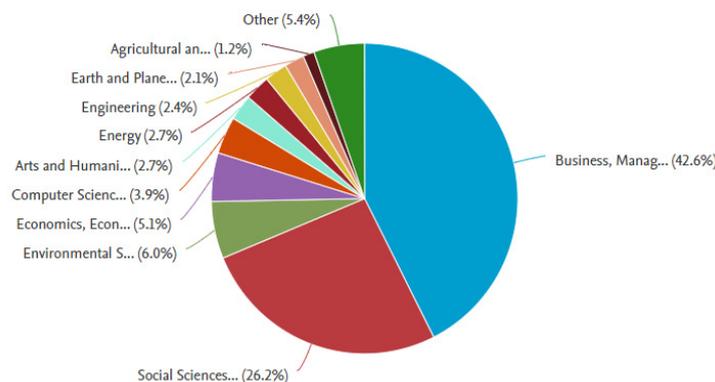


Figure 7. Subjects of publications related to marketing communications in tourism

Map of Publication Development by Keyword

Figure 8 shows that, based on keywords (co-words), the development map of research publications related to marketing communication in tourism indexed by Scopus from 1993 to 2023 forms 11 clusters. Cluster 1 is in red, consisting of consumer behavior, destination positioning, domestic tourism, gender, information, information search, information sources, integrated marketing communication, marketing communication, message consistency, perceived risk, sport tourism, tourism, travel, travel agencies, and visit intention. Cluster 2 in green, consisting of commerce, competitiveness, destination branding, destination image, destination management, hotels, information and communication technology, integrated marketing communications, performance assessment, planning, strategic approach, sustainable tourism, tourism market, tourist attraction, tourist destination. Cluster 3 is blue, consisting of authenticity, ecotourism, information technology, innovation, national parks, place identity, tourism development, tourist behavior, travel behavior, travel demand. Cluster 4 is yellow, consisting of brand, brand equity, brand image, brand management, coronavirus, COVID-19, crisis communication, integrated marketing communication, marketing communication, and territorial marketing. Cluster 5 is purple, consisting of advertising, cultural tourism, involvement, motivation, nation branding, pandemic, public attitude, responsible tourism, and segmentation. Cyan cluster 6 consists of climate change, consumption behavior, destination marketing, emotions, media role, social media, travel intention, user-generated content, and the world wide web. Cluster 7 is terracotta-colored and consists of customer satisfaction, digital marketing, health tourism, hospitality, hospitality industry, internet marketing, management, medical tourism, and tourism marketing. Cluster 8 is orchid-colored, consisting of behavioral intention, communication behavior, cultural heritage, loyalty, museums, online marketing, rural tourism, and sustainable development. Cluster 9 is violet-colored, consisting of communication, decision making, hotel industry, investment, perception, sustainability, tourism promotion, and tourist experience. Cluster 10 is a medium orchid, consisting of communication networks, Greece, heritage, heritage tourism, marketing strategy, tourism management, and a world heritage site. Cluster 11 is mantis green, consisting of events and marketing.

Table 7. Most-cited 15 articles, ranked from most to least

No	Author and Year	Document title	Source Title	Quartile	Cited by
1	Bruhn et al., (2012)	Are social media replacing traditional media in terms of brand equity creation?	Management Research Review	Q1	373
2	Kim et al., (2007)	Gender differences in online travel information search: Implications for marketing communications on the internet	Tourism Management	Q1	342
3	Hudson et al., (2015)	The effects of social media on emotions, brand relationship quality, and word of mouth: An empirical study of music festival attendees	Tourism Management	Q1	303
4	Govers et al., (2007)	Promoting tourism destination image	Journal of Travel Research	Q1	299
5	Akehurst, (2009)	User generated content: The use of blogs for tourism organisations and tourism consumers	Service Business	Q1	295
6	Dolnicar, (2005)	Understanding barriers to leisure travel: Tourist fears as a marketing basis	Journal of Vacation Marketing	Q1	156
7	Vyncke, (2002)	Lifestyle segmentation: From attitudes, interests and opinions, to values, aesthetic styles, life visions and media preferences	European Journal of Communication	Q1	150
8	Mack et al., (2008)	Believe it or not: Credibility of blogs in tourism	Journal of Vacation Marketing	Q1	148
9	D. Kim & Perdue, (2013)	The effects of cognitive, affective, and sensory attributes on hotel choice	International Journal of Hospitality Management	Q1	146
10	Krizanova et al., (2019)	The effectiveness of marketing communication and importance of its evaluation in an online environment	Sustainability (Switzerland)	Q1	118
11	Dann et al., (2019)	Poster child and guinea pig – insights from a structured literature review on Airbnb	International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	Q1	118
12	Bianchi et al., (2014)	Investigating attitudes towards three South American destinations in an emerging long haul market using a model of consumer-based brand equity (CBBE)	Tourism Management	Q1	118
13	Kruger & Saayman, (2010)	Travel motivation of tourists to Kruger and Tsitsikamma national parks: A comparative study	African Journal of Wildlife Research	Q2	106
14	Reid & Reid, (1994)	Communicating tourism supplier services: Building repeat visitor relationships	Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing	Q1	103
15	Ritchie et al., (2010)	Understanding the motivation and travel behavior of cycle tourists using involvement profiles	Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing	Q1	100

Based on the data in Table 7, the top 15 most-cited papers all appear in foreign publications included in Scopus' Q1 index. None of them came from proceedings articles. In this case, it can be concluded that Q1 journal articles have quality research results that are widely cited by other researchers around the world. The total citations of 195 documents from the Scopus database are 5317 citations. The 15 articles above accounted for 2875 citations (54.1% of the total citations). Articles published between 2002 and 2015 have received the most citations, making up ranks 1 through 8. This means that research in that year range is the main source of reference to date regarding marketing communication research in tourism. For rankings 9 and 15, it was only articles published in 2010 and 2019 that received quite a lot of citations.

The first ranked article is Bruhn et al. (2012) with 373 citations (7.02%). Changing consumer preferences regarding the usage of social media to access information and connect with companies are explored, as well as their impact on

marketing communications and the construction of a company's brand value in this study. Furthermore, the second rank is the article Kim et al. (2007) with 342 citations (6.43%). In this research, we present a theory of marketing communication concerning the gender gap in the pursuit of travel-related internet information. The purpose of this research is to learn how males and females seek for vacation information online differently and what that means for online marketing. The work by Hudson et al., 2015 is ranked third with 303 citations (5.70 percent of all citations). The impact of social media on music festival attendees' feelings, the quality of their relationships with brands, and their recommendations is explored. Furthermore, the fourth rank is an article from Govers et al. (2007) with 299 citations (5.62%). This paper discusses promotional efforts to strengthen the image of tourism destinations that focus on the strategies and tactics used in promoting and improving the image of tourism destinations. Govers et al. (2007) outlined various methods that can be used to build a positive image, including promotional campaigns, marketing activities, improving service quality, managing public perception, and using information technology. Ranked fifth is an article from Akehurst, (2009) with 295 citations (5.55%). The discussion of this paper deals with how tourism organizations can utilize blogs as communication and marketing tools to promote their tourism destinations, services, or products. The use of blogs by tourism organizations allows them to share information, travel stories, figures, and experiences with potential audiences.

In sixth place, Dolnicar's (2005) article discusses the factors that act as barriers to leisure travel and how these concerns can inform marketing strategies. The results show that a good understanding of the concerns and barriers perceived by tourists can help in designing effective marketing strategies to overcome and minimize their negative influence. Ranked seventh is an article by Vyncke (2002), which highlights the shift from the traditional approach of segmenting based on attitudes, interests, and opinions to a more holistic approach involving media preferences, life visions, aesthetic styles, and consumers' values. It recognizes that consumers' identities and choices are not only limited to their attitudes and interests but also include the values they hold, the aesthetic style they choose, the vision of life they have, and the media preferences they follow. Ranked eighth is an article from Mack et al. (2008) that discusses the credibility of blogs in the tourism industry, and the results show that blog credibility in the context of tourism can be influenced by several factors. These factors include blog content quality, author expertise, user experience, and blog interactive features. Ninth in the ranking is an article by D. Kim & Perdue (2013), which discusses how cognitive (such as brand and image), affective (such as emotions and personal preferences), and sensory (such as physical appearance and sensory experience) attributes influence consumers' perceptions of hotels and their decisions in choosing a particular hotel. In this case, the importance of effective communication from the hotel to convey these attributes to potential consumers. The tenth ranking is the article from Krizanova et al. (2019), the latest article that has the most citations published in 2019, using a variety of marketing communication features that are pertinent to the online context, it discusses the efficacy of marketing communications and the relevance of analyzing marketing communications in an online setting, including content strategy, digital advertising, social media, and customer interaction.

In the context of marketing communication in tourism, Sangadi & Handriana (2023) revealed that through effective marketing communication, the tourism sector can improve tourism education and provide a pleasant experience to tourists. Marketing communication in tourism plays a key role in promoting tourism destinations, tourist attractions, and available facilities. With proper marketing communications, tourism destinations can attract potential tourists, build a positive image, and increase the number of tourist visits. In addition, effective marketing communications can also provide accurate and adequate information to tourists, so that they can make the right decision when choosing the destinations and facilities they want to visit. Thus, the importance of marketing communications in tourism is not only to increase the number of tourists, but also to improve the quality of the tourist experience. Good marketing communications can create greater awareness about a destination, build positive perceptions, and communicate the unique values of a place. As a result, strong marketing campaigns will boost tourism's growth and make locations more appealing to international travelers.

4. Conclusion

The development of marketing communication research in tourism over the past three decades has been analyzed using bibliometric methods. This research uses a total of 195 documents from the Scopus database. The data shows annual changes in the growth of research publications on marketing communication in tourism, as well as a fluctuating citation rate across all articles. The majority of the most-cited articles are from the first quarter of the year, and they all appeared in high-quality international journals. In terms of productivity and influence, Pike, S., is the most productive and influential author, respectively. The development of marketing communication research themes in tourism from year to year has not changed significantly, but recent topics that have become research trends include elements of marketing communication that are relevant in the online context, such as content strategy, digital advertising, social media, and customer interaction. This bibliometric analysis provides valuable insights to understand the evolving research landscape in marketing communications in the tourism industry. This study is an important resource for researchers,

practitioners, and policymakers interested in advancing marketing communication strategies for tourism development in addition to illuminating recent advances in this area of study. The findings of this study have important practical implications for those working in the tourism business, suggesting that they should keep up with the latest findings in the field of tourism marketing communication. Themes such as content strategy, digital advertising, social media, and online customer interaction are becoming increasingly relevant in the current context. By understanding these research trends, tourism practitioners can adopt more effective marketing communication strategies to promote destinations, increase customer engagement, and gain a competitive advantage. In addition, information on the most prolific and influential authors can provide guidance on valuable resources for research collaborations and partnerships communication specialists in the tourism industry.

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