

Online Social Travel

- An academic study of electronic Word-of-Mouth and its impact on individual travellers' purchase process



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Executive Summary

Online Social Travel refers to the opportunities online platforms and communities provide by incorporating the human aspect and trust in family, friends and peers into the travel experience.

This thesis looks into the phenomenon of online social travel and how electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) impacts individual travellers' purchase process. More specifically it focuses on influencers, motivation to trust and motivation to share. The study has been completed by a combination of quantitative questionnaires and qualitative interviews with individual travellers.

The study has found that respondents trust social ties including friends, family and friends' friends the most followed by experts such as travel agents and journalists. At the same time relationship, perception of others as experts and source transparency motivates trust formation and hence influence. It is suggested that it is source not platform that the travellers form trust towards proposing online media are just enablers.

In regards to the purchase process it has been argued how this may be seen as a connected circle with WOM theory and hence influencers impacting all steps in the circular process. It was found that almost all respondents search for travel information and majority do so before departure thereby serving as a filter. Information is primarily searched on traditional sites such as publishers' and travel agents'/tour operators' websites, followed by rating and review sites. Social Networks were used to ask for and get travel recommendations from social ties such as friends and family. Travel information search was found to be a pretty good indicator as to the actual purchase and it was found that accommodation is mainly purchased before departure while tours/activities are primarily purchased on the go.

Influence via eWOM is mainly done in the delivery and after-evaluation and primarily when in close proximity to the experience. Motivation to share was found to be based on social needs, altruism and reciprocity and especially extraordinary experiences were shared. Post-purchase evaluation was found to include both sharing experiences with others as well as obtaining internal knowledge affecting subsequent purchase processes. Thereby, all travellers are potential influencers impacting subsequent decisions by self and others – and the circle repeats itself, circling around one giant network of social ties and information flow.

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1 Introduction

In 2008 Dave Carroll flew United Airlines (UA) and was unlucky to have his guitar broken. What was even more unfortunate, at least for UA, was that Carroll was also a musician with a cause. After a tiresome complaint process with no satisfying solution for Carroll, he decided to make the now famous music video “United Breaks Guitars” portraying the incidence and UA in a very unfavourable light – and posting it on YouTube (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Going viral, the video has been viewed nearly 12 million times (YouTube.com, 2012:1) and cited in very influential media channels including Time Magazine and CNN (Kietzmann et al., 2011). *“Such attention led to a brand and public relations crisis for UA, as the story was cheered on by a global community of passengers who understood all too well the frustration of dealing with airlines service failures”* (Kietzmann, et al., 2011, pg. 242). The video still accumulates views and comments on a daily basis (YouTube.com, 2012:1).

What is interesting about Carroll’s case is the power Word-of Mouth (WOM) has when it is carried out in an online context. Equally interesting is the many thousands of comments made by peers suggesting that it has had a negative influence on their willingness to fly UA. The case highlights a tendency of sharing experiences, of listening and seeking advice from others in regards to pre- and post purchase behaviour in travel, where services cannot be tried before buying. Hence people rely on the words and experiences of others (Ong, 2012).

This also underscores something that may seem obvious; that travelling is social by nature. Individual travellers often meet and interact with other people when they are on the road, both someone they know and strangers – who might become friends. They listen to people’s stories, which may influence their world. With the rise in new technology and the power of the Internet, these stories may be lifted into an online context, which has broader reach, is not affected by time or geography and tends to be long lasting (Buttle, 1998). Carroll’s incidence with UA is a great example since it happened in 2009 but the story is still very much thriving today. Hence travel is no longer social only when the journey takes place. Before making a decision, individual travellers engage in dialog and seek advice from travel forums, social networks and review sites. They may have a blog or update social media status during travel experience. Afterwards, they may even provide a review of a hotel or provide answers based on experience to others in travel forums. This may also be seen in the light of more and more individual

travellers bringing portable devices such as tablets and smart phones to access the Internet and have access to Wi-Fi while travelling.

WOM in the travel industry is, however, not a new phenomenon, but the paradigm shift caused by the Internet and digital devices has catalysed the power of and access to WOM. In fact expectations of electronic WOM has supported many technology start-ups to harness the power of above social recommendations and increased travel and a new term, “social travel” is slowly emerging (GP Bullhound, 2012). Social travel builds on the opportunities online platforms and communities provide by incorporating the human aspect and trust in family, friends and peers into the travel experience. Needless to say, there is thus a great chance that individual travellers will follow advice by trusted peers and it creates a new travel experience and purchase process – constantly connected to one’s social group.

The author has for long followed these tendencies with great interest being an avid individual traveller and social media user. The author finds the developments extremely exciting and not least entailing great potential for travel companies if they can break into the social graph. This has also caught the attention of Visit Beyond (VB) a Danish hotel and tour operator with operations in Asia targeting free individual travellers, primarily in the age group 18-35, who themselves tailor make their journey. VB has for long been restricted to selling through travel agents in Denmark and Northern Europe only, but now increasingly wish to target and sell to travellers online regardless of geographical borders. Being a new playing field for VB this creates a need to gain further understanding of the above phenomenon and its opportunities in order to formulate and carry through a conscious online strategy. Becoming aware of this mutual interest and benefit, this thesis is prepared in coordination with VB to give this understanding specifically in regards to their target group. This will be done through quantitative and qualitative research but will mainly focus on individual travellers’ current use of and behaviour online in regards to WOM and how this affects the purchase process for travel related services.

You are now welcome to enter the world of online social travel.

1.1 Problem Statement

This thesis will look further into the phenomenon of online social travel – more specifically the power of electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) and its impact on individual travellers' purchase process. When individual travellers enter the purchase process they will constantly be affected by various factors, including the opinion of others. With the surge in access to the online world, this may increasingly take place in an online context fuelled by the rise in social media use. With this in mind this thesis will focus specifically on influencers including the motivation to share content with travellers online and the motivation to trust this content by other travellers. This leads to the following research question:

What characterises individual travellers' use of electronic Word-of-Mouth in regards to influencers, hereunder the motivation to trust and motivation to share – and how does this impact individual travellers' purchase process?

1.2 Purpose, Delimitation & Term Clarifications

Much literature and many reports have been prepared focusing on both traditional and eWOM, its power as well as its impact on the purchase process. However, not much has been written focusing specifically on individual travellers or travel services needed at a given destination. This thesis will seek to gain a further understanding as to a specific target group and their behaviour in various phases concerning their purchase of travel services. The report is written with support from VB and it is the aim, based on the knowledge obtained, to give recommendations on how VB may tap into the online world. Specifically, how VB may use eWOM as a strategic advantage in their online communication with current and potential customers to positively drive the decision to buy services offered.

Implications will be included in part 6.0 Perspectives only.

Individual travellers are often referred to as "Free Independent Travellers" and may be defined as vacation tourists having pre-booked only a small part of their travel arrangements prior to departure. Their itinerary, however, may be fixed or flexible while this includes transportation, accommodation, activities and tours. Individual travellers are not to be confused with backpackers, but instead it is argued that these are a subset of individual travellers (Hyde, 2008). In this study, when speaking of individual travellers, the above framework will be used but the definition will always be subject to various travellers' individual understanding of the term as well as self-perception. Hence what is

important is the fact that individual travellers are free to tailor make their trip according to their particular needs and wants, regardless of it being in the company of a travel agent or alone, before departure or on the road. Lastly, travelling independent does not refer to travelling alone or in a group, but solely refers to the itinerary being independent by nature. For the remainder of this study “individual travellers” and “travellers” will be used interchangeably.

When referring to **travel services** these are limited to include accommodation and tours/activities only. It does not include flight or destination considerations, but solely the two types of services needed after having arrived at the destination.

Referring to an online context various terms will be used. **Media** in general refers to a channel of communication be it one-way or two-way and **social media** in particular refers to online sites and platforms with user generated content at their core. In other words, the platforms are built around and for users. **Online media** then refers more broadly to all relevant websites and platforms on which communication and information is passed between a sender and a receiver. Apart from social media, this also includes traditional websites previously characterised by one-way communication including commercial websites and independent publishers’ websites. The concepts will be more specifically defined under part 3.2 Online Social Context. Lastly, for ease of reading this thesis, a list of abbreviations used may be seen in appendix 8.7.

The author is aware that it is close to impossible to separate traditional and online WOM since they most likely impact each other. This will also be evident in this study; however, eWOM is the overall focus, but often with references to WOM in general. It must also be stated that the author is aware that several factors affect and drive travellers’ decision-making and purchase process, but it is aimed to only look at the interaction between people and not consider other motivating factors or impacting sources such as, but not limited to, advertising and public relations.

2 Methodology

In order to gain an insight into the phenomenon of online social travel and thereby answer the problem statement this section will explain the methodology used as well as the scientific theoretical viewpoints. This will give the reader an understanding of the methodological perspectives used to complete this study as well as clarify the rationale that supports the methodological choices and limitations.

2.1 Research Method

This study takes its stand in the social constructive approach. It is based on the belief that social phenomenon are constructed and are a result of historical and social processes. It has human beings and their relations at the centre and thereby acknowledges that these are also able to drive and alter processes (Esmark et al., 2005). It is thereby not the aim of this study to confirm or falsify propositions. Since the analysis is a construction of reality stemming from certain notions, the conclusion will be a summary of the performed construction. Furthermore, due to the social aspect, reality is not seen as either subjective or objective but as an individual domain for social reality (Esmark et al., 2005).

In other words, the objective of this study is not to identify a final 'truth' or what is 'right' or 'wrong' in regards to the target field. Rather the purpose is to uncover social constructions and in doing so, make them observable. The area of scope in this study is to gain further insight into the phenomenon of online social travel and the interesting part is to investigate how this social aspect constructs and creates itself. Aided by theory the aim is to analyse social constructions, as they exist in the empiricism (Esmark et al., 2005).

This also means that by using the social constructive approach to analyse data, the author is aware that she will contribute to the construction of the social reality with the methods and terms used. As a consequence, the outcome will not represent an objective reality, but a *construction* of reality as a product of practice (Esmark et al., 2005).

2.2 Primary Data

To conduct a social constructive analysis the target field must first be constructed before it is observable (Esmark et al., 2005). Hence to answer the research question, primary data has been created and constructed to form a reality on which theory is applied.

This study will be based on both quantitative and qualitative research, which is possible since the social constructive viewpoint does not take preference for either method (Esmark et al., 2005). This is supported by the scientific theoretical discussions, which has recently shown increasing convergence between the various theoretical viewpoints and based on these it is suggested that the best research often combine the two qualitative and quantitative principal methods (Nielsen, 2002). Both has it strengths and limitations and by joining the assets of each it will aid in better creating a socially constructed reality and thereby aid in answering the research question (Nielsen, 2002, Kvale, 2007 & de Vaus, 2007). Both methods will be discussed in the following specifically in regards to this study.

2.2.1 Quantitative Data

To acquire an initial understanding of the target field and to form the basis for further research, a questionnaire survey was developed and distributed among individual travellers (copy of questionnaire may be seen in appendix 8.1). The construction and reasoning of the questionnaire is discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.2.1.1 Construction of Questionnaire

When constructing questionnaires the author is aware that as a researcher she affects the constructed reality through the choice of terms used (Esmark et al., 2005 and de Vaus, 2007). Hence, exact use of notions has been carefully contemplated and it has been sought to clarify or explain terms where needed to ensure all respondents interpret the questions the same way and that what is being measured is what is actually intended (de Vaus, 2007). Furthermore, the questionnaire was originally formulated and available in English only, which may have caused some language difficulties for non-native English speakers. The author is aware that this may cause some minor bias in the final results.

The questionnaire primarily consists of closed ended questions and all questions are *single choice*, *multiple choice* or *matrices/Likert scales* (primarily nominal, based on an ordinal scale). Response

categories have been sought aligned throughout the questionnaire and no open-ended questions were asked. This approach has been chosen to make it inherently quantifiable and supportive of further qualitative research. Additionally, the questionnaire is then faster for respondents to complete, which may increase response rate.

To allow for cross tabulation analysis, questions concerning background variables have been included (de Vaus, 2007). These comprise age, gender and country of residence, but also travel traits, normal use of social media (based on Zarella's (2010) framework explained in 3.2.1 Social Media Sites and Networks) and use of digital devices for accessing the Internet while travelling. This is due to the individual personalities of people in general that is normally found to impact decision outcomes, here in regards to the motivation to trust, to share and the purchase process (for example Casaló et al., 2011, Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004:2, Li & Bernhoff, 2009 and Hyde, 2008).

The remainder of the question items have been formulated based on existing literature, gaps in literature as well as interesting areas for further research. A great amount of business reports and academic research has focused on the phenomenon of Web 2.0¹ and hence the new era and consequences of social media and collaborative development and consumption. As specified above, people in general and hence also travellers will normally use online media and its content differently. Hyde (2008) has especially looked into the unique characteristics of individual travellers and what impacts their decision-making; however, this is majorly focusing on the itinerary and destination rather than actual services while on the destination. In general, not much research has been done on individual travellers, which is reflected throughout the questionnaire.

Much research has been done on influencers especially in regards to social ties and connected online networks. There are no questions specifically in the questionnaire asking in this regard, but influencer theory will be greatly used to explain the motivation to trust. Here Casaló et al. (2010) and Kim et al. (2008) suggest that various needs and conditions need to be present and often research is separated into trust in source and trust in online media. Hence questions on both have been included in the questionnaire to allow for further explorations.

¹ Web 2.0 refers to a new version of the Internet where users are no longer limited to passive viewing but are able to interact and collaborate to create user-generated content (UGC)

Li & Bernhoff (2009) has developed the Social Technographics Profile, which looks into the participation level of online as well as motivators. This has also been explored by Wang & Fesenmaier (2004:1 & 2) where both argue that the amount of participation and motivation to share will depend on a range of factors. Questions on sharing have been included in the questionnaire to explore motivation further specifically applicable to individual travellers. Furthermore, these have been formulated hypothetically in that travellers, who may not share today, might potentially do so at a later point in time (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004:2)

Extensive research has sought to explore the purchase process and both the process and its components are greatly discussed, especially by Engel et al. (1995). The questionnaire seeks to incorporate questions covering the entire process to gain an understanding of the influencing factors on the process and time frame, based on the online media travellers use.

Theory will be more thoroughly discussed in section 3.0 Theoretical Framework, which also presents hypotheses that have influenced the creation of the questionnaire and its items.

2.2.1.2 Pre-Testing

Before launching the questionnaire all questions and formulations were tested on a smaller group of people from Denmark and Australia and discussed with survey experts and experts from the travel industry. This was done to limit any misinterpretations and ensure that all necessary and interesting questions were included.

2.2.1.3 Respondents

Respondents were recruited based on the convenience sampling method. The author is aware that as a consequence the sample may not be 100% representative of the population (de Vaus, 2007), but from a social constructive perspective a replica or final truth is, however, not the aim. Equally important, the questionnaire was conducted to highlight interesting areas for further research for in depth interviews. Combined with the lack of resources, a non-probability sampling method thus seems an acceptable choice for this study (de Vaus, 2007).

Participants in the study comprise of international travellers passing by New Road Guest House (NRGH) in Bangkok, Thailand. This was possible since this study has been written with the support of

VB, who is the owner of the guesthouse. NRGH fits the target field since it caters for individual travellers on non-package tours only. It is not limited by nationality or age. It has a wide range of rooms for various budgets and needs and is sold via a broad range of online sites available worldwide.

2.2.1.4 Distribution

The questionnaire was distributed in a paper version to all travellers passing by NRGH's service office in the period 1st Jul to 10th Sep 2012. To increase response rate, travellers were given incentives to participate (free Internet and competition participation). The NRGH service guides handled questionnaires and incentives and they were instructed to approach all travellers passing by the guesthouse. Due to limited time, however, not all travellers may have been approached. The author had limited control over actual communication with respondents; however, a verbal brief was given and a written guide (appendix 8.3) was distributed before commencing the survey to ensure proper administering (de Vaus, 2007). Furthermore, a responsible party was identified at location, who possessed previous survey experience.

The questionnaire was setup in Enalyzer (student license), an online system for conducting surveys, and the author manually reported completed questionnaires. A major advantage of using self-reporting surveys is the ease of administering when having limited resources and its potential to reach a large sample size. On the other hand, self-reporting surveys have the disadvantage of increasing the chance of incorrectly filled questionnaires having to be discharged. Also, when filling in the questionnaire, respondents do so at a given time on their journey and hence may potentially cause memory bias of under- or over-reporting. It is, however, likely that this will be evenly distributed the larger the sample size (de Vaus, 2007).

2.2.1.5 Response Rate

A total of 203 travellers filled in the questionnaire while it was active. Of these 21 questionnaires were incomplete and ultimately discharged. The author is aware that including a "non-answered" category in the survey setup could have offset this issue; however, due to lack of resources, this was not an option after launch. Of the 182 remaining and finalized questionnaires, 95% of the respondents fall within the 18-35-age bracket, which is also the primary target group of VB. The last 5% consist of 10 subjects in various age brackets and to increase statistical reliability, these 10 subjects have been

excluded from further analysis since subgroups with less than five cases may bias statistical results. Thereby, the total number of respondents included in the sample (N) is 172 individual travellers in the age 18-35. This is considered satisfactory since a subgroup should consist of at least 50 to 100 cases and though unfortunate to reduce sample size it is still acceptable since the reduction is below 15% (de Vaus, 2007). Data results may be seen in appendix 8.2.

The exact response rate among those who were requested to fill in the questionnaire remains unknown. It is known that a total of 213 travellers were given the questionnaire and estimated that 940 travellers checked in during the time period; however, since the total population also include day-visitors, customers in the service office as well as repeat travellers, the total population remains unknown. Furthermore, the total number of check-ins includes children of which there are no respondents. Lastly, it was requested that all individuals fill in the questionnaire, regardless of being in a group, but some may have filled it in together. Based on the above as well as feedback from NRGH staff it is estimated that the response rate is just above 20%. Though this is below preferred sample size it is acceptable to do statistical calculations and in regards to a social constructive approach the aim is to form a base for further explorations, not to formulate a final truth.

2.2.1.6 Data Analysis

Data collection and processing has been done via Enalyzer and Excel/StatPlus. Data processing has been conducted with descriptive statistics hereunder frequency tables and graphs, mode and mean values reflecting data distribution. Furthermore, bivariate methods were used to connect variables and detect possible correlations and associates in the data material (de Vaus, 2007). These include chi-square statistics (χ^2) to test statistical significance of observed relations in cross tabulations, t-tests (t) to compare mean differences between continuous outcome variables as well as Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA (H) to compare multiple independent variables and test significance of these. Lastly, Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) was used to confirm correlations between and the strength of relationships when both variables were measured at equal continues outcome scales. No fixed rule is given as to when a relationship is considered strong or not; however, in social research 0.3 may be regarded as *relatively* strong and hence only coefficients above this are considered. Also tables and scatterplots have been used to verify correlations (de Vaus, 2007). In general, categories were sought collapsed where possible in case less than five subjects represented a subgroup. Overall, findings are reported only at the 0.05% significant level ($p < 0.05$) and calculations may be seen in appendix 8.6.

Not all items in the questionnaire will be analysed in detail, only areas of particular interest and significant results will be subtracted from data to support and highlight the theoretical discussion in regards to the research question. This also indicates that extensive and complicated statistical methods will not be used, since this is beyond the scope of this study.

2.2.2 Qualitative Data

Based on findings in the questionnaire survey, qualitative semi-structured interviews were used to cast further light on the target field. The quantitative research method in itself has a range of limitations and criticisms (de Vaus, 2007) just as the current survey has been constrained by reach, time and space. The qualitative methods of research will to some extent offset these limitations (de Vaus, 2007 and Kvale, 2007) and thereby aid in the further understanding the target field and the respondents' more or less conscious motivations and social actions in a given context.

From an epistemological viewpoint, an interview is a prime venue for exploring subject's experience and understanding of the world described in their own words and from their own perspective. It is then the task of the interviewer to register and interpret meanings from what is being said and how it is being said. The author has sought precision in description and qualitative diversity and varieties in phenomenon with a focus on specific, and not general events. It has thereby been the aim to be open to new and unexpected phenomena, though still focusing on the particular target field. This is where the semi-structured interview becomes a suitable choice since it provides a topical framework, but opens up for explorations during the conversation as well as allows the clarification of any ambiguities and/or contradictory statements (Kvale, 2007).

This also underscores the importance of the skills, knowledge, intuition and integrity of the interviewer. An interview constructs knowledge in the interaction between two people and these reciprocally influence each other. However, it is still the interviewer, who sets the stage, controls the sequence and uses the outcome for a specific purpose (Kvale, 2007). The author is aware that the role as an interviewer will most likely impact the process, but will seek to maintain a professional distance and report and interpret from the subjects' perspectives. Contrary, the author will use the theoretical and quantitative knowledge obtained beforehand in regards to the target field, to set the frames for the interview and clarify meanings and narratives, which is an important prerequisite as underscored by Kvale (2007).

Kvale (2007) has identified seven research stages, which has been applied to this study and summarised in the table 2.1:

Table 2.1: Qualitative research stages of this study. Based on Kvale's (2007) framework of qualitative research.

<i>Thematizing</i>	Based on the rigid findings in the questionnaire survey, it is the aim with the interviews to explore further the phenomenon of online social travel and obtain explorative empirical knowledge as to subjects' interaction with online social travel sites and sources.
<i>Designing</i>	The interviews were explorative in nature to allow for new and unexpected aspects of the target field. Hence, the interviews were only semi-structured and thereby allowed to pursue interesting viewpoints and narratives during the interview. This method also allows for altering and improving questions, as the author gets wiser during interviews. The study included three subjects based on convenience sampling (who was available and accepted the request). It was, however, ensured that they represented the target field.
<i>Interview situation</i>	<p>The interviews took place in Bangkok, Thailand, which means subjects were travelling when the interviews took place. To allow for later analysis and validity, the interviews were voice recorded and to reflect further on learning outcomes, notes on ambience, rapport and preliminary viewpoints was briefly stated after each interview was conducted (appendix 8.4).</p> <p>Subjects were duly pre-briefed in regards to purpose and procedure thereby allowing them to give their informed consent. Full anonymity was offered and hence names are fictive.</p> <p>The actual interviews were conducted based on a semi-structured interview guide (appendix 8.5). To limit inconvenience for subject, interviews were aimed to last approximately 30 minutes. The interview was a mix between <i>dialogue</i> to clarify and further explore findings in the questionnaire and <i>experiment</i> to increase memory and actual life situations in an online context. Meanings were as far as possible clarified during the interview to avoid ambiguities and increase validity. In general, rich, spontaneous and relevant answers were encouraged.</p> <p>Debriefings were conducted where subjects could ask questions or clarify any doubts.</p>
<i>Transcription</i>	The interviews were voice recorded and stored for later verification (attached). A summary with key points from each interview is seen in appendix 8.4 and interesting, conflicting or supporting statements uttered by subjects have been included in the analysis. The author is aware that when translating from oral language to written language utterances become interpreted constructions and part of the meaning lost including tone of voice and gestures.
<i>Analysis</i>	The interviews are analysed as bricolage – a mixed technical discourse allowing use of a variety of ad hoc methods and conceptual approaches to generate meaning of data and uncover unexpected perspectives. This method seems valid considering the aim of the research is to explore further the target field from a social constructivist perspective. When analysing, statements are not penetrated deeply, but instead the analysis relies on the actual utterances, not non-verbal behaviour. This is to avoid misinterpretations and over interpretation of individual body language and behaviour.
<i>Verification</i>	Reliability and validity are and were attempted at all stages of the interviews including validity of own interpretations by ensuring solid craftsmanship in all research stages. The author is aware of the role as interviewer and interpreter, which might influence outcome. However, by adapting a critical role this is sought offset as far as possible.
<i>Reporting</i>	Findings are reported and used to support tendencies in this study by being contextualised, readable and loyal.

2.3 Secondary Data

Secondary data will primarily consist of articles, reports and statistics. It will be used to support and fill gaps in primary data research and to illustrate comparison others, averages, potential and the like. The author is aware that secondary data has its limitation and that data might not necessarily fit into the framework set for this study (de Vaus, 2007).

2.4 Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into six overall parts. To aid the reader a brief overview of the individual parts and what it contains is hereby given:

1.0: Introduction – Introduces the thesis and its relevancy. Furthermore, it identifies and defines the problem statement and limitations for the study and clarifies terms used.

2.0: Methodology – Elaborates the methodological approach of the study including the scientific approach, data collection methods and discusses the structure of the thesis.

3.0: Theoretical Framework – Reviews the literature, which will aid in understanding how individual travellers' use WOM in the purchase process. The review will introduce the characteristics of individual travelling and the online context as well as discuss eWOM focusing on influencers hereunder the motivation to trust and the motivation to share content online. Combined this will aid in understanding how this affects the purchase process and why this process may be seen as a connected circle rather than a linear process.

4.0: Analysis and Data Discussion – Applies theory to data and seek to gain a deeper understanding as to the phenomenon of online social travel. Based on the data obtained through qualitative and quantitative research, the aim is to further explain and comprehend how eWOM affects the purchase process by looking into influencers online and why and how travellers share and trust content online.

5.0 Conclusion – Important findings are summarised to answer the problem statement.

6.0 Perspectives – Limitations of the present study and research methods will be evaluated and areas of further research suggested. Also results will be put into perspective regarding implications for Visit Beyond and hotel and tour operators in general.

3 Theoretical Framework

While data forms the empirical reality of this thesis, it is the task of the theory to formulate propositions about this reality, which is testable by confronting theory and reality (Esmark et al., 2005). The theoretical framework will discuss existing literature relevant for the target field and emphasise the most important findings. Included, is a brief introduction to individual travellers and the online context after which eWOM is more thoroughly discussed focusing on influencers and the motivation to trust and share content online. Finally, eWOM theory is integrated into the purchase process being reflected by a connected circle. Throughout this section, expected empirical findings are highlighted and exemplified by hypotheses, which is then verified in part 4.0 Data Analysis & Discussion.

3.1 Characteristics of Individual Travel & Travellers

Travelling entails the consumption of services while on the road. Services are distinct from products in that services entails intangibility, inseparability, variability and perishability (Mudie & Cottam, 1999). Jointly, these may lead to uncertainty for both the traveller (what can he expect?) and the service provider (what does the traveller actually expect?) and consequently affects the traveller's decision-making and purchase process. This is due to risk (financial, social, time and opportunity costs) that may be perceived when uncertainty is present (Mudie & Cottam, 1999). When experiencing risk (low or high), humans will seek to minimize the feeling of risk and this normally entails acquiring additional information (Engel et al., 1995 and Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998). In this sense it has been found that risk is often a major influencer on and consequence of WOM information and is believed to affect both WOM seeking and WOM utterance depending on where the traveller is in the decision, consumption or evaluation process.

However, how much risk individuals tolerate will differ depending on for example personal traits and previous experiences. Individual travellers are said to have distinct characteristics such as inherent curiosity and often being novelty-seekers (Andersen and Lee & Crompton in Hyde, 2008). Individual travellers are likely to prefer the unusual, adventure and change in pace and excitement (Hyde, 2008). Based on this, it may be assumed that most decisions are first time purchases of services, which is found to increase perceived risk (Buttle, 1998). Contrary, seeking and wanting the novel has also been

found to increase risk acceptance by individual travellers (Hyde, 2008). It, however, still leads to information search because to satisfy needs, individual travellers must seek or search for information to find the novel place, experience, adventure or excitement (Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998 and Tsaor et al., 2010). Information search is *"...the process by which the consumer searches his or her environment for appropriate information to improve the outcome of their purchase decision-making"* (Hyde, 2008, pg. 57). Travel wise Snepenger & Snepenger (in Choi et al., 2007) identified four major information sources being family and friends, destination specific literature, media and travel consultants. However, the online world has enabled low cost, easy access to and retrieval of information causing a paradigm shift in information search (Gursoy & McCleary, 2004). Considering the very intangible nature of travel related services, especially at new destinations, travellers increasingly embrace information supplied by others online (Saranow and Ricci & Wietsma in Cox et al., 2009) and previous work has confirmed that travellers are strongly motivated to obtain information for their journeys (Parra-Lopéz et al., 2010 and Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998). Thus it is hypothesised that:

H1: Travellers are highly motivated to investigate travel information for their journey(s)

Also, it is hypothesised that there will be observed behavioural differences due to unique personal and travel traits. More specifically it is hypothesised that there will be an:

H2: Association between travel experience and behaviour

H3: Association between travel duration and behaviour

H4: Association between travel form and behaviour

H5: Association between gender and behaviour

3.2 Online Social Context

Traditionally, the Web was limited to passive viewing and downloading of information. The emergence of Web 2.0 and the social media phenomenon, however, has increasingly enabled connected individuals to interact online to create, modify, share and discuss content (Kietzmann et al., 2011), which is exemplified greatly by Carroll's UA case. Notably, travellers increasingly use the Internet in a collaborative manner to obtain information, share experiences and compare services related to their trip – jointly referred to as Travel 2.0 (Adam et al. and O'Connor in Parra-Lopéz et al., 2010). With an

increasingly online connected world, communication with others is no longer restricted by time or location. The social media phenomenon has then extensively enabled a giant connected network to emerge where WOM information flows freely and easily between individuals and groups of people based on information and social ties: *“Word-of-Mouth is a network phenomenon: People create ties to other people with the exchange of units of discourse (that is, message) that link to create an information network while the people create a social network”* (Dwyer, 2007, pg. 64). These two networks have now become two sides of the same coin and given rise to countless social media sites and networks.

3.2.1 Social Media Sites & Networks

Social media is *“...highly interactive platforms via which individuals and communities share, create, discuss, and modify user-generated content”* (Kietzmann et al., 2011, pg. 241). These platforms are based on mobile and web-based technologies and enable the formation of social networks, which is *“...a set of people or groups with some pattern of contact or interaction between them”* (Newman in Dwyer, 2007, pg. 63). These characteristics highlight the essence and common denominator of social media being interaction between two or more parties – and consequently, some kind of sharing or passing of information or content. In other words, very aligned with the network phenomenon of WOM stated above.

Social media sites include both personal and impersonal sources of information and they vary considerably in terms of size, conditions, user characteristics and whether they are closed communities or open for all (Jacobsen & Munar, 2012). Consequently, the degree to which people trust content and information sources at various social media will vary greatly – and hence, the degree to which content influence the listener. An overview of social media used as framework for this study (including questionnaire) is presented in table 3.1:

Table 3.1: Characteristics of the social media used as framework for this study. Based on Zarella's (2010) framework of social media

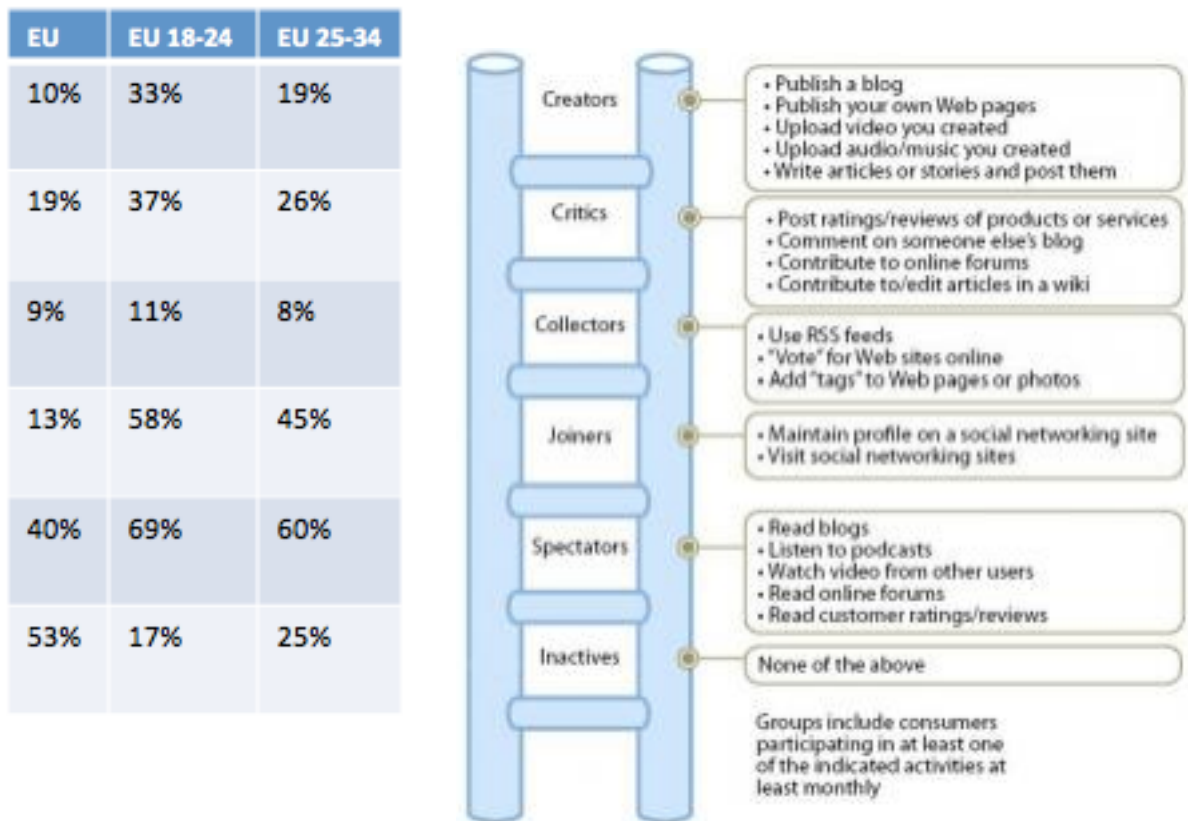
	Blogs	Micro Blogs	Social Networks (SN)	Media Sharing (MS)	Social News & Bookmarking	Rating & Reviews (R&R)	Forums
Characteristic	In depth, personal experiences or opinions	Max 140 characters – snapshot of time	Connects friends in one giant web – complement real world	Allows users to create and upload content	Submit & vote for popular content Collect & store content	Allow users to rate and/or review products/services	Modern version of community bulletin boards
Examples	Individual or community	Twitter	Facebook	YouTube, Flickr	Digg.com, Pinterest	Yelp, TripAdvisor (TA)	Thorn Tree
User figures	346mio read blogs 184mio have their own blog*	145mio users sending an average of 90mio tweets per day*	800mio Facebook users* Average 110 friends**	4 billion videos are shown on YouTube every day *	47mio unique visitors on Reddit.com in October*	TA: More than 50mio unique visitors/month And more than 60mio reviews*	More than 2mio subscribers to Thorn Tree forum*
Perishability	Longer lasting	Fast pacing	Lasting social profile	Long lasting	Long lasting	Long lasting	Long lasting
Anonymity	Possible	Possible	Not possible	Possible	Possible	Possible	Possible
Nature of tie	Interest	Interest	Social	Interest	Interest	Interest	Interest
	*Zarella, 2010	*Madway in Kietzmann et al., 2011	*GP Bullhound, 2012 **Christakis & Fowler, 2011	*YouTube (2012:2)	*Reddit.com (2012)	*TripAdvisor's Website, 2012	*Lonely Planet (2012)

Summarised, it is hypothesised that:

H6: Trust in information found on different online media will vary

3.2.2 Social Media Use

Li & Bernhoff (2009) has developed the Social Technographics Profile, which classifies consumers into six levels according to social media use and which activities they participate in. The groups have been defined according to distinct behaviours and then applied to consumers according to different variables. This is highlighted in the following model, where European figures (and specific age groups) have been added:



Model 3.1: A representation of the Social Technographics Profile. Adapted from Li & Bernhoff (2009) with updated figures specifying the percentage each category represents in the EU (Forrester, 2010)

The model reflects that the younger generation use social media more than the average and that more people “look at” and “maintain” content rather than “share” and “create”. Hence it is hypothesised that:

H7: Travellers sharing content online will be less than travellers consuming content (in the form of information search and evaluation)

3.2.3 Social Media on the Go

Mobile devices represent the option for users to connect online on the go, facilitating real time interaction thereby bridging the real and the virtual world. This also allows travellers to reach (and be reached) by friends, other travellers and companies almost anywhere and at any time through digital devices, presuming access to a Wi-Fi connection. Thus, travellers are increasingly able to access social media to investigate travel services, purchase experiences as well as share experiences with relevant others – all while actually travelling. Recently, this has been extended to also include the location context in which the traveller is situated, for example via location based services and social media

extensions thereby leveraging the combination of the social aspect, the location context and the use of mobile phones (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

Several reports and surveys confirm an increased adoption of digital devices and use of these for both accessing social media in general, but also searching travel information and purchasing travel related services (for example Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010 and ComScore, 2011). It is, however, important to note that the number of people accessing social media via mobile devices is still a fraction of those using classic web interfaces (ComScore, 2011). Further, a recent study conducted by TNT Travel Show found that 85% of Blackberry users and 68% of iPhone users would prefer to leave their phone at home when travelling for longer periods, in favour of human contact (in Barnett, 2012).

Acknowledging the above it is, however, hypothesised that:

H8: Travellers bringing digital devices to access the Internet investigate more travel services on the go than those who do not bring digital devices

H9: Travellers who bring digital devices to access the Internet while travelling are more likely to share than those who do not bring digital devices

3.2.4 Traditional & Professional Sites

Though social media is found to be the major driver of WOM online, “traditional websites” are still widely used on the Internet as information sources. In a travelling context, there is a difference between commercial sites (tour operators and agents) and information sites (independent publishers). As in real life, commercial sites are present with the ultimate goal to generate sales, while information sites are mostly perceived as independent information sources (Senecal & Nantel, 2004). This may impact the level of trust travellers put into websites and hence information may have different impact on the travellers and their individual purchase process. More specifically, when sales are involved, consumers tend to be more wary, than with independent sources (Cox et al., 2009).

The emergence of Web 2.0 and social media tools has, however, enabled the integration of the social aspect on these sites with the ultimate aim of increasing trust in the company’s message via support from common people and peers. Companies thereby leverage consumers’ utterances and interactions, but integrated into their own virtual world and framing (Litvin et al., 2007). Integration includes

Facebook interactions, showing ratings and reviews (R&R) from TripAdvisor, hosting blogs or the use of people's content such as a video from YouTube.

3.3 Electronic Word-of-Mouth

The paradigm shift caused by Web 2.0 has catalysed WOM into an online sphere with new characteristics attached and increase in reach and power. In this part, eWOM will be discussed in further details in regards to origin and characteristics.

3.3.1 Origins of Word-of-Mouth

WOM is not a new phenomenon and its importance has been recognised for more than half a century with Whyte in 1954 being one of the early researchers in the area. Based on his findings, Katz & Lazarsfeld in 1955 as well as Dichter in 1966 found that WOM influences the majority of all purchase decisions. This is further underscored by Engel et al. (1969:2) who found that 60% of innovators reported WOM communication to be the single most effective source in their decision to adopt a product. Arndt (1967:1) also found a significant relationship between favourable WOM and the intention to buy. More specifically Dichter (1966) proposed that WOM is an especially strong ally (if not *the* strongest) when risk value is high, which may often be the case for travel related services as previously highlighted. This leads to the following hypothesis that there is a:

H10: Positive relationship between WOM recommendations and actual purchase

Arndt (1967:2, pg. 3) has proposed one of the first definitions of WOM being *"...oral person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial, concerning a brand, a product, or a service"*. This underscores the basic assumption and proposition of the phenomenon that WOM is non-commercial by nature. More recently, Buttle (1998) has identified five characteristics of WOM being valence, focus, timing, solicitation and intervention whereby the nature of WOM is touched upon and the possible impact of businesses is acknowledged.

3.3.2 Characteristics of Electronic Word-of-Mouth

With the emergence of online media, the playing field for the WOM concept has been changed significantly and Buttle (1998) points to some of the new considerations that must be acknowledged.

First of all, WOM does not need to be directed at a specific product or service, but may include an organisation as a whole. Secondly, due to the increase in Internet access and social media use, WOM is no longer restricted to take place orally or face-to-face, it may be conducted in writing or via other visual aids. By doing so, the WOM utterance also need not be conducted in real time or real life just as it no longer necessarily disappears when uttered. As a consequence, eWOM “sticks” longer and technology enables a much broader reach to the masses than traditional WOM, which is passed person-to-person and often needs a social tie as a prerequisite for taking place. This highlights another difference in that online WOM need not originate from a source known to the receiver. Lastly, written online content allows WOM to be measured, whereas it is observable in traditional WOM including gestures and mimic. The differences may be summarised as follows:

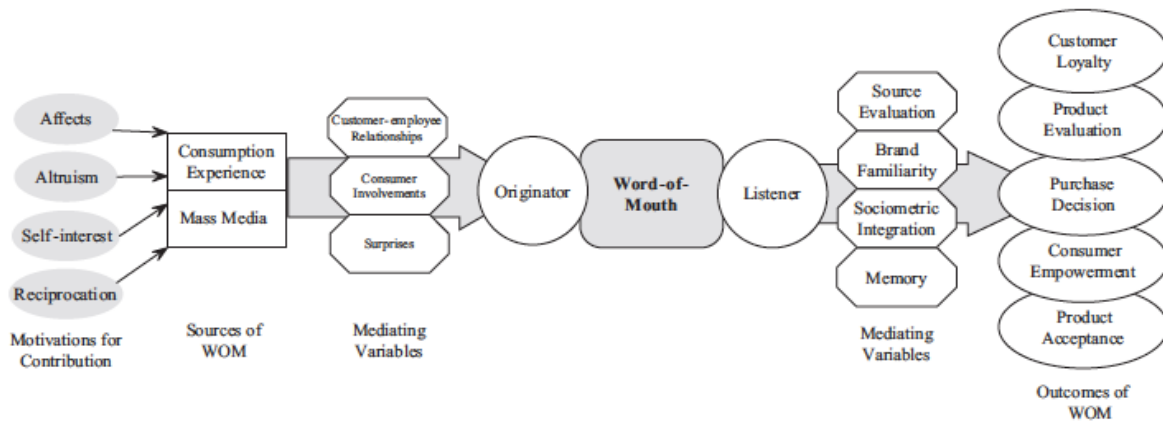
Table 3.2: Differences between traditional and electronic WOM. Own production

Traditional WOM	Electronic WOM
Offline	Online
Non-anonymously / Social tie	Anonymously / Non-social ties
Spoken Word	Written Word
Perishable	Longer lasting
Narrow Reach	Broad Reach
Observable	Measureable

This has lead to the following definition of e-WOM being “...any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and intentions via the Internet” (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, pg. 39)

The definition underscores the similarity with traditional WOM where the consumer is at the centre as passer and receiver; it just takes place in an online, hence different environment. Therefore, despite the differences WOM and eWOM are not two significantly different concepts (Beldona et al., 2004), one is the evolutionary consequence of the other. Based on this closeness it is generally found reasonable to assume that important motives in traditional WOM are also relevant in eWOM and that the online context is just an enabler – not the goal in itself (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). However, it has still caused the users to have easy access to a vast amount of low cost information regardless of time and space plus the ability to be in contact with peers across the globe in a manner of seconds. This changes the scope and traits surrounding WOM effectiveness and reach (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

WOM is in essence a social interaction (online or offline) and a wide range of factors influence the outcome. Based on the social exchange theory, Gatignon & Robertson (1986) developed “The Exchange Theory Model of Interpersonal Influence”. This has reciprocity as its central construct and theorize that social interaction will continue if mutually rewarding. This theory aids in grasping the proposed process of WOM and impacting factors:



Model 3.2: A conceptual model of WOM (adapted from Litvin et al., 2007)

To spark WOM there must be some motivating factors that drive the originator to initiate WOM. In the other side of the spectrum, the listener benefits from information that may decrease decision time, effort and contribute to improve decision outcome (Schiffman & Kanuk in Bronner & de Hoog, 2011). In between are mediating variables that will impact the power of WOM utterances and the originator's influence on the listener (Litvin et al., 2007). In an eWOM context it is generally found that consumers engage in and share eWOM due to social-psychological, identity and utilitarian motives (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004), while the seeking or consumption of eWOM is mostly driven by utilitarian motives such as purchase- and consumption related advice (Hennig-Thurau & Walsh in Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004). This study will not investigate all WOM factors but focus on the role of influencers (part 3.4), the motivation to trust these (part 3.5) and the motivation to contribute (part 3.6).

Firstly, it is, however, important to introduce the commercial site of WOM being in a rather grey area of the theory. The concept is known as eWOM marketing (eWOMM) and may be seen as “...*the intentional influencing of consumer-to-consumer communications by professional marketing techniques*” (Kozinets et al., 2011, pg. 71). The theory is based on relationships rather than transactions and acknowledges the importance of consumer networks, groups and communities (Kozinets et al., 2011) where companies can affect the information flow, which is increasingly

multidirectional, interconnected and difficult to predict. Hence companies move from control over their brand to participate in a conversation about their brand (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2010).

Especially for travel companies WOMM is attractive since peer-to-peer recommendations are found to be an important and effective tool when selling intangible services such as travelling (Senecal & Nantel, 2004). It, however, highlights a fundamental contradiction in the eWOMM term and brings the concept of WOM into a grey area since at its very core WOM theory assumes no business or commercial intervention. Still, as previously mentioned, Buttle (1998) identified five characteristics of WOM and with these he also acknowledged the possibility for WOM being stimulated by companies. Web 2.0 then has enabled companies to take advantage of this form of marketing, but the intervention may create an issue with source credibility, emphasising the importance of communication method and source transparency (Kozinets et al., 2010).

3.4 Influence & Influencers

At the core of WOM theory is the phenomenon of influence and the role of influencers. Both offline and online, people are influenced by others, but the degree of influence depends on a wide range of factors including how well they are known, the context and the type of information being transferred or sought. Traditionally, WOM would often stem from people who are known to some extent, including friends, family and colleagues. However, online anyone is able to disseminate information and express oneself, thereby possibly acting as an influencer. This has changed the conditions in which WOM takes place since people across the globe and total strangers may now share WOM. As a consequence, there are increased concerns over source credibility (Park et al., 2007 and Litvin et al., 2007) and the identity verification of the potential influencer becomes increasingly important.

The amount of influence people exert over another is often dependent on their relationships; this is, the extent to which users are related to each other. Relate refers to a particular association between parties that leads to conversations and sharing. As a consequence, how social media users are connected often determines the what-and-how of information exchange (Kietzmann et al., 2011). This idea has caused extensive research into the role of connections and social ties over the years.

Social ties became widely discussed with Gladwell's (2000) Law of the Few, where he found that a small number of very influential people are the connectors to and influencers of thousands of people.

He characterised these as highly connected, persuasive and credible in their field and findings are also confirmed by Eccleston & Griseri (2008) who took the framework into a Web 2.0 and commercial context. This may explain why listeners seek the input of an opinion leader or influential, when WOM is actively sought (Buttle, 1998).

Contrary the Law of the Few has also been greatly questioned and other research has found little correlation between highly connected people and large degrees of influence (Aral et al., Manski and Khurana in Adams, 2012). Moreover, it is found to be rare that any one individual may influence many other people. All are part of independent groups where people in different groups may not know each other. All are then connectors in between such groups and for information to spread through a large population it must go through many regular people instead of a few highly influential ones (Adams, 2012). Hence it is hypothesised that all travellers represent possible influencers, especially in an eWOM context:

H11: All travellers are influencers to various extents

Social ties also varies in strength as found by Granovetter's (1973) focus on weak ties where he defines the strength of a tie as "*...a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie*" (pg. 1361). Based on this framework, strong ties are an individual's closest bonds; often friends and family, and normally people have a very small number of strong ties – often fewer than five. These are the first to be looked to for information because they are trusted and because it is believed they have the best interest at heart (Spencer & Pahl in Adams, 2012). People are three to five times as likely to share similar preferences with their friends than with strangers (Sernovitz in Adams, 2012) and often buy things solely on the recommendation from a close friend (Adams, 2012). Hence, the closest people emotionally also have disproportionate influence (Christakis & Fowler 2011) as hypothesised:

H12: Travellers are proportionally more influenced by their strong ties being friends and family

Contrary, weak ties are people not known so well and often include people met recently and people known through others. Individuals usually have many (up to 150) weak ties in their network. But in a hyper connected world, everyone may engage in anonymous, large-scale interactions increasing the possible number of weak ties to several hundreds (Christakis & Fowler, 2010). People interact with

weak ties because of a common interest or object and weak ties are often a better source of information than strong ties (Granovetter, 1973).

Generally weak ties often better represent expertise, hence are used for obtaining *information* and are mostly used when holding prior subjective knowledge and when it is related to performance aspects (Duhan et al., 1997 and Brown & Reingen, 1987). Contrary, strong ties are often the ones trusted the most, hence are used for *influence* in regards to purchase decision, more specifically related to task difficulty and prior knowledge. In other words, the more difficult the decision, the more likely people will turn to strong ties. It must be noted that the two alternatives are, however, not mutually exclusive (Duhan et al., 1997).

The explanation for the above may be found in the network and connected aspect where Granovetter (1973) argued that strong ties bind people together into groups, but weak ties bind groups together into larger society and are crucial to spread information about a given subject or phenomenon. Since information flows freely within a close group of friends, it is likely that people know more or less everything their close friends know. To extend the individual's knowledge base, they must search beyond their immediate circle of reference and often rely on weak ties for specific knowledge or information. Human beings might trust socially distant people less, but the information and contacts they have may be intrinsically more valuable because they cannot access them themselves (Christakis & Fowler, 2011). Hence it is hypothesised that:

H13: Travellers search for information beyond their immediate circle of reference (strong ties)

The discussion about weak ties as information providers is a consequence of the fact that people cannot be knowledgeable in all areas. Hence people trust some of their friends on certain topics and others on different topics (Adams, 2012). In this sense, all humans are influencers to varying degrees and are all looked upon by others as knowledgeable in certain areas. Sometimes individuals trust the opinion of their closest friends even though they may not be the most knowledgeable in the area. As they increase their reliance on their social network they won't turn to strangers for advice nor recognized experts. However, this is still not fully explored since it is also found that individuals still turn to experts, but the degree to which they trust them depends on the strength of their relationship (Forrester in Adams, 2012). This will also explain findings in Litvin et al. (2007), that people seek the

view of opinion leaders, often experts in the area, to give valuable advice or information. Based on these findings it is hypothesised that:

H14: Travellers form trust in source based on perceived expert knowledge

The importance of ties is due to people being homophile. Individuals associate with people who resemble them and vice versa have a tendency to influence and copy one another. This restricts information to pass between groups who are separated by dimensions, for example race and education (Milgram in Adams, 2012). So although a huge range of people influences individuals, they are disproportionately influenced by people they perceive to be like themselves (Kaufmann in Adams, 2012). It is, therefore hypothesised that:

H15: Travellers trust people they perceive to be similar to themselves

But people not only copy their friends, they also copy their friends' friends' friends. This has been termed the Three Degrees of Influence Rule (Christakis & Fowler, 2011) and these may have great influence on decisions. When going beyond three degrees, influence gradually dissipates and ceases to have noticeable effect just as people are not influenced beyond three degrees. Though influence stops here; individuals often start their search for information two or three degrees away in order to make sure they learn something new. This phenomenon has been found valid for WOM recommendations and equally important, in an online context (Christakis & Fowler, 2011).

3.5 Motivation to Trust

For WOM to be truly influential, a prerequisite is trust in both the sender of information as well as the message. If trust is not perceived or present, people are less likely to be influenced by a given WOM transition. In an eWOM context, recommendations are typically from unknown individuals where social ties are lacking and hence individuals have difficulty in using source similarity to determine credibility of information or sender (Bronner & de Hoog, 2011). In an e-commerce context, trust has been described as *"...a subjective belief, a subjective probability (...), reliance on parties other than oneself, or a person's expectations"* (Kim, et al., 2008, pg. 545) just as the motivation to trust springs from the issue of 'risk' surrounding a purchase. As highlighted under part 3.1 Characteristics of Individual Travel & Travellers, travel related services are often expected to entail risk and purchase

involvement is high. Hence, the issue of who to rely on and trust for thorough and trustworthy recommendations often plays a major role in the purchase decision (Kim et al., 2008).

Fundamental to the WOM theory is the assumption that there is no material interest involved in the recommendation (only psychological gains) and this is what motivates the listener to accept and act upon WOM provided by others (Dichter, 1966). Dichter identified two concerns in regards to trusting information provided: the interest of the person who recommends in regards to the listener's well-being and how convincing the speaker's experience with the product is. It was generally found that people who have genuine interest in the listener's wellbeing are most likely to affect buying decisions followed by people with whom the listener share a communal feeling of interest. Last were the commercial authorities (Dichter, 1966). Later research has focused on the characteristics of the WOM originator where integrity, benevolence and ability impacts trustworthiness. If sufficient, a person will develop trust towards the information source and have a positive impact on purchasing intentions (Mayer et al. in Kim et al., 2008 and Casaló et al., 2010).

These findings seem to be very much relevant today – not least in an online context. Several surveys have found that the most trusted sources of information remain friends and relatives as compared to all other influencers or types of influencers such as company websites, social networks (SN) and blogs (Eccleston & Griseri, 2008 and Nielsen, 2012). More specifically Nielsen (2012) found that 92% of global consumers say they trust earned media such as WOM recommendations from friends and family above all other forms of advertising. Online consumer reviews are second most trusted form of advertising (70%) followed by “owned media” such as messages on company websites (58%) and sponsored ads in social networks (36%). This leads to the following hypotheses:

H16: Travellers trust their social ties being friends and family the most when investigating travel services

H17: After social ties, travellers trust peers with similar interests when investigating travel services

H18: Travellers trust commercial sources the least when investigating travel services

User-generated content (UGC) including reviews score high on trust and its importance was recognised by Dichter (1966) who mentions the use and benefit of testimonials to increase trust in the message

conveyed by the company. Newer research conducted by Gretzel, (in Cox et al., 2009) reveals that looking at other travellers' comments on online travel review sites is the most frequently used source of information when planning pleasure trips. Other key findings of the study shows that the credibility of the person writing the review tends to be judged based on their previous travel experience and the extent to which their profile is similar to the reader. This is in line with people being homophile as highlighted in part 3.3 Influence & Influencers in that they look for the opinion of people who are knowledgeable in their area but still similar to self. Generally, Gretzel found that users of travel review sites consider information provided by these sites as more reliable, up to date and enjoyable than the information presented on travel providers' own websites. Yet, it must be noted that the survey was based solely on a sample of Internet users who were already actively engaged in the use of a particular UGC site, tripadvisor.com (Cox et al., 2009). It is though hypothesised that:

H19: Travellers will trust social media with user-generated content more than commercial sources

Further to UGC and reviews there is the issue of trust in regards to fake reviews or content posted by travel companies disguised as independent reviewers. Prior research has found that consumers discredit recommendations from information sources or endorsers if they suspect that incentives are given to recommend a product (Senecal & Nantel, 2004). It is underscored that an important consideration for review sites is transparency in that the source (here reviewer) is not anonymous (Cox et al., 2009 and O'Connor, 2010). Still it is also found that consumers may be able to relate to a reviewer based solely on what is written and in which manner. This naturally confirms another finding by Ong (2012) that review readers tend to use written reviews more than the aggregated numerical ratings when judging content and balancing level of confidence. This may be to consider the author's expertise and credibility. In line with this it has been found that consumers focus more on the recommendation source itself (actual person or sender of information) than on the type of website on which information is passed (Senecal & Nantel, 2004).

H20: Travellers' intention to follow advice is dependent on trust in and hence relationship to source

In terms of impact it appears that negative WOM has more powerful impact than positive (Arndt, 1967:1 and Lee et al. in Ong, 2012). Negative WOM provided to ease frustration or anger is, however,

less influential to the receiver since it is not perceived to be constructive or useful (Wetzer et al. in Cox et al., 2009). Carroll's UA case highlights an exception, which is possibly due to its creative execution. Also, newer research has found support for positive WOM being equally if not more impactful (Ong, 2012) and that negative comments increase credibility because it takes off the corporate sheen (Adams, 2012). Balancing these findings it is hypothesised that:

H21: Positive and negative recommendations are equally impactful

Opposing the popularity of UGC sites is findings in Cox et al. (2009), where more "traditional" sources of information were found most trustworthy. It was found that information from independent sources like state tourism sites were trusted by 91%, travel agents by 71% and social networking sites by only 36% of the respondents. However, it must be mentioned that almost 80% of the respondents were aged 30 or above and 66% above 40, whereby the younger generation more used to the Internet is only limited represented.

On a community level, studies have shown that trust among people and in the community is a critical element to allow for knowledge sharing in networks. It is the main attribute in forming relationships, promoting affective knowledge creation, transfer and exchange of knowledge (Abrams et al. in Chai & Kim, 2010). To form trust among members of a community it is important that some kind of collective identity or common feeling of unity exists as well as a perceived usefulness of the travel community. When present community members feel obliged not to lie to each other and hence there should be no reason to mistrust content (Casaló et al., 2010 and Parra-López et al., 2010). Social communities are usually formed around similar interests, hence opinions are perceived to be relevant and unbiased and, therefore, trusted by sceptical consumers (O'Connor, 2010). It must however be noted that trust is a long-term process and it takes time to find confidence in an online media and a sender of information (Casaló et al., 2010). Based on this and previous discussion, it hypothesised that there will be a:

H22: Correlation between normal use of social media and social media used in the purchase process

H23: Correlation between trust in source and equivalent online media where source is found

H24: Correlation between trust in online media and online media used in the purchase process

3.6 Motivation to Share

Sharing in an online context is referred to as *“the extent to which users exchange, distribute, and receive content”* (Kietzmann et al., 2011, pg. 245). Here the actual sharing or what is being shared mediates the ties between people in that it becomes the reason for “meeting” online and associate with each other, regardless of them knowing each other in real life (Kietzmann et al., 2011). Based on existing literature it is found that there is a difference between level of participation and actual contribution online (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004:2). Bronner & de Hoog (2011) found that only 11% of vacationers could be characterised as sharers on UGC sites and 36% readers. This is in line with the Social Technographics Profile that individuals behave differently online. Nevertheless, even when travellers are not motivated to share at current, they are still important for travel communities because the more confidence they gain in the media the more motivated they may be to contribute later (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004:2).

Dichter (1966) investigated the psychological aspects of wanting to share WOM. He proposed, in line with social exchange theory, that a fundamental aspect of wanting to share is the expectation to “get something out of it” and that the sharer will actively balance product, listener and chosen words to satisfy his need (though he may not be aware of it).

The willingness to share stems from intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motivations (Castañeda et al. in Huang et al., 2010). Extrinsic motivations may derive from the need for status, positive self-enhancement, visibility, reciprocity, economic incentives or desire for social interaction and benefits (Huang et al., 2010, O’Connor, 2010, Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004, Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004:1 & 2). Particularly it is found that women talk to form social bonds while men talk about themselves and things they claim to be knowledgeable about and to impress others (Dunbar in Adams, 2012). In relation to social life people often update their status to feel connected to others despite geography (Adams, 2012), which may be expected to be very relevant for travellers who are often far away from their social ties. In relation to the travel industry, efficacy and future reciprocity has been identified as important motivators (Wang & Fesenmaier in O’Connor, 2010 and Parra-Lopéz et al., 2010).

People are also motivated intrinsically, especially due to general interest, growth and achievement, to express and document, pleasure in disseminating Information or purely for the enjoyment of sharing travel experiences and expertise (O’Connor, 2010, Huang et al., 2010 and Litvin et al., 2007). Travellers

are proud of their journeys and hence like to discuss them, especially highlighting where one travels and with whom (GP Bullhound, 2012). A recent study conducted by Facebook shows that travel stories are by far more added than any other type of life event (O'Neill, 2012). Further to enjoyment, Bronner & de Hoog (2011) found altruistic motivation in their study in that 70% of vacationers post information on websites to help others make good decisions. This confirms Hennig-Thurau et al.'s (2004) findings that people share out of concern for others (also seen in Wojnicki & Godes in Adams 2012, Huang et al., 2010 and O'Connor, 2010). Mostly, however, people converse to perform reputation management, though they may not be aware of it (Emler in Adams 2012).

Based on the above motivations, it is hypothesised that:

H25: Travellers are motivated to share content online based on reciprocity, social interactions, enjoyment of sharing travel experiences and concern for others

Much research has also been conducted on when consumers are most likely to share and under which circumstances. Belk (in Bone, 1992) found that this is most likely to occur while in close proximity to the product and when consumers are highly involved in the purchase (Dichter, 1966), as is the case in the travel industry. This is supported by Holmes & Lett (in Dwyer, 2007) who found that product usage and purchase intention drives WOM behaviour. It is further found that initial excitement dissipates over time, (Houston & Rothschild in Dwyer 2007), wherefore it is hypothesised that:

H26: Travellers are most likely to share during service delivery or right after

Bone (1992) looks further into influencers of WOM during consumption. She finds that the social environment (social ties and committed decision maker role) and individual's perceptions of the consumption experience (satisfaction and perceived distinctiveness) affects the exchange of WOM regarding a product or service. It is found that people are most likely to share extremely negative or extremely positive experiences. Here, customers' affective element of satisfaction, pleasure and sadness all motivates the desire to share experiences with others (Dichter, 1966, Neelamegham & Jain and Nyer in Litvin et al., 2007) due to an inner tension that calls for discharge (Wisner & Corney in O'Connor, 2010 and Westbrook in Litvin et al., 2007). In case of dissatisfaction, as seen in Carroll's UA case, the customer seeks relief or balance by uttering the perceived negative experience (Buttle, 1998). This is known as cognitive dissonance and is an imbalance in the cognitive system, based on

expectations and perceptions (Festinger in Buttle, 1998). Eccleston & Griseri (2008) found that the frequency for positive eWOM generation is slightly higher than for negative WOM and Fay (in Adams, 2012) found eight positive comments for every negative brand comment. Bronner & de Hoog (2011) has found that more people share to help companies than to harm them (in a ration of 5:1). Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

H27: Travellers are most likely to share extremely positive or extremely negative experiences

H28: Travellers share more positive WOM than negative

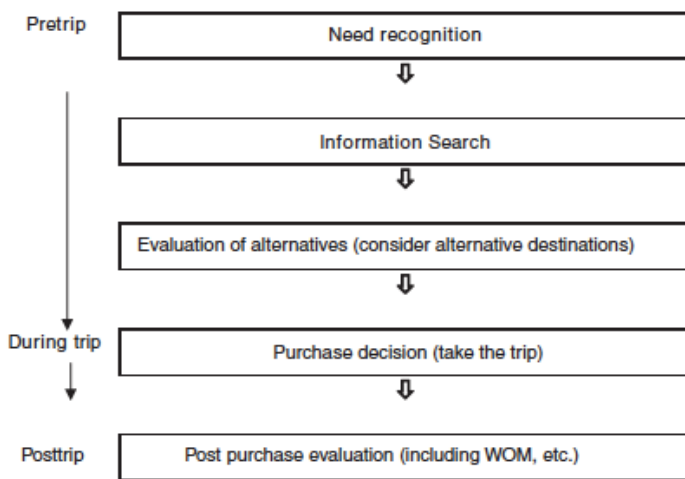
3.7 Purchase process

Extensive research has been done over time regarding consumers' purchase behaviour and there are various perspectives on the process. Bringing in eWOM theory the traditional linear process will be highlighted and updated to a connected circle relevant to explain and understand travellers' behaviour in this study.

3.7.1 Contemporary Buying Behaviour – The Linear Process

Research and the initial development of models on decision-making and purchase behaviour date back to the 1960s where the hierarchy of effects model saw the behaviour as a hierarchy of sequential events. This goes from awareness to knowledge, liking, preference, conviction, and finally purchase. This model was proposed by Engel et al. (in Hyde, 2008) and updated by Engel et al. (1995) to be more problem solving oriented and hence action oriented. A six-step process was proposed including 1) recognition of need, 2) search for information, 3) information processing, 4) pre-purchase alternative evaluation, 5) purchase and 6) consumption and post-purchase evaluation (Engel et al., 1995). Recent research, however, challenges the hierarchical or linear process (for example Varey, 2002) since consumers are not perfectly rational decision-makers, nor extensive information processors (Bettman et al. in Hyde, 2008). Furthermore, the linear process does not fully reflect learning theory where previous experiences and learning often impact subsequent behaviour (Varey, 2002). Hence, it may be argued that the post-purchase evaluation impacts subsequent purchase processes and behaviour.

The linear process has, however, been greatly used and when adapted to travel context the following process has been proposed:



Model 3.3: The travel planning purchase (Cox et al., 2009 based on Engel, Blackwell & Millard and Woodside & Lyonski)

With the emergence of the Internet and mobile devices that allow travellers to increasingly plan on the go combined with the unique traits of individual travellers having purchased only a minimum before departure the above process seems not to accurately reflect individual travellers' purchase process in regards to accommodation (ACC) and tours/activities (T/A) since it entails multiple decisions in regards to one vacation (Hyde, 2008). Instead it must be assumed that the above steps repeat itself constantly during the trip, but also to some extent beforehand and afterwards, supporting the circle formation rather than the linear process, since the trip is one great learning and evaluating experience. Though outside the scope of this study it is argued that this is the case in general for travelling, since previous experience affects subsequent behaviour also in regards to destination and transportation option. There may, however, be longer time between these decisions (for example going on vacation) and hence longer between the repetitions of the purchase process than is the case for ACC and daily activities where choices may be made on a daily basis when travelling.

3.7.2 Updated Purchase process – The Connected Social Circle

Further to the argument above and due to the complexity of travel services and decision-making, more recent research has adopted a process approach to understand travellers' information search and decision-making behaviour. As stated, it may be seen as on-going, rather than unchanging sequential stages that ends once a decision has been made (Decrop & Snelder in Choi et al., 2007). Information behaviour continues the integration of new knowledge into existing knowledge and the process considers personal traits and motives including prior knowledge that will accumulate as an on-going

process. In this sense evaluation of previous purchases will be used as a reference point thereby affecting future purchases of ACC and T/A (for example Jeng & Fesenmaier and Hyde in Choi et al., 2007, Vogt & Fesenmaier, 1998 and Varey, 2002).

In support of this Hwang et al. (in Choi et al., 2007) have found that tourist information search is intertwined with every phase of the decision process and in line with learning theory, post-choice evaluative feedback has been found to be a significant factor impacting the decision-maker's attitude and subsequent behaviour. In this sense travellers' experiences are stored in their memory and are retrieved and integrated into a decision-making frame when a new travel demand is made (Choi et al., 2007 and Duhan et al., 1997).

Considering the above findings and for ease of understanding travellers' behaviour it is argued that the linear process should rather be seen as a circular process where previous experiences and obtained knowledge impacts subsequent behaviour and hence later purchase processes.

When acknowledging and integrating the web 2.0 era and the influence of WOM into the purchase process it may be argued that this influences the purchase process from awareness over information search and evaluation to actual purchase, delivery and post-purchase evaluation, however, differently at each individual step, which will be further highlighted below. With exponentially amounts of information available and limited capacity for memory people will increasingly turn to others to help decide just as uncertainty makes consumers turn to others for information to make decisions (Adams, 2012). Also, people are increasingly able to disseminate information surrounding their purchase at all phases. Therefore, based on Dwyer's (2007) statement in part 3.2 Online Social Context, it may be argued that the WOM and hence eWOM forms an integrated network of social ties and information flow that constantly impacts all phases of the purchase process. Combining this network thinking into the circular process, an updated visualisation of the purchase process online is proposed as follows:



Model 3.4: “Purchase process – The Connected Social Circle”. Own production

The purchase process is now seen as one connected and repeated process circling around one great network of social ties and information flow, representing eWOM theory. The single steps of the model are based on existing literature from the linear process above. Note that the investigation step includes both information search and evaluation and that service delivery has been included as a unique step in the process. This is when the consumption actually takes place and refers to when travellers are staying at their accommodation or are on the actual tour. Consequently, the step represents a limited period of time that may cover a shorter or longer period ranging from hours to weeks depending on the nature of the service consumed. Furthermore, since travellers have to be physically present for the above services to be delivered or consumed, travellers are not only in direct contact with the travel service, it is most likely also consumed simultaneously with others. For example, more travellers may be joining a tour or staying at the same hotel at the same time, hence allowing for interactions and WOM influence to take place. Lifted into an online context via the increased use of Web 2.0, access to Wi-Fi and the use of mobile devices to access the Internet have enabled travellers to utter WOM regardless of time and place, hence also when consumption takes place. This includes for example posting a picture online while being on a tour or writing a review of a

hotel before checking out. In other words, consumption may take place simultaneously with eWOM and hence enables influencer activities to become daily events increasing reach and influence during consumption, here service delivery (Eccleston & Griseri, 2008).

Looking into the single steps of the model and the impact of eWOM it may be suggested that factors and influencers vary across the process:

The initial step represents when travellers become **aware** of a need, either in general or for a specific service. Research has found that this increasingly happens via interactions on social media where consumers in 2011 generated more than 500 billion impressions about products and services (Forrester Research in Forrester Consulting, 2012) and 74% were likely to encourage friends to try new products (MarketingProfs in Forrester Consulting, 2012).

Also, to start with the end, human beings learn from observed outcomes of past behaviour. This learning may be used to modify subsequent actions (Varey, 2002). To take this one step further, learning may also be based on other people's learning, which is for example seen in reviews of services. Yet again, this emphasises the circular process and it may be argued that other people's learning is more likely a part of the subsequent investigation step; however, the two phases are often found hard to separate since people recognize needs and learning in different ways (Varey, 2002). Combined it is hypothesised that:

H29: Previous experiences impact travellers' subsequent behaviour

After awareness comes information search and evaluation of information represented by **investigation** of alternatives to satisfy the perceived need. Even in the early days it was found that consumers turn to more personal sources of information when moving from awareness to trial (Arndt, 1967:1) and WOM is often found to be a prime information source (Katona & Mueller in Hyde, 2008). Individual consumers cannot comprehend and process all information themselves and seek trusted peers to help filter the information available or seek advice (Rosen & Olshavsky in Duhan et al., 1997). Peers are preferred as a recommendation source due to the issue of trust. As highlighted under part 3.5 Motivation to Trust consumers in general and thereby travellers increasingly turn to these for unbiased advice as compared to commercial sources, who are perceived as having material interest.

As stated, travel related services are often perceived as high interest products and Beldona et al. (2005) have found that detailed and extensive information is searched when it comes to pleasure travel services such as ACC and T/A. No first-hand experience before buying is possible, hence susceptible travellers may use the experience of fellow peers to direct own behaviour intentions and expectations (Casaló et al., 2010). Cox et al. (2009) found that UGC was mainly used in this part of the process, which is confirmed by a number of subsequent studies and reports in that 60% of travel consumers check online reviews, blogs and other feedback before making a buying decision and over 80% state that it at least has some influence on their subsequent purchase decision (Opinion Research Corporation in O'Connor, 2010). This is found to be of particular importance to the travel industry where such feedback is seen as highly credible (O'Connor, 2010).

A study of UK consumers show that a total of 68% always or often consult reviews before making a purchase related to travelling (GP Bullhound, 2012), but Ong (2012) has found that R&R were primarily used to narrow down choices and only to a minor extent helped to make the final choice. Nevertheless, Ong found that when seeking reviews travellers are often at an advanced stage in the buying process. Hence it is hypothesised that there will be a:

H30: Correlation between online media used for information search and online media, which content influence final decision to purchase

The investigation aids in narrowing down choices before making the final decision to **purchase**. In regards to eWOM, Casaló et al. (2010) has found that the intention to follow advice obtained in online travel communities depends on factors related to 1) the nature of the advice including usefulness, 2) the source of the advice including trust in the person or community and 3) the personal characteristics of the person obtaining or seeking the advice including susceptibility to interpersonal influence. Senecal & Nantel (2004) have found that online product recommendations greatly influenced the final product choice and especially so for experience-based products. This is supported by findings, that almost 60% of consumers said that UGC had a positive effect on the likelihood of them booking travel related products and services (Compete Incorporated in Cox et al., 2009). Research has also found that reviews are powerful to the travel industry because they drive transactions, by increasing trust and reduce the time it takes to get comfortable with the decision (GP Bullhound, 2012). 84% of review users in the tourism industry found reviews to have a significant influence on their purchase decision (ComScore in Casaló et al., 2010). Here it was also noted that UGC by other travellers was more

influential than content generated by professionals.

When dealing with travel related services, time may pass between purchase and actual **service delivery**; however, these steps may also immediately follow each other. Referring to Motivation to Share in part 3.3 as well as hypothesis stated sharing is most likely to occur while in close proximity to and when highly involved in the product. Combined with the increased use of mobile devices to access the online world this step may be of increasing importance in the purchase process; however, this has not been extensively researched yet.

Post-purchase evaluation of the service is normally found to take place after service consumption, though the above may stipulate the belief that it also increasingly takes place during consumption (Varey, 2002). Regardless of time, the evaluation is, however, important since it is stored as learning and knowledge when it is necessary to search for alternatives should the same need arise in the future (Varey, 2002). In regards to sharing experiences, it is found that initial excitement dissipates over time, (Houston & Rothschild in Dwyer 2007) suggesting that travellers are most likely to share during service delivery and only shortly after the experience. Here the issue of Wi-Fi may be mentioned in that it is not always possible to share or reflect upon experiences in an online context during consumption. Therefore, many might wait with the sharing until they have returned home (GP Bullhound, 2012). Or as a consequence, not get around to sharing. In general, a study shows that 36% of US online adults contribute to R&R, blogs and the like at least once a month (Forrester in Forrester Consulting, 2012).

4 Data Analysis & Discussion

Based on data created and theory reviewed this section will contain and support the data analysis and discussion in regards to the research question and subsequent hypotheses (H"#"") stated. The author is aware that data only represents an empirical reality and is not generalizable to the population as a whole. With this in mind data analysis and discussion only form proposals as to the target field surveyed, not full population.

To gain a further understanding of the target field thus, data and theory will be confronted by briefly giving an introduction to the respondent characteristics (both quantitative and qualitative) and discussing empirical findings in regards to influencers and trust, motivation to share and eWOM's impact on individual travellers' purchase process. To summarise, a table with hypotheses stated in part 3.0 Theoretical Framework and associated verifications will be presented.

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

Basic for further analysis is the understanding of whom the data is based upon. Presented in table 4.1 is, therefore, a summary of respondent characteristics.

Table 4.1: Respondent characteristics in percentages (N=172)

Age	18-25 years	63 %
	26-35 years	37 %
Gender	Female	57 %
	Male	43 %
Residency	Denmark	49 %
	Scandinavia (less Denmark)	5 %
	Europe (less Scandinavia)	30 %
	North America	9 %
	Asia Pacific	6 %
Travel experience*	First time travelling	41 %
	Experienced traveller (more than one time)	55 %
Travel form**	Alone (some point of time)	20 %
	Together (some point of time)	87 %
Travel duration	0-7 days	3 %
	8-14 days	5 %
	15-21 days	22 %
	22-28 days	17 %
	29 days or more	53 %
Social Media Use	Blog	37 %
	Microblogs	22 %
	Social Networks (SN)	95 %
	Social Media Sharing (SM)	78 %
	Social News & Bookmarking	26 %
	Ratings & Review (R&R) Sites	53 %
	Forums	53 %
Online Access*	Travelling with digital device for accessing Internet	69 %
	Not travelling with digital device for accessing Internet	28 %

*People stating “don’t know” has been excluded, hence sum less than 100% **Choose all that apply, hence sum more than 100%

4.1.1.1 Demographics

Based on the responses it is found that majority of respondents are in the age brackets 18-25 and 26-35. The remainder age brackets included five respondents or below and hence to increase statistical reliability these have been excluded from further data calculations. Hereafter the effective sample size is 172 respondents between 18-35 years (which is also the primary target group of VB) and according to the Social Technographics Profile this is also the age group most active on social media and hence most interesting for this study.

An inequality in gender representativeness is observed, which is in line with VB’s normal customer group being around 60% female. It is, however, contrary to mPower’s statistics on arrivals in Thailand where males consist of 63% (PATA, 2012). The observed difference may be due to female respondents’ perception of risk and hence to decrease this perception they use a travel agent and stop by VB’s service office. Verification for H5, association between gender and behaviour will be seen throughout this section and summarised in table 4.13.

4.1.2 Residency

Due to a small number of subjects (mostly less than 5) in each residency category, these have been clustered according to geographical location (table 4.1). The observed skewness of Danish respondents will invariably affect the universal representativeness of results; however, since it is a replica of VB's target group (where majority is from Denmark and Europe), it still forms a useful database for further investigations and understanding of the target field. Also, data on mPower (PATA, 2012) suggests that majority of arrivals is from regional Asia, which is not a target group of VB and the rest is somewhat a replica of the results found in this study with Europe enjoying the second largest representation followed by North America and last the Pacific (PATA, 2012). It must be noted that cultural differences is not a primary focus of this study.

4.1.3 Travel Traits

Referring to table 4.1 three forms of travel traits have been included as background variables and was expected to influence respondents' purchase process and use of eWOM as stated in H2, H3 and H4. Observed associations will be summarised in table 4.13 since verification is discussed throughout this section. Note that travel form may include several answers and hence amount to more than 100% because some respondents travel alone part of the time and with friend(s)/partner part of the time.

A relationship is found between age and travel experience in that respondents who are first time travellers tend to be in the 18-25 age bracket ($\chi^2(1, N=166)=10.78, p<0.001$), while the experienced travellers are more likely to be in the 26-35 age bracket. This seems logical since the likelihood of having travelled before may be presumed to increase proportionally by age. Also in regards to travelling alone or together, an association is found with age ($\chi^2(1, N=172)=11.54, p<0.001$), where those travelling alone enjoy a higher representation in the 26-35-age bracket and people travelling together are majorly in the 18-25-age bracket. Once again, this may refer to risk. When younger and maybe inexperienced it may be preferred to travel together. Lastly, though not as strong as the others, an association is observed between travel form and gender ($\chi^2(1, N=172)=4.32, p<0.038$) in that respondents who are single travellers are more often male. Yet again, this is expected to be due to female travellers feeling more at risk and hence prefer to travel with another person.

4.1.4 Social Media Use

Online and social media platforms are explained in part 3.2 Online Social Context and this will be used as reference point for the remainder of this study. By far the most popular use of social media is SN, where 95% use these and 90% use them at least once a week. This was expected since SN have 1.2 billion users worldwide and nearly one in five minutes spent online is on a SN (ComScore, 2011). Apart from this, only Media Sharing Sites (MS) stands out, which is also not surprising since four billion videos are shown on YouTube every day (YouTube, 2012:2) and was the media used to give Carroll's UA case visibility and since received immense viral effect. MS are used by 78% of respondents and 59% use it weekly.

The majority (69%) is travelling with a digital device to access the Internet, which is contrary to findings highlighted in the theoretical framework that backpackers prefer to leave their smart phone at home. This contradiction may be due to an increase in Wi-Fi access in Asia and use of digital devices in daily life. Hence respondents are also likely to bring these when travelling being the standard contact point to their social worlds. This may also explain why respondents using SN in their daily life are more likely to bring digital devices to access the Internet while travelling ($\chi^2(5, N=168)=19.41, p<0.002$). Also, it appears that the longer respondents are away from home, the more likely they are to bring a digital device to access the Internet ($\chi^2(3, N=168)=13.72, p<0.003$). This is contrary to previous findings where backpackers who are away for a longer period of time prefer to leave their smart phone at home, but may be explained by people being able to logout of their online social life for a couple of weeks (may even be desirable), but not for several months thereby limiting contact to friends and family.

4.1.5 Personas of Qualitative Research

Based on questionnaire findings, three interviews were conducted and each subject naturally had unique traits and behaviours summed up in three "personas":

Felicity, 27, USA – Free & Flexible: A mirror image of a budget backpacker persona constantly keeping an eye on price, but is also obsessed with cleanliness due to a bad experience. Felicity values her freedom and does not like to plan ahead when travelling, but keeping the day open for options. She pays great attention to ambience and meeting other travellers is of great importance to her. Felicity listens to other travellers but always leaves room to change her mind in a short manner of time.

Stephanie, 25, Denmark – Safe & Sound: An experienced backpacker who, nevertheless, prefer to plan ahead with fix points and overall itinerary. She wants to make the most of her time when travelling and prefers to be on safe ground when travelling to new places. Hence she often chooses group tours over freedom and is happy to book in advance if needed. Stephanie listens to others travellers' advice; however, always forms her own opinion.

Isak, 21, Netherlands – Inexperienced & Impassioned: A first time traveller who is unique in that some of his stay in Asia was fixed in one place during a two months study program. Isak has, however, used this as a base for travelling and is very passionate about what he is doing. Furthermore, he is, in his own words, very trusting to other people – sometimes too trusting. Hence he puts great emphasis on other people's advice.

The unique traits of the individual personas naturally lead to observed differences in travel behaviour; however, subjects also to some extent confirm each other in narratives. These communalities plus individual statements will be used to support and fill in gaps in quantitative findings in the remainder of the data analysis and discussion.

4.2 Word-of-Mouth

The questionnaire developed for this study was fairly rigid in its outlay in the sense that response categories were mostly given and no open-ended questions were asked. Nevertheless, terms such as "word-of-mouth", "mouth-to-mouth", "recommendations from friends" and "...talking to other travellers" were often stated in the "other" category when possible and when asking 1) from where people searched for information and 2) what impacted their final decision to purchase. This means that without even asking specifically, respondents still refer to WOM suggesting that it is indeed something they use and are aware of.

The qualitative interviews greatly supports this finding, in that all subjects emphasise their use of WOM recommendations – be it in an online or offline context:

"Oh yeah for sure – I have a friend travelling right now and we are constantly forth and back on Facebook, what we are doing..." – Felicity

In regards to acquiring WOM recommendations she further goes:

“I feel like I’ve had better experiences doing that instead of just reading a book and follow advise. It’s actually been easier to just ask people. More convenient.” – Felicity

Isak confirms the impact and power of WOM by stating:

“For tours, I booked often through Chris (friend and travel organiser, editor) and this was like ‘hey, Chris is organising this new trip do you want come?’ ‘Sure!’ That was usually the amount of research I did” – Isak

The components of WOM including influencers and why surveyed and interviewed individual travellers trust and share will be discussed in the following and summed up in the end on how their use of eWOM impacts their purchase process.

4.3 Influencers & Trust

Individual travellers in this survey not only have unique traits, but the amount of influence they exert over one another and the motivation to trust senders of information and content found online also varies greatly.

It is found that when searching for travel information online, the trust in senders of information differs, ($H(7)=429,52$, $p<0.000$) with a proportionally higher amount of trust in especially friends and family as highlighted in the following table:

Table 4.2: Trust in senders of information when searching for travel information online (N=172)

	Mode	\bar{x}	SD
Friends	“High Degree”	4.22	0.70
Family	“High Degree”	4.14	0.82
Friends of friends	“Average”	3.42	0.85
Journalists	“Average”	3.25	0.89
Travel Agents (TA)	“Average”	3.18	0.89
Peers I share similar interests with, but do not know in person(s)	“Average”	2.92	0.87
Groups of individuals that jointly form an average	“Average”	2.77	0.81
Individuals whom I do not know in person	“Average”	2.52	0.87
Overall Averages		3.30	1.01

Based on literature in part 3.4 Influence and Influencers plus 3.5 Motivation to Trust it was anticipated that strong social ties such as friends and family would be the most trusted source of information, providing support for H16. Not only are people of the belief that strong ties have their best interest at

heart, they also know what strong ties stand for just as strong ties often are aware of individual's preferences, supporting H12:

"If it is my good friend, who I have known forever that says something is cool, then I know that I will think it is cool too because we think the same things are cool (...). When you know each other well then you more or less know what the other will prefer. So of course it is a major advantage to know each other a bit better" – Stephanie

Felicity supports Stephanie emphasising the weight of the recommendation:

"(...) that would definitely weight more, because I obviously know them (friends, editor) better and they know what I like. So I would definitely go for what my friends said" – Felicity

Nevertheless, strong ties are not necessarily the ones people turn to for information in line with H13, but are more likely to turn to weak ties, which in the above may be represented by friends' friends but also friends in general since people may term a person a friend though he does not fulfil the qualities of a strong tie. Here, Isak highlights an important issue, suggesting wariness to trust friends' friends:

"It would help if we had a mutual friend on Facebook. Though knowing you personally... I would trust a person I know a thousand time more than someone who just happens to have a mutual friend. 'Cause everyone has a couple of shady friends now" – Isak

Though people trust socially distant others less, the information they have may be intrinsically more valuable. Thus people interact due to mutual interest and better representation of expertise. As a consequence, existing literature by Forrester (in Adams, 2012) has also found that people use experts, but the degree of trust depends on the relationship. This may aid in understanding why travel agents and journalists are ranked as the most trusted senders of travel information online after actual social ties, hence failing to support H17 and H18. Travel agents and journalists may represent this expertise that respondents need and thus become more impactful. Based on existing literature as specified above and by Litvin et al. (2007) and Adams (2012) these sources may take the role of expert advisers or opinion leaders, where people's knowledge base and relationships affect the amount of trust put into a person and also underscores that respondents search information beyond their immediate circle of reference (strong ties) supporting H13:

“I would listen to people (...) who I feel knows what they are talking about. And in the case of Kilroy² I knew that my sister knew what she was talking about. And if Noom (service guide at New Road Guest House, editor) talks about some trip in Thailand I know that she knows what she is talking about. So I would trust Noom on Thailand advice and my sister on travel agency advice”
– Isak

Stephanie further supports this:

“We talked to Randi from Jysk³, not to have her tell us what to do, but to get some facts and recommendations based on her opinion. She has lived and worked at the destination so I trust that she knows what she is talking about” – Stephanie

Furthermore, social ties and trusted peers may serve as endorser of these sources, here travel agents, and thereby increase level of confidence:

“Kilroy had been recommended to me by people I trust and it all seemed very legitimate (...) People I trust are my sister and her boyfriend” – Isak

The endorsement by Isak’s sister is then the validity stamp for Isak to trust the travel agent and combined the statements serve to support H14 in regards to expert knowledge and H20 on relationship and trust. Furthermore it illustrates that everyone may be influencers but to various extents and dependent on the above, which supports H11.

This does, however, not explain why peers with whom interests are shared and groups of people who jointly form an average are found to be lower than average. These were expected to rank higher in trust in regards to eWOM recommendations (H17) in that these better represent non-commercial sources – an important prerequisite in WOM theory. However, it may be that the transition to eWOM with options for anonymity is also the explainer since people trust sources that cannot be identified less. In other words, respondents do not have an identifiable social tie to these peers and are less likely to have formed a relationship on which to form trust.

² Kilroy is a Northern European travel agent catering for individual travellers and is a prime sales agent of VB

³ Jysk Travel is a Danish travel agent catering for individual travellers and is a prime sales agent of VB

This leads to types of online media on which eWOM transition may take place and it is found that the degree of trust in travel information found on online platforms differ ($H(8)=398.02$ $p<0.000$) as also seen in table 4.3 and supporting H6:

Table 4.3: Trust in travel information found on the stated online media

	Mode	\bar{x}	SD	N*
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (Publishers)	"High Degree"	4.06	0.95	156
Travel agents/tour operators' websites (TA/TO)	"High Degree"	3.96	1.12	154
Rating & Review (R&R) Sites	"Average"	3.56	0.98	142
Travel Blogs	"Average"	3.25	0.90	130
Forums	"Do not use"	3.08	1.07	103
Social Networks (SN)	"Average"	2.94	1.08	136
Media Sharing Sites (MS)	"Do not use"	2.58	1.02	118
Social News & Bookmarking	"Do not use"	2.49	0.99	66
Microblogs	"Do not use"	2.47	0.90	66
<i>Overall Averages</i>		<i>3.05</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>118</i>

*"I never use this type of online media" have been excluded from the calculations; hence N will vary.

Contrary to expectations (H19) publishers/travel professionals' websites (publishers) and travel agents/tour operators' websites (TA/TO) are ranked the highest and above all social media. As previously touched upon one possible explanation for this may be source transparency in that information found on social media today is increasingly blurry in regards to source where everyone can be an influencer and WOMM has to some extent taken over. When respondents think of an online media including all possible originators of information, at least it is clear on the publisher and TA/TO sites who is the source.

Also a study has confirmed that people still trust the so-called "traditional websites" for travel knowledge when planning vacations (Cox et al., 2009). Isak may explain this tendency:

"(...) Because, in the end, the company that earns money by recommending things to people, has to recommend good things to people to stay in business, so that adds to the reliability." – Isak

He has the same note in regards to publishers, such as Lonely Planet:

"(...) once again, these are people (...) who's income depends on providing reliable information or not" – Isak

Considering that people often search for information beyond their strong ties and that existing research generally has found a high amount of trust in peer generated online reviews it was expected

that especially R&R sites would rank higher than trust in TA/TO. When looking at table 4.2 this is, however, not the case but the table must be read with caution in that a test comparing the means do not support a significant difference between the two variables ($t(172)=1.71$, $p=0.088$). Further, R&R sites also enjoys the highest mean of the social media when it comes to trust in travel information found at the media and since trust is a prerequisite for knowledge sharing to take place this is of essential importance.

It is observed that the social medias enjoying the highest means in regards to trust in content tend to be dominated by platforms that may be narrowly focused on travelling and where content/interest, not social ties and communication, is in focus. In this sense R&R, blogs and forums may all be very closely related to travel specific ties (peers with whom interest is shared, not social ties) whereas SN cover all aspects of respondents' lives (social ties) and travel information is not necessarily at the core. This may also impact the perceived amount of trust in the platform for obtaining travel information specifically.

In regards to trust in content on online media, the amount of trust in travel agents versus TA/TO ($r(153)=0.57$, $p<0.000$) and travel journalists versus publishers ($r(155)=0.46$, $p<0.000$) were the only significant relationships identified. Hence, there seems to be a missing link between trust in social ties and peers (not travel agents or journalists) and social media on which these may be found thereby only partly supporting H23. For example, trust in friends and family did not correlate with trust in travel information on SN just as trust in peers that jointly form a group did not correlate with trust in content found on R&R sites. This may, however, partly be explained by the previously stated lack of source transparency and in line with existing theory it may be proposed that people form trust towards the actual source of information (the actual person or community) rather than the website/platform itself.

Online media do, however, still represent sources and/or communities that are connected to them – including the presence or lack of source transparency. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that it still is online media that serve as the tools on which travellers obtain information, regardless of the source. With this in mind the level of trust in content found on individual online media was compared to the amount of search for information on correlating online media as well as impact of content found on the individual online media's impact on the purchase decision. All these relationships seemed to correlate (correlation coefficient from $r(170)=.41$ to $p<0.000$ and $r(170)=.75$, $p<0.000$),

suggesting that the level of trust in content found on individual online media also seems to mirror both level of use for information search and content's impact on purchase decision, supporting H24.

Considering existing research by Casaló et al. (2010) this seems reasonable to expect since it takes time to trust media and individual sources or communities and the more people use it, the more confidence and trust they will get in the media. Stephanie confirms this tendency when she, based on habit and recognisability, use HostelWorld⁴ for investigating and purchasing ACC:

"(...) I like to go on HostelWorld, because I think that when you have started using something, you know the procedure" – Stephanie

An interesting observation is that respondents who travel alone at some point during their journey tend to trust content found on TA/TOs' websites less than those not travelling alone at some point in time ($\chi^2(2, N=154)=11.45, p<0.003$). The observation remains unexplained; however, it may be that since single travellers surveyed also tend to be more experienced travellers, they are more integrated in travel communities and hence more prone to meet and speak to other travellers, thereby increasing reliability on these instead of TA/TO. This would also partly explain why travel experience is found to impact level of trust in strangers (at least when investigating travel related information). In due case, respondents who were first time travellers were found to trust "Peers I share similar interests with, but do not know in person" ($\chi^2(2, N=166)=16.01, p<0.000$) and "Individuals whom I do not know in person" ($\chi^2(2, N=166)=6.61, p<0.037$) less than experienced travellers though the last category is less significant. Felicity matches the category of experienced travellers and explains:

"(...) would anybody really want to steer you wrong? I am not going to post anything on the Internet about awful places and say it was amazing. I feel very trustworthy when it comes to backpackers. We all have the same kind of idea of what we want to (...) Like a bond" – Felicity

By this statement, Felicity also points to another important consideration that was observed across all interview subjects and confirmed in literature thereby supporting H15 – that people are homophile and, therefore, importance of being able to identify self with the trusted sources of information. Especially Stephanie highlights this concern:

⁴ HostelWorld.com is an online travel agent and booking platform for hostels, which incorporates elements of user generated content such as overall ratings and personal reviews

“If it is someone I think I do not have much in common with, I tend to put more emphasis on the facts (...) and tend to judge people on how I think they are from the way they are writing (...) Because most often it is pretty subjective what it says (...). Hence I do not use their judgement as such, it is more to get some information I couldn’t find in a brochure or the like” – Stephanie

Combined with source transparency, this consideration may then be one possible factor in explaining the amount of trust put into R&R where the overall ratings are reflective of many individuals combined and the reviews are based on single identifiable individuals. Hence, it may aid in explaining the low mean value of the information source “groups of individuals that jointly form an average”, which is further supported by the following:

“(...) I imagine someone actually reads the reviews and do not just look at the number of stars. So it is not always the number of stars or the points show the full truth, but then the text you write will be more exact” – Stephanie

To sum up, respondents were found to trust social ties online the most; followed by experts such as travel agents and journalists, which highlights the issue of relationship, expert advice and source transparency as well as people being homophile. Furthermore, it seems it is the source, not the platform the respondents form trust towards suggesting that the online context is just the enabler of WOM. However, the more trust respondents have in the various media, the more likely they seem to use these for information search and the more likely content found is to impact their final decision to purchase (and vice versa).

4.4 Motivation to share

As highlighted with the Social Technographics Profile the way and extent to which people share varies greatly, which is also found to be the case for individual travellers in this survey. A very plausible explanation is highlighted by Felicity:

“I don’t normally post anything (reviews, editor) on for example Yelp – it’s too much effort” – Felicity

Therefore, it was also expected (H7) that the level to which respondents reported sharing (or the lack thereof) would vary as seen in table 4.4:

Table 4.4: If and when respondents normally share content online (N=172)

	Accommodation (Percentages)	Tours/Activities (Percentages)
Upon Purchase	5%	5%
After purchase, but before check-in / beginning the tour/activity (T/A)	4%	6%
While I am actually staying at my accommodation / on the tour/activity	28%	13%
After having checked-out of my accommodation / finished the tour/activity	28%	53%
I do not share this information online	48%	39%
<i>Total*</i>	<i>113%</i>	<i>116%</i>

**Note: choose all applicable, hence sum to more than 100%*

As stated, it appears that there is a difference in how much and when, respondents share information online in regards to ACC and T/A. As observed, the mode for ACC is “I do not share this information online, while for T/A it is “After having finished the tour/activity”. However, this is also the only significant time where respondents share for T/A, whereas for ACC respondents are most likely to share while being at the accommodation or after they have checked out. This majorly supports H26 and is also confirmed by theory (Belk in Bone, 1992 and Dichter, 1966) that consumers need to be in close proximity to the experience or having been highly involved in the experience before forming an opinion. Contrary, initial excitement dissipates over time suggesting that the sharing “after” takes place relatively soon after having been in contact with the service. This is also confirmed by Felicity:

“I mostly forget the names on stuff and places I stay. I haven’t been keeping a story line on what I have been doing” – Felicity

It is found that respondents who bring digital devices to access the Internet are more likely to share than those who do not bring, which is the case for both ACC ($\chi^2(1, N=168)=9.51, p<0.002$) and T/A ($\chi^2(1, N=168)=6.68, p<0.010$) thereby supporting H9. Further, respondents bringing digital devices to access the Internet are more likely to share when they are actually at their accommodation and those who do not bring are less likely to share ($\chi^2(1, N=168)=14.12, p<0.002$). Considering the easy and convenient online access with mobile devices this seems expectable as confirmed by Isak:

“I post whenever I feel like posting something on Facebook (...) just depending on when there is a computer handy” – Isak

Stephanie uses her smart phone to communicate her travelling on the go:

“I (...) always make a statement if I am somewhere – status, pictures or check-in. There are many ways to show that you are at a given place” – Stephanie

When looking into why the respondents want to share information online table 4.5 shows that by far the majority share to keep friends and family updated:

Table 4.5: Why respondents want to share content online (N=172)	Percentages
To keep friends and family updated on my travel experiences	87%
For the enjoyment of helping other travellers	41%
To give something back to someone who already has or might help me	30%
I want to help the travel company with constructive feedback	16%
I want to help promote the travel company	8%
To be part of an online travel community	7%
If I receive a reward for sharing	6%
I want to harm the image of a travel company due to a bad experience	6%
It is my obligation to help other travellers	5%
To be perceived/build reputation as a travel expert	3%
<i>Total*</i>	<i>217%</i>

**Note: choose all applicable, hence sum to more than 100%*

This supports H25 and is in line with existing literature that travellers increasingly share to stay connected despite geographical distance as well as a general desire for social interactions and benefits. More specifically it is found that female respondents are more likely to share to keep friends and family updated than are males ($\chi^2(1, N=172)=9.08$, $p<0.003$), which is also in line with theoretical findings that women mostly share to form social bonds.

In addition to keep social network updated, it appears that altruistic motives (enjoyment of helping others) and reciprocity (to give something back to someone who has already helped) is the main drivers (also supporting H25). It should be noted that 16% have stated that they want to help a company with constructive feedback. This suggests that they care when for example writing reviews and (at least here) state that it is to a lesser extent to offset anger due to a bad treatment as seen in Carroll's UA case (only 6% have stated that they would share information to harm a company). There is found no significant variance between sharing by first time travellers and experienced travellers though "I want to help the travel company with constructive feedback" were stated as reason by 10% of first time travellers held against 19% for experiences travellers. Both results may be supported by findings in theory that more people share to help than harm, which Stephanie supports:

"I share so others do not end in the same situation (...) I do not write something non-constructive but mention what did not live up to expectations and why" – Stephanie

Stephanie then, being an experienced traveller, give back to travel company as well as community in a constructive manner based on reciprocity and travel experience.

Lastly, theory states that mostly, people share out of reputation management though maybe not aware of it. Not being aware of it seems also to be the case based on data obtained from the questionnaire; however, Felicity confirms that this is one of the reasons she shares:

“(...) I do have some friends who are travelling soon and (...) they seek my opinion and I really feel like a world traveller in the sense where they have never done it. So when they ask questions it feels pretty good. Yeah, I’ve been there, done that” – Felicity

An interesting finding is that the reasons for wanting to share content online are found to vary based on travel form. It is found that respondents travelling alone at some point during their journey are more likely to share to give back to someone who has already helped ($\chi^2(1, N=172)=11.02$, $p<0.001$) and for the enjoyment of helping others ($\chi^2(1, N=172)=4.04$, $p<0.044$), though less significant. There are no obvious theoretical explanations for this; however, it may be expected that single travellers have a larger need for getting in contact with other travellers and hence also increasingly exchange travel related information (both offline and online). Especially online these connections are maintained through Facebook (being a SN), where information is exchanged:

“I have many (connections, editor) on Facebook I have met while travelling this way (alone, editor) (...) Maybe not the best of friends but maintain some contact because you are able to help each other and get some good advice” – Stephanie

When it comes to the experiences shared it is found that respondents are motivated to share certain experiences more than others ($H(7)=160.77$, $p<0.000$) as seen in table 4.6:

Table 4.6: Experiences that motives respondents to share online (N=172)

	Mode	\bar{x}	SD
Extraordinary – beyond the ordinary	“Very high”	3.74	1.33
Great – just what I expected	“Average”	3.01	1.30
Developing community with fellow travellers with local culture and people	“Average”	2.93	1.33
Challenging my personal boundaries and abilities	“High	2.90	1.39
Extremely negative – below acceptable	“Very low”	2.80	1.45
Challenging my initial beliefs	“Average”	2.71	1.27
Negative – compared to expectations	“Very low”	2.25	1.19
Somewhat average	“Average”	2.07	0.96
Overall Averages		2.80	1.37

Aligned with theory by Bone (1992) it is found that respondents are more motivated to share experiences that exceed their initial expectations and the somewhat average experience is the least motivating, which partly supports H27. Also, it is in line with theoretical findings by Fay in Adams (2012) and Bronner & de Hoog (2011) in that the respondents are found to be more motivated to share positive than negative experience (supporting H28). The following statements exemplify excitement as an explanation of positive versus negative sharing:

“(...) if people asked me for advice I would be really enthusiastic (...) and I would be sure to send lots of good information and inform them about every good experience I had. And the bad ones! Though I find that positive recommendations are easier” – Isak

Isak elaborates further on the good versus bad experiences:

“If they (companies, editor) are bad they would probably be changing their name now and then. Positive experiences are more reliable I think.” – Isak

Furthermore, Stephanie emphasises the motivation to share extraordinary versus average experiences (which also partly supports H26 on time of sharing)

“If it has been a really cool place, or really exceeded expectations compared to for example price, I review right after ‘cause I think they should have that praise (...) if it’s been average it is not always that I gets around to reviewing it and if so I usually do not write, only give stars” – Stephanie

It also appears that respondents are quite willing to share personal experiences such as feelings of community and challenges of self since both enjoy means above average. This may be aligned with primarily intrinsic motivations found in theory such as self-achievement, general interest and pleasure in disseminating information. Furthermore, it is found that female respondents are more likely to share extraordinary experiences than males ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=19.60$, $p<0.001$) as well as experiences that develop community ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=11.08$, $p<0.026$). The sharing of personal experiences and community feelings is for example evident from Felicity’s travel experience:

“The trekking I did in Chiang Mai, it was soooo good! Really hard, but one of the best experiences I have ever had. Seriously scary, hard and a lot of work, but met the most amazing people. Anytime people go to Chiang Mai I always recommend them to go on this tour” – Felicity

When looking into the social media respondents use for sharing (table 4.7), it appears that this does not match the social media they use for information search, but partly correlates with everyday use (correlation coefficient from $r(170)=.34$, $p<0.000$ to $r(170)=.53$, $p<0.000$), hence provide some support for H22 in regards to WOM sharing in the purchase process.

Table 4.7: Social media respondents use for sharing information when travelling (N=172)

	Mode	\bar{x}	SD
Social Networks (SN)	“Very high”	3.18	1.78
Rating & Review (R&R) Sites	“Do not use”	1.38	1.62
Travel Blogs	“Do not use”	1.19	1.48
Forums	“Do not use”	0.92	1.28
Media Sharing Sites (MS)	“Do not use”	0.87	1.10
Microblogs	“Do not use”	0.66	1.01
Social News & Bookmarking	“Do not use”	0.57	0.92
Overall Averages		1.25	1.58

Considering normal use as well as why respondents share (to keep friends and family updated) it is not surprising that SN are ranked with the highest mean. Actually it seems to be in line with respondents who share to keep friends and family updated also are more likely to use SN ($\chi^2(2, N=152)=26.32$, $p<0.000$) highlighting the emphasis on social ties on SN. This may also explain why female respondents are found to be more likely to use SN (share based on social needs) to share than are males ($\chi^2(5, N=172)=19.98$, $p<0.001$).

It is also found respondents use SN to share ACC information while actually at the accommodation ($\chi^2(2, N=152)=16.40$, $p<0.000$) and T/A when having finished the tour ($\chi^2(1, N=152)=10.29$, $p<0.006$). Contrary to expectation, there was found no significant relation between people sharing ACC information and the use of R&R sites. One plausible explanation may be that booking sites increasingly take over this function, by incorporating social elements on their websites, here the option to R&R. For example, Stephanie reviews when she has stayed somewhere but instead of doing it at an independent R&R site, she does it at the site on which she has booked the ACC:

“When I have booked hotels through Agoda⁵ or hostels through HostelWorld I always review them. They keep sending these emails and in the end I think ‘Okay, I do it’” – Stephanie

To summarize, travellers in this survey are found to share to various extent, but majorly when in close proximity to the experience. They share for different reasons but especially based on social needs to keep friends and family updated as well as motivators of altruism and reciprocity. Mostly, positive and personal experiences are shared and it majorly takes place on SN underscoring the social needs.

4.5 Electronic Word-of-Mouth and its Impact on the Purchase process

Free individual travellers are, as the words suggests, independent by nature, curious and often eager to maintain freedom when travelling. In this sense, they often only book one night or a couple of nights at a new destination and book and purchase the rest while on the go. Thereby, the purchase process becomes a constant process during the course of the journey, where previous learning as well as the learning of others constantly impacts the next decision. All this has already been discussed in section 3.0 Theoretical Framework and based on the empirical data, findings in regards to impact of eWOM on this process will be discussed in the following with traces back to influencers, trust and sharing.

4.5.1 Awareness & Investigation

Travellers have a wide range of sources from where they may become aware of and search for additional travel related information to investigate further. Often these are hard to separate and it may be hard for travellers to identify what exactly made them aware of either a need or a possible solution to a need (for example a recommendation of a tour). It has not been the aim of this study to identify when or from where the awareness stems, but more in general from where individual travellers get and evaluate information and how this impacts the purchase process. Being a connected circle, this also goes for post-purchase evaluation, which may lead to learning and awareness in subsequent processes – for self and others.

In part 4.2 Word-of-Mouth, Felicity stated that she and a travelling friend are constantly exchanging knowledge forth and back through Facebook while travelling. This highlights in particular the constant

⁵ Similar to Hostelworld.com, Agoda is an online travel agent and booking platform for hotels, which incorporates elements of user generated content such as overall ratings and personal reviews

information exchange that takes place and underscores that both awareness and information may arise from random conversations online. Furthermore, the online world has made available an immense amount of information and social media may help in sorting through this information since people tend to trust non-commercial sources. The filter function is explained by Stephanie using R&R and Felicity using CouchSurfing⁶:

“I use it a lot in new cities with a huge amount of choices – a filter so to say” – Stephanie

“I am on CouchSurfing and then check up to see what people are up to around here or good stuff on what they are doing or places to go. I keep up a lot with that (...)” – Felicity

When looking into data gathered in regards to respondents’ information search a disparity is identified when it comes to the point in time that respondents start searching for travel related information. However, the majority (68% and 63% respectively) search for information on ACC and T/A before departure and almost all respondents (97% and 95% respectively) search for travel related information online at some point, supporting H1. Though not a significant difference, it is noticeable that respondents start earlier searching for information in regards to ACC and that T/A is slightly more researched on the go than ACC as seen in table 4.8:

Table 4.8: Point in time respondents search for travel related content online (N=172)

	Accommodation (Percentages)	Tours/Activities (Percentages)
6 months before departure	10%	6%
3-5 months before departure	17%	8%
1-2 months before departure	20%	25%
Less than one month before departure	21%	24%
After departure while on the go	28%	32%
I don’t search for travel information online	3%	5%
Total	100%	100%

This is generally in line with theory. Travelling entails the purchase of services normally characterised as being high-involvement purchases partly due to risk but especially out of interest. As a consequence travellers may also be more interested in obtaining information to make the best decision and often use the online world to search for information:

⁶ CouchSurfing is an online community connecting locals and travellers based on free accommodation

“I did a lot of research before going to Taiwan (...) I researched extensively and made a huge database of everything I could and wanted to do – Isak

“I google everything. If I find a place I would save it and google it. I save everything to my notes on my phone (...) Place’s I’ve been, places I want to go” – Felicity

An interesting finding is an association between gender and travel information search in that female respondents seem to start earlier than males, who contrarily search more while on the go. This is the case for both ACC ($\chi^2(5, N=172)=20.48$, $p<0.001$) and T/A ($\chi^2(5, N=172)=12.69$, $p<0.026$). The reason for this remains unknown; however, it may be that females perceive a higher risk when travelling and hence seek to limit this earlier in the process than males.

Maybe not surprisingly, it is found that respondents who are away for 29 days or more are more likely to search travel related information while on the go for both ACC ($\chi^2(6, N=172)=30.05$, $p<0.000$) and T/A ($\chi^2(6, N=172)=17.93$, $p<0.006$), while those being away for less are more likely to search before departure. This makes sense since travellers want to make the most of limited time and hence plan in advance to avoid something of interest being sold out or do not want to spend vacation time researching information:

“Especially for short trips when time is an issue and I want to see as much as possible, the trip will be planned in detail. If I am travelling for a month I would book flights and make an overall travel plan – and then allow for being spontaneous within this framework” – Stephanie

The online media identified on which the respondents search for information also varies greatly for both ACC ($H(8)=335.63$, $p<0.000$) and T/A ($H(8)=364.24$, $p<0.000$) and it seems that respondents still find inspiration at the so-called “traditional sites” such as publishers and TA/TO, though R&R sites are listed just after as seen in table 4.9. Not surprisingly, R&R sites are especially used for ACC ($t(342)=2.31$, $p<0.022$) where this type of site is especially prominent, as compared to T/A:

Table 4.9: Degree to which stated media is used to search travel related information online (N=172)

	Accommodation		Tours/Activities	
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (Publishers)	3.17	1.69	3.21	1.62
Travel agents/tour operators' websites (TA/TO)	2.73	1.69	2.98	1.65
Rating & Review (R&R) Sites	2.58	1.79	2.15	1.66
Social Networks (SN)	1.76	1.55	1.60	1.38
Travel Blogs	1.74	1.64	1.55	1.58
Forums	1.55	1.69	1.46	1.57
Media Sharing Sites (MS)	1.15	1.32	1.15	1.26
Social News & Bookmarking	0.72	1.21	0.72	1.20
Microblogs	0.54	0.91	0.54	0.95
Overall Averages	1.77	1.74	1.70	1.69

A plausible explanation for the above is the extensive information found on traditional sites:

"...(I, editor) use travel agents' websites as starting point to gain an initial understanding of the country, its highlights, travel routes and possible tours. Then add my own touch within these frames (...)" – Stephanie

Also, as found in theory, traditional sites increasingly incorporate social elements and UGC into their websites such as forums on Lonely Planet and reviews on travel agent sites, which helps in increasing trust in content based on the endorsement by non-commercial sources. Furthermore, traditional sites represent expert knowledge, which as previously underscored is also important for trust.

In regards to R&R these are in several studies and reports found to be an important information source for travellers supported already by Stephanie, but also by Felicity:

"I use HostelWorld all the time, just to look at places and price ranges, but I never book, just look percentages on cleanliness and so on – Felicity

Hence both mention HostelWorld as a source and explain that this is due to R&R and especially the perception that people here are more like themselves, which is found to be important for forming trust. Nevertheless, it must be mentioned that R&R may come from all kinds of sources, as they are normally strong in search engine results:

"(...) but I don't necessarily look for reviews, it just happens when I google it" – Felicity

In regards to use of SN to search for information all interview subjects confirm the interaction with both strong and weak social ties through here and underscore that they use SN to ask on Facebook:

“I am going to Thailand in January, does anyone have ideas on what not to miss?’ or if I see that someone has shared pictures from a place in the world where I am going, I might ask ‘oh, but was it cool there and are there something that was better than other things and what can you recommend’?” – Stephanie

“If I knew people who had been at a destination beforehand I would definitely ask them on Facebook for recommendations” – Isak

This leads to the normal use of social media versus the use of these for travel information search.

Here, some correlation was found; however, the relationships were often close to the 0.3 significance level or even below it as seen in table 4.10:

Table 4.10: Correlation between everyday use of social media and social media used for travel information (N=172)

	Accommodation	Tours/Activities
Forums	$r(170)=.47, p<0.000$	$r(170)=.49, p<0.000$
Rating & Review (R&R) Sites	$r(170)=.43, p<0.000$	$r(170)=.47, p<0.000$
News & Bookmarking	$r(170)=.41, p<0.000$	$r(170)=.46, p<0.000$
Microblogs	$r(170)=.40, p<0.000$	$r(170)=.46, p<0.000$
Media Sharing (MS)	$r(170)=.34, p<0.000$	$r(170)=.30, p<0.000$
Social Networks (SN)	$r(170)=.33, p<0.000$	$r(170)=.27, p<0.000$
Blogs	$r(170)=.15, p<0.000$	$r(170)=.18, p<0.000$

Hence, every day social media use is not found to be a reliable predictor of which social media sources respondents pursue to obtain travel information, thereby only partly supporting H22. There is, however, significant relationships identified, but looking closer into individual charts it becomes clear that 1) the social media respondents use a lot (MS and SN) is significant ($r>0.3$); however, only just, which suggests a relatively weaker correlation, 2) the social media respondents use, but only rarely (forums and R&R sites) seem to be the most strongly correlated; however, this just reveals that respondents use this to a lesser extent and this also correlates with little use of these media for travel information search, 3) the media that respondents almost do not use (News & Bookmarking and Microblogs) is rarely used in general and hence also for travel information search, and 4) that the use of blogs is not correlated at all with search for travel information. The latter may be due to

respondents not having personal blogs and only use these to read when specific information is needed (and Google directs):

“I do not have a blog (...) but I sometimes use others’. But mostly by coincidence via Google. For example if there is a national park I want to know more about” – Stephanie

In regards to SN and MS, being the most used, this may tell that respondents strongly use these but not necessarily nor specifically for travel information search only. Especially for SN this may be due to its DNA as being formed around social ties, not interest. So though respondents actually use the site to exchange information it is not the first thing that comes to mind when asked and hence it is likely to be reflected in data gathered.

Summarizing the above it was found that majority of individual travellers surveyed search for travel information before departure and those having less time start searching earlier for information presumably to make the most of their travel time. Also most respondents search online at some point in time highlighting that services are high-involvement and perceived risky purchases. In this sense obtaining travel information online serves as a filter and is primarily searched on traditional sites followed by R&R sites. Yet again this highlights the role of expert advisers just as the traditional sites increasingly integrate social elements to increase trust. Lastly, SN is highly used to getting recommendations from social ties as highlighted by interview subjects.

4.5.2 Purchase

With the increasingly connected world and last minute offers, individual travellers have easy access to book travel related services whenever it fits into their individual framing and often while being on the go. As a consequence the point in time when travellers in this survey chose to book or purchase their ACC or T/A varies greatly; also the two types of services in between. Furthermore, what and who impacts the decision also seems to vary.

Data shows that respondents are more likely to purchase ACC before departure (71%) as compared to T/A (49%). Contrary this also means that more than half (51%) of the respondents majorly purchase their T/A after departure, which is seen in table 4.11:

Table 4.11: Point in time respondents normally purchase travel related products online or offline (N=172)

	Accommodation (Percentages)	Tours/Activities (Percentages)
6 months before departure	8%	4%
3-5 months before departure	19%	13%
1-2 months before departure	23%	17%
Less than one month before departure	24%	16%
After departure while on the go	27%	51%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>100%</i>

The tendency to search for ACC before departure may partly be explained by risk and is also supported by interview subjects, here represented by Stephanie:

“I have tried to arrive somewhere at 04 in the morning and going to find somewhere to sleep – and that is seriously not fun! After having tried this, then when I get to larger cities I book in advance” – Stephanie

In regards to T/A interview subjects, however, mostly book after departure:

“Probably, I would just google (...) I would browse a little, but I probably wouldn’t do anything it said in there anyway. I would wait till I get there” – Felicity

A correlation is found between the point in time respondents start searching for travel information online and the point in time they actually purchase (ACC: $r(167)=.69$, $p<0.000$ and T/A: $r(164)=.63$, $p<0.000$) suggesting that when respondents search for information it is also a good predictor of actual purchase. This is in line with theory that when travellers search for R&R they are at an advanced stage in the purchase process. Further, as stated previously respondents who are away for 29 days or more mostly search for information on the go and in line with this, findings reveal that these are also more likely to purchase while on the go for both ACC ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=21.17$, $p<0.003$) and T/A ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=14.39$, $p<0.006$). This has already been explained in part 4.5.1 Awareness & Investigation and seems to be valid for both search and purchase based on the correlation identified.

Exploring data further it appears that there is an association between respondents’ travel experience and point in time for purchasing both ACC ($\chi^2(4, N=166)=16.49$, $p<0.002$) and T/A ($\chi^2(4, N=166)=15.52$, $p<0.004$). A closer look at the cross tabulations reveals that the first time travellers tend to buy ACC earlier (mode: “3-6 months” before departure”, 28,1% of subjects) than the experienced travellers (mode: “after departure, while on the go”, 33,7% of subjects). However, for T/A both have their mode

at “after departure while on the go” but for experienced travellers the mode represents more than half of the sample population (57.9% versus 39.4% for inexperienced travellers) suggesting that respondents who are first time travellers buy more beforehand. One possible explanation for this is the increased risk that inexperienced travellers may perceive since they are leaping into a novel experience of being an individual traveller. Knowing beforehand where they are staying and what they will be doing may be one way of decreasing perceived risk. This is also supported by findings in the qualitative interviews where Isak, being the novel traveller had purchased his ACC and T/A in Thailand in advance. Felicity on the other hand pre-purchase as little as possible:

“(...) I would not book it (ACC, editor) online. I would still leave room in case I changed my mind ‘cause obviously, I am going by strangers’ recommendations. So I would get there, check it out and stay if I liked it” – Felicity

Stephanie being experienced, however, prefers to be on the safe side, acts in between:

“I now have knowledge in regards to Asia, (...), but in South America, I do not know how it works. And then I would probably join a pre-arranged tour to feel more secure” – Stephanie

Somehow surprisingly, it must be noted that no correlation is found between travelling with digital devices and neither information search, nor point in time of purchase. It was expected that travellers with digital devices would increasingly search and purchase on the go (H8), but one very likely explanation may be due to travellers not yet relying on Wi-Fi abroad. Stephanie also flags this issue:

“When on the go, I use iPhone apps from Agoda and HostelWorld to book – but only in countries where I know there is Wi-Fi. Otherwise I would probably book in advance” – Stephanie

Looking further into content found on various online media and its impact on the final purchase decision, a great difference is found (ACC: $H(8)=358.36$, $p<0.000$ and T/A: $H(8)=426.72$, $p<0.000$) among the online media as shown in table 4.12:

Table 4.12: Degree to which stated online media's content influence final decision to purchase (N=172)

	Accommodation		Tours/Activities	
	\bar{x}	SD	\bar{x}	SD
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (Publishers)	3.24	1.61	3.43	1.53
Travel agents/tour operators' websites (TA/TO)	2.97	1.53	3.26	1.45
Rating & Review (R&R) Sites	2.69	1.72	2.64	1.65
Travel Blogs	1.87	1.61	1.94	1.61
Social Networks (SN)	1.84	1.43	1.83	1.45
Forums	1.69	1.66	1.63	1.60
Media Sharing Sites (MS)	1.26	1.19	1.38	1.30
Social News & Bookmarking	0.81	1.20	0.72	1.12
Microblogs	0.78	1.14	0.77	1.06
Overall Averages	1.91	1.69	1.95	1.70

Supported by the mean it is found that the content present on traditional media, publishers and TA/TO, remain the most impactful on the final decision to purchase. This is, however, followed closely by R&R sites topping the list of social media for both ACC and T/A. Being primarily used for ACC and not T/A it is interesting that content on R&R sites still has a large impact on the purchase decision on the latter. This may highlight a need among travellers surveyed to have more access to these since T/A are to a large extent intangible and R&R may be an effective way to increase confidence in a specific T/A and thereby convince the traveller to purchase. Furthermore, there is found no significant difference between the means for ACC and T/A, which is contrary to the level respondents use the online media to search for information as highlighted in part 4.5.1 Awareness & Investigation. Stephanie, who states that she uses R&R a lot for ACC, but not so much for T/A, supports this finding:

"(I, editor) look at what others have rated in regards to accommodation, but not so much for tours. (...) I have for example seen that TripAdvisor has it, but then it is a tour offered by many different suppliers and it is not always obvious if it is the best supplier they have chosen." – Stephanie

This also supports the above statement in regards to T/A reviews, that R&R on these sites may be more specific and enjoy a larger priority from suppliers/middle men in order to become an effective tool for travellers.

When looking closer into the online media used to search for information and the online media where content impacts respondents' purchase decisions, a relatively strong correlation above 0.5 was found for all types of media and for both ACC and T/A (range from $r(170)=.54$, $p<0.000$ to $r(170)=.71$, $p<0.000$). This suggests that the more respondents use a given online media to search for information,

the more likely content is to impact their purchase decision or vice versa, which supports H30 and partly H10. An interesting exception, however, is the use of R&R sites for T/A since the impact content on these have on respondents' purchasing decision is stronger than the extent to which they use these for information search ($t(342)=2.76$, $p<0.006$). As highlighted earlier by Stephanie this seems to be contrary to other findings and leaves room for further research and may highlight a potential need among travellers.

More specifically in regards to eWOM recommendations it was expected that trust in senders of information would match online media where these sources are found (for example that trust in friends would correlate with content on SNs' impact on the purchase decision). However, the only significant relationship where source was found to correlate with content on online media was trust in travel agents and impact of content found on TA/TO (ACC: $r(150)=.53$, $p<0.000$, T/A: $r(156)=.49$, $p<0.000$) suggesting that the more respondents trust travel agents the more the content found on their website, impact respondents' purchasing decision. Why this is not the case for the remainder may be due to uncertainty in regards to source identity.

On the recommendation (or the lack of) from other people and the influence on the purchase decision it has already been underscored that interview subject greatly react upon WOM recommendations (H10), but impact naturally depend on strength of the tie (if any). For example if travellers book one night accommodation only as is the case for Felicity or a full week as is the case for Isak. Stephanie highlights the ambiguity and the many factors involved in recommendations online:

"It does have influence, but if it specifically could make me do something or keep me away from it, I do not think so. But it is all the little things that does it" – Stephanie

One last factor in regards to eWOM's impact on the purchasing decision, Stephanie highlights the impression of positive versus negative recommendations online:

"There is always one or two, regardless how good you are, who will be negative about something – bad service or the like. And if there are for example 200 ratings and three are negative, then it escapes my notice. But if you find that the first 50 is just people who have found bugs, I will be more put off. But if the majority holds a particular opinion then I think it there might be something on it – Stephanie

In other words, Stephanie expects negative feedback and aligned with theory it may add to reliability, thereby failing to support H21. Furthermore, as stated earlier, respondents tend to form their own subjective opinions based on perceived similarity to reviewer.

To summarise, it was found that the travel information search (both time and type of online media) is a good indicator as to the actual purchase time and decision and yet again highlights the impact of traditional sources and R&R. ACC is primarily purchased before departure while T/A is primarily purchased on the go; however, travel traits impacts this since respondents who are away for 29 days or more as well as respondents who are experienced travellers majorly purchase on the go.

4.5.3 Delivery

The actual point in time when the service is delivered is included as a separate step since the rise in travelling with mobile devices and access to Wi-Fi now often lets travellers share information online while actually being at a given ACC choice and/or at a T/A.

It is found that those who share while they are at the ACC are most likely to share experiences, which are extraordinary ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=11.50, p<0.021$) supporting previous findings and statements in part 4.4 Motivation to Share and highlighting that people are more motivated to share experiences that exceeds their expectations and more likely to share when in close proximity to the experience:

“If the place I have been where it was really, really cool, I do it (review, editor) pretty fast, because I think they should have that praise” – Stephanie

For T/A the strongest significance was found between being on the tour and experiences that challenge initial beliefs ($\chi^2(2, N=172)=8.2, p<0.017$), though it must be mentioned that the number of respondents sharing during tours is only observed to be N=22 suggesting that respondents are, however, not very likely to share while at the T/A. Most likely focus here is on the actual experience and respondents share after having finished instead.

4.5.4 Post-Purchase Evaluation

It is found that some respondents (28%) share after having left their ACC and especially after having finished their T/A (53%) as seen in table 4.4. More specifically it is found that those who share after

having stayed at their ACC are greatly doing so for the enjoyment of helping other travellers ($\chi^2(1, N=172)=18.60$, $p<0.000$). No other significant relationships were identified. Stephanie explains that she often share extremely positive experiences to:

“(...) urge others to go a place to get a good experience” – Stephanie

Also, there seems to be an association between sharing after having checked out of a given ACC and the willingness to share experiences that are great ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=10.22$, $p<0.037$), negative ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=16.43$, $p<0.002$) and extremely negative ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=15.00$, $p<0.005$). Surprisingly, it is not found for extraordinary experiences, but it may be that these experiences are shared while actually at the ACC instead, as specified above. Apart from this, it is in line with theory that travellers need motivation to share and average experiences do not motivate. This has been further explained in part 4.4 Motivation to Share.

For T/A sharing after having finished is positively associated with experiences that are great ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=33.33$, $p<0.000$), extremely negative ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=11.55$, $p<0.021$), challenge initial beliefs ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=22.96$, $p<0.000$), develop community ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=30.60$, $p<0.000$) and experiences that challenge personal boundaries ($\chi^2(4, N=172)=28.09$, $p<0.000$). In other words, this seems to be strongly correlated with personal experiences and changes/challenges rather than the experience itself being positive or negative (unless it is great or extremely negative compared to expectations). Felicity's statement in part 4.4 on trekking in Chiang Mai also seems to support this and may be due to the nature of T/A services where the traveller is part of the experience, hence if memorable also triggers something inside that person and motivates him or her to share it.

Post-purchase evaluation not only benefits other travellers, it also adds to individual respondents' own learning curve and hence subsequent purchase decisions, supporting H29:

“If I where to go to Thailand again I would not use a travel agent, I would just go to New Road Guest House as I don't think I could find much better anyway” – Isak

Also in regards to trust in a given person or source of information Stephanie finds reassurance in her own experiences and subsequently increases reliance on source:

“I am quite influenced of what they (Lonely Planet, editor) write. Mainly because when I am at places, I often have the experience that what it says in Lonely Planet also holds true in real life” – Stephanie

Lastly, previous experiences also impacts what respondents prioritise in subsequent purchases:

“Previous experiences would impact if I joined something thereafter. If I liked something, I would definitely do it again, just not directly following each other but at a later time – Stephanie

In all, travellers surveyed share after service delivery based on different motivators for ACC and T/A, which is primarily experience oriented (good or bad) for ACC and personal touching for T/A.

Experiences and the subsequent evaluation are passed on as knowledge to other travellers on- and offline and is also internalised as learning useful for subsequent decisions.

4.6 Hypotheses Verification

To summarize data analysis and discussion, an overview of hypothesised findings is hereby presented with support and verification:

Table 4.13: Hypothesis summary and verification based on data analysis and discussion. Own production

H#	HYPOTHESIS	SUPPORT	VERIFICATION
1	Travellers are highly motivated to investigate travel information for their journey(s)	Supported 95-97% of respondents search for information online in regards to T/A and ACC respectively	Table 4.8 Discussion pp. 59-60
2	Association between travel experience and behaviour	Supported <i>Respondents who are experienced travellers (as compared to first time travellers) are more likely to:</i>	
		Represent majority – 55%	Table 4.1
		Be 26-35 years old	$\chi^2(1, N=166)=10.78, p<0.001$
		Trust unknown senders of information more than first time travellers	$\chi^2(2, N=166)=16.01, p<0.000$ $\chi^2(2, N=166)=6.61, p<0.037$
		Buy ACC and T/A after departure while on the go	$\chi^2(4, N=166)=16.49, p<0.002$ $\chi^2(4, N=166)=15.52, p<0.004$
3	Association between travel duration and behaviour	Supported <i>Respondents who are away for 29 days or more (as compared to less) are more likely to:</i>	
		Represent majority – 53%	Table 4.1
		Bring digital devices to access the Internet	$\chi^2(3, N=168)=13.72, p<0.003$
		Investigate ACC and T/A while on the go	$\chi^2(6, N=172)=30.05, p<0.000$ $\chi^2(6, N=172)=17.93, p<0.006$
		Purchase ACC and T/A while on the go	$\chi^2(4, N=172)=21.17, p<0.003$

			$\chi^2(4, N=172)=14.39, p<0.006$
4	Association between travel form and behaviour	Supported <i>Respondents, who go alone at some point in time are more likely to:</i>	
		Represent minority – 20%	Table 4.1
		Be 26-35 years old	$\chi^2(1, N=172)=11.54, p<0.001$
		Be male	$\chi^2(1, N=172)=4.32, p<0.038$
		Trust TA/TOs' websites less	$\chi^2(2, N=154)=11.45, p<0.003$
		Share to give back to someone who has already helped and for the enjoyment of helping others	$\chi^2(1, N=172)=11.02, p<0.001$ $\chi^2(1, N=172)=4.04, p<0.044$
5	Association between gender and behaviour	Supported <i>Respondents who are female (as compared to male) are more likely to:</i>	
		Represent majority – 57%	Table 4.1
		Not travel alone	$\chi^2(1, N=172)=4.32, p<0.038$
		Share to keep friends and family updated	$\chi^2(1, N=172)=9.08, p<0.003$
		Share extraordinary experiences	$\chi^2(4, N=172)=19.60, p<0.001$
		Share experiences that develop community	$\chi^2(4, N=172)=11.08, p<0.026$
		Use SN to share	$\chi^2(5, N=172)=19.98, p<0.001$
		Start earlier when searching for information on both ACC and T/A	$\chi^2(5, N=172)=20.48, p<0.001$ $\chi^2(5, N=172)=12.69, p<0.026$
6	Trust in information found on different online media will vary	Supported Observed mean score for trust in content found on social media 2.47 – 4.06 on a 0-5 scale	H(8)=398.02 $p<0.000$ Table 4.3 Discussion pp. 50-51
7	Travellers sharing content online will be less than travellers consuming content (in the form of information search and evaluation)	Supported Referring to H1 where 95-97% of respondents consume content, only 52-61% share content online	Table 4.4 and 4.8 Discussion pg. 53-54
8	Travellers bringing digital devices to access the Internet investigate more travel services on the go than those who do not bring digital devices	Not supported No correlation between travelling with digital devices and neither information search, nor point in time of purchase	Discussion pp. 66
9	Travellers who bring digital devices to access the Internet while travelling are more likely to share than those who do not bring digital devices	Supported 70-79 respondents out of 168 bring digital devices and share compared to expected 61-72	ACC & T/A respectively: $\chi^2(1, N=168)=9.51, p<0.002$ $\chi^2(1, N=168)=6.68, p<0.010$ Discussion pg. 54
10	Positive relationship between WOM recommendations and actual purchase	Mostly supported Correlation between online media used to search for information and the online media where content impacts travellers' purchase decisions However, interview subjects were found to sometimes take their precautions	$r(170)=.54, p<0.000$ to $r(170)=.71, p<0.000$ Discussion pg. 67-68
11	All travellers are influencers to various extents	Supported Interview subjects have stated various sources as influencers from strong social ties to expert advisers	Discussion pp. 48-49
12	Travellers are	Supported	Discussion pp. 47-48

	proportionally more influenced by their strong ties being friends and family	Interview subjects state that they are more influenced by friends they know well	
13	Travellers search for information beyond their immediate circle of reference (strong ties)	Supported Interview subjects confirm that they will search information from peers they perceive knowledgeable in their area, not just strong ties	Discussion pp. 48-49
14	Travellers form trust in source based on perceived expert knowledge	Supported Interview subjects state that they seek the opinion from people they perceive to be knowledgeable in their particular area	Discussion pp. 48-49
15	Travellers trust people they perceive to be similar to themselves	Supported Interview subject state that they trust similar others due to a mutual bond and judge others online before adding value to their opinion	Discussion pp. 52-53
16	Travellers trust their social ties being friends and family the most when investigating travel services	Supported Modes for trust in both friends and family are "High Degree" and means are 4.14-4.22 on a 0-5 scale with an average mean 3.30	Table 4.2 Discussion pp. 47-48
17	After social ties, travellers trust peers with similar interests when investigating travel services	Not supported This group has a mean score of 2.92, which is below average of 3.30 on a 0-5 scale and below travel agents and journalists (mean 3.18-3.25)	Table 4.2 Discussion pg. 49
18	Travellers trust commercial sources the least when investigating travel services	Not supported Travel agents has a mean score of 3.18, which is close to average (3.30) and above sources such as peers with similar interest (mean 2.92)	Table 4.2 (and 4.3) Discussion pp. 48-49 (partly pg. 50)
19	Travellers will trust social media with user-generated content more than commercial sources	Not supported Publishers and TA/TO has modes of "high degree" and means of 3.96-4.06 on a 0-5 scale. The best-ranked social media (R&R sites) has mode "average" and mean 3.56.	Table 4.3 Discussion pp. 50-51
20	Travellers' intention to follow an advise depends on trust in and hence relationship to source	Supported Interview subjects state that they will follow an advice based on trusted people, hence people with whom a relationship has been established.	Discussion pp. 48-49
21	Positive and negative recommendations are equally impactful	Not supported Travellers expect some negative reviews and do not notice these as long as majority is positive	Discussion pg. 68-69
22	Correlation between normal use of social media and social media used in the purchase process	Partly supported Everyday use of social media correlates with social media used for sharing Everyday use of social media correlates only limited with social media used for searching	<i>Sharing:</i> $r(170)=.34, p<0.000$ to $r(170)=.53, p<0.000$ Discussion pg. 58 <i>Searching:</i> Table 4.10 Discussion pp. 63-64
23	Correlation between trust in source and equivalent online media where source is found	Partly supported Only significant relationship identified was trust in travel agents versus TA/TO websites and travel journalists versus publishers' websites	$r(153)=0.57, p<0.000$ $r(155)=0.46, p<0.000$ Discussion on pg. 51 (partly pg.68)

24	Correlation between trust in online media and online media used in the purchase process	Supported Level of trust in content found on individual online media seems to correlate with level of use and content's impact on purchase decision	$r(170)=.41, p<0.000$ to $r(170)=.75, p<0.000$ Discussion pp. 51-52
25	Travellers are motivated to share content online based on reciprocity, social interactions, enjoyment of sharing travel experiences and concern for others	Mostly supported 87% based on social interactions (keep friends and family updated), 41% out of concern for others/enjoyment of sharing (enjoyment of helping others) and 30% out of reciprocity (give something back)	Table 4.5 Discussion pp. 55
26	Travellers are most likely to share during service delivery or right after	Supported 13-28% share during service delivery and 28-53% share after	Table 4.4 Discussion pp. 53-54 (partly 57-58)
27	Travellers are most likely to share extremely positive or extremely negative experiences	Partly supported Experiences that are "extraordinary" have mode "very high" and the highest mean of 3.74 out of 5. However "extremely negative" has mode "very low" and mean on overall average 2.80 on a 0-5 scale.	Table 4.6 Discussion pp. 56-58
28	Travellers share more positive WOM than negative	Supported Most motivating experiences are those that are "extraordinary" (mode: very high and mean 3.74) and "great" (mode: average, mean 3.01). "Extremely negative" and "negative" has modes "very low" and means of 2.80 and 2.25 respectively. All means on a 0-5 scale	Table 4.6 Discussion pp. 56-58
29	Previous experiences impact travellers' subsequent behaviour	Supported Interview subjects state that their experiences impact how and where they will travel in the future as well as what they will do	Discussion pp. 70-71
30	Correlation between online media used for information search and online media, which content influence final decision to purchase	Supported A relatively strong correlation above 0.5 was found for all types of media and for both ACC and T/A	$r(170)=.54, p<0.000$ to $r(170)=.71, p<0.000$. Discussion pg. 67-68

5 Conclusion

The aim with this thesis has been to look further into the phenomenon of online social travel and how electronic Word-of-Mouth (eWOM) impacts individual travellers' purchase process. More specifically it has aided in giving a further understanding of what characterises individual travellers' use of eWOM in regards to influencers, hereunder the motivation to trust and motivation to share and how this impact individual travellers' purchase process.

The problem statement has been sought answered through a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods. This includes a questionnaire survey to gain an initial understanding of the target field supplemented by in depth interviews to further support and explain findings.

The study has found that travellers surveyed trust social ties including friends, family and friends' friends the most followed by experts such as travel agents and journalists. This implies that relationship, perception of people as experts and source transparency motivates trust formation and hence influence. It is suggested that it is source not platform that the travellers form trust towards proposing online media are just enablers. However, it is also found that trust in an individual media is correlated with media used for searching travel information as well as media on which content impact final decision to purchase travel related services. The more trust, the more use and the larger impact and vice versa.

Travellers surveyed shared information online to various extents, but primarily when in close proximity to the experience. Travellers were found to share for different reasons but especially motivated based on social needs to keep friends and family updated as well as altruism and reciprocity. Mostly, positive and personal experiences motivated to share and sharing happens primarily via Social Networks.

In regards to the purchase process it has been argued how it may be seen as a connected circle with WOM theory and hence influencers impacting all steps in the circular process. Looking at the single steps, it is found that majority of individual travellers search for travel information before departure and those having less time start searching earlier for information presumably to make the most of their time while on the go. Most travellers search online at some point in time highlighting that services are high-involvement and perceived risky purchases. In this sense obtaining travel information online serves as a filter and is primarily searched on traditional sites such as publishers' and travel

agents'/tour operators' websites, followed by rating and review sites. Yet again this highlights the role of expert advisers just as the traditional sites increasingly integrate social elements with user-generated content to increase trust. Social Networks were used to ask for and get travel recommendations from social ties such as friends and family.

When making the decision to actually purchase, it is found that travel information search in regards to both time and type of online media is a pretty good indicator as to the actual purchase and yet again highlights the impact of traditional sources including publishers' and travel agents' websites as well as ratings and reviews. Accommodation is mainly purchased before departure while tours/activities are primarily purchased on the go. Not only are travellers able to purchase on the go, they also increasingly share information thereby generating WOM when at their accommodation, especially extraordinary experiences.

Post-purchase evaluation includes both sharing experiences with others as well as obtaining internal knowledge affecting subsequent purchase processes in regards to accommodation and tours/activities. More specifically it is found that motivation to share was experience oriented for accommodation, while focusing more on personal impact for tours/activities.

It must be mentioned that respondents were found to behave differently according to individual traits. However, for the purchase process it was overall found that individual travellers in this study greatly seek, trust and are ultimately influenced by information obtained from social ties, travel agents and journalists based on relationships, expert advisers and source transparency. Also, ratings and reviews are greatly used and are found to influence decisions; however, reviews are often evaluated based on the source. Influence via eWOM is mainly done in the delivery and after-evaluation steps to keep friends and family updated, to help other travellers and due to reciprocity. Thereby, all travellers are potential influencers impacting subsequent decisions by self and others – and the circle repeats itself, circling around one giant network of social ties and information flow.

6 Perspectives

When initiating a study of a defined and focused target field a range of limitation is inevitably necessary. This is also the case for this study, which has primarily focused on influencers, trust and sharing as well as the steps individual travellers go through in the purchase process circling around eWOM. Hence, other interesting factors have been investigated to a lesser extent and especially personal perception and management of risk and its impact on decisions is open for further research. This is due to its influence on trust and consequently extent of information search. Risk has been highlighted several times as a possible and expected explainer in regards to especially female travellers and first time travellers yet again highlighting where focus may be in future research.

Furthermore, this study has limited reach in regards to research subjects and the study could with benefit have included a broader age range and especially be either more focused on a single nationality and/or have been more broadly representative of world travellers. In this sense cross-cultural differences have not been included as part of the study, which may be considered or researched specifically in future studies since it is expected to also have great impact on travellers' decisions, travel traits and habits as well as social media use.

This study did not penetrate deeply the commercial sources' (travel agents and tour operators) role in regards to eWOM Marketing, though it is briefly touched upon. eWOM marketing, also known as viral marketing, is a great buzzword in today's online business world and its use and specific effect on the purchase process as well as trust implication would be very interesting to look further into. Today the power is no longer entirely with a company's strategic communication department. A company cannot control what is being said about their brand, they can only try to influence it in certain desirable directions. It is this issue and way of handling it that could be interesting for further investigations.

Lastly, it may be desirable to look further and more specifically into travellers' unique traits and behaviour in that this study has identified some associations between behaviour and travel traits/gender. However, to fully grasp these individual behaviours, further research is needed. Based upon this "personas" may be developed to represent subgroups and thereby allow travel agents and tour operators to better target and tailor communication according to individuals various needs and behaviour.

As to the method used it may be recommended future wise to include more real time experimentations and observations. Data in this study is based on memory at a specific time and hence may be biased both in regards to remembrance, but also in regards to self-perception and self-reporting errors. By using real-life experiments and observation it may be that different and interesting phenomenon are observed, which it is then possible to explore further. Doing so it may be recommended to focus on the sources of information rather than the social media since these today holds a multitude of sources and therefore is difficult to judge as one.

In regards to Visit Beyond (VB), as well as travel agents and tour operators in general, the study has highlighted some important implications for a future online strategy. Firstly, it may be good news for VB that their target group still seems to trust them as a commercial source; however, it implies that VB needs to consciously communicate and position themselves as expert advisers, being knowledgeable in their particular area as well as seek to create a relationship with potential and current customers online. Being perceived as expert advisers is a continual effort that demands for constantly updated information and communication of this to the target group, be it via website or social media, where news travels faster. In regards to forming relationships, this is also a long-term priority where VB employees are at the core communicating to and interacting with the target group online (and offline). It is recommended that VB clearly show whom potential customers communicate with online by writing names, showing pictures and by using a personal style of writing that meets the customer at eye level. The aim is to emphasise the personal connection, source transparency and maybe even create a perceived social tie.

In this sense, it is also recommended that VB prioritise the use of social media to interact with travellers and build relationships. Primarily it is recommended to use social networks such as Facebook and if used correctly it may build and strengthen tie with travellers as well as give the option to communicate expert knowledge. If they are able also to effectively use eWOM Marketing, where travellers start talking about VB with each other, this may be especially desirable.

Also it seems important that VB prioritise rating and review sites acknowledging the impact these have on the purchase decision. Considering that the majority of reviews are positive it is recommended to encourage satisfied customers to review a given tour or accommodation via for example TripAdvisor which aids in both visibility and credibility. Also it must be noted here that interaction via management

response is often possible at these sites and should a negative review be encountered it is recommended that VB give their constructive perspective on the matter fast and effectively.

It is recommended that VB incorporate social elements such as, but not limited to, Facebook widgets and TripAdvisor ratings on their website to increase credibility in the eyes of potential and current customers. By doing so, it will not only be VB who patronize own services but travellers' social ties and peers who embrace and recommend these. Should it be possible to do so for tours/activities in the future, this may be especially desirable.

As a last point it may be mentioned that social media develops extremely fast today and hence it is the aim with this study to grasp the human behaviour behind these rather than focusing on particular use of individual online media. With this in mind it may be recommended that VB ensure that they understand the motivation behind user-generated content in order to benefit from a system they have little control over. Nevertheless, understanding and keeping updated on the strengths of social media and specific platforms is a necessity to convey the right message at the right time and not least, the right place (read: platform). Only then will it be possible to work with the system to navigate and engage in the world of online social travel.

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8 Appendices

8.1 Copy of Questionnaire

Please find copy of questionnaire on the following pages

Is this your first time travelling on a free individual tour, i.e. non-fixed package tour?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

How are you travelling? (Please tick all that may apply)

- ☐ Alone
☐ With a friend / my friends
☐ As part of a couple
☐ As part of a family with kids

Other, please specify _____

In total, for how long will you be away from your country of residence?

- ☐ 0-7 days
☐ 8-14 days
☐ 15-21 days
☐ 22-28 days
☐ 29 days or more

How often do you use the following Social Media? (Please only state one answer for each)

	Several times per day	Once a day	3-6 times per week	1-2 times per week	A couple of times per month or less	I don't have an account / Never
Blog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. Yelp, Trustpilot, TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forums	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products: (Please only state one answer for each!)

	6 months before departure	3-5 months before departure	1-2 months before departure	Less than one month before departure	After departure while on the go	I don't search for travel information online
Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tours / Activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to accommodation:
(Please only state one answer for each!)

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree	I never use this type of online media
Travel Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others (please specify) _____						

To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to tours/activities:
(Please only state one answer for each!)

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree	I never use this type of online media
Travel Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Others (please specify) _____						

When searching for travel information, to what degree do you *trust* information found on the below online media? (Please only state one answer for each!)

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree	I never use this type of online media
Travel Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

When searching for travel information via online media, to what degree do you find the following senders of information trustworthy: (Please only state one answer for each!)

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree
Family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends of friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peers I share similar interests with, but do not know in person(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Individuals whom I do not know in person	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Group of individuals that jointly form an average (e.g. in rankings/ratings)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel agents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel journalists	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify) _____					

When do you normally *purchase* the majority of the following travel products? (Includes both online and offline purchases - Please only state one answer for each!)

	6 months before departure	3-5 months before departure	1-2 months before departure	Less than one month before departure	After departure while on the go
Accommodation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tours / Activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To what degree does content on the below online media influence your *final decision* to purchase accommodation (Please only state one answer for each!):

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree	I never use this type of online media
Travel Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Others (please specify) _____

To what degree does content on the below online media influence your *final decision* to purchase tours/activities (Please only state one answer for each!):

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree	I never use this type of online media
Travel Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Others (please specify) _____

When travelling, do you normally bring a digital device for accessing the Internet?
(This includes laptop, smart phone/mobile phone, tablet such as iPad etc.)

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation?
(This incl. text, reviews, check-ins, status updates, pictures, video, links etc. -Please tick all that may apply)

- ☐ Upon purchase
☐ After purchase, but before check-in
☐ While I am actually staying at my accommodation
☐ After having checked-out of my accommodation
☐ I do not share this information online

When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities?
(This incl. text, reviews, check-ins, status updates, pictures, video, links etc. -Please tick all that may apply)

- ☐ Upon purchase
☐ After purchase, but before beginning the tour/activity
☐ While I am actually on the tour/activity
☐ After having finished the tour/activity
☐ I do not share this information online

When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online?
An experience, which is....:

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree
Extraordinary - beyond the ordinary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great - just what I expected	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Somewhat average	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negative - compared to expectations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extremely negative - below acceptable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Challenging my initial beliefs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing community with fellow travellers with local culture and people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Challenging my personal boundaries and abilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please state) _____

Why would you want to share experiences online?
(Please tick all that may apply)

- ☐ To keep friends and family updated on my travel experiences
☐ To be perceived/build reputation as a travel expert
☐ To give something back to someone who already has or might help me
☐ If I receive a reward for sharing
☐ To be part of an online travel community
☐ For the enjoyment of helping other travellers
☐ It is my obligation to help other travellers
☐ I want to help promote the travel company
☐ I want to help the travel company with constructive feedback
☐ I want to harm the image of a travel company due to a bad experience

Other (please state) _____

When travelling, to what degree would you use the following social media to *share* your experiences online? (Please only state one answer for each!)

	To a very low degree	To a low degree	To an average degree	To a high degree	To a very high degree	I never use this type of social media
Travel Blogs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is your age?

- ☐ 17 or below
☐ 18 – 25
☐ 26 – 35
☐ 36 – 45
☐ 46 – 55
☐ 56 or above

What is your country of residence?

What is your gender?

- ☐ Female
☐ Male

Please state your email, if you would like to participate in the competition for 2 x Visit Beyond gift vouchers:

(It will ONLY be used to contact you in case you are among the winners)

Thank you for taking your time to finish this questionnaire - it is greatly appreciated.

Please remember to return this questionnaire to the New Road Guest House Service Office and get your 15 minutes of free Internet.

If you have chosen to state your email address we will send you a summary of results and not least contact you, if you are among the lucky winners.

We wish you a great journey - Happy Travels!

8.2 Quantitative Data Results

Is this your first time travelling on a free individual tour, i.e. non-fixed package tour?

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
Yes	41% 71
No	55% 95
Don't know	3% 6
Total	100% 172

How are you travelling? (Please tick all that may apply)

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
Alone	20% 34
With a friend / my friends	44% 75
As part of a couple	33% 57
As part of a family with kids	4% 7
Other (<i>please see table to the right for statements</i>)	6% 11
Total	107% 184

Sister + boyfriend
Sister and her boyfriend
Brother
Travel company
Group
My mother
groupe
and on a group tour
With my family + kids
but meeting friends from the
Netherlands (brother also)
Work in Bangkok

In total, for how long will you be away from your country of residence?

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
0-7 days	3% 6
8-14 days	5% 8
15-21 days	22% 38
22-28 days	17% 29
29 days or more	53% 91
Total	100% 172

How often do you use the following Social Media?

Frequency / Per Cent	Several times per day	Once a day	3-6 times per week	1-2 times per week	A couple of times per month or less	I don't have an account / Never	Total
Blog	2% 4	3% 5	7% 12	9% 16	16% 27	63% 108	100% 172
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	2% 3	3% 6	3% 6	3% 6	9% 16	78% 135	100% 172
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	35% 60	33% 56	17% 30	5% 8	5% 9	5% 9	100% 172
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	11% 19	12% 20	15% 26	21% 36	19% 33	22% 38	100% 172
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	2% 3	4% 7	5% 8	4% 7	12% 20	74% 127	100% 172
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. Yelp, Trustpilot, TripAdvisor)	0% 0	4% 7	10% 18	8% 14	31% 53	47% 80	100% 172
Forums	1% 2	3% 6	7% 12	10% 17	32% 55	47% 80	100% 172
Total	8% 91	9% 107	9% 112	9% 104	18% 213	48% 577	100% 1204

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Blog	0.78	1.60	1.26
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	0.49	1.30	1.14
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	3.72	1.95	1.40
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	2.08	2.70	1.64
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	0.59	1.45	1.20
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. Yelp, Trustpilot, TripAdvisor)	0.95	1.34	1.16
Forums	0.92	1.35	1.16
Total	1.36	2.82	1.68

When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products:

Frequency / Per cent	6 months before departure	3-5 months before departure	1-2 months before departure	Less than one month before departure	After departure while on the go	I don't search for travel information online	Total
Accommodation	10% 17	17% 30	20% 35	21% 36	28% 49	3% 5	100% 172
Tours / Activities	6% 11	8% 14	25% 43	24% 41	32% 55	5% 8	100% 172
Total	8% 28	13% 44	23% 78	22% 77	30% 104	4% 13	100% 344

To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to accommodation:

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	I never use this type of online media (= 0)	Total
Travel Blogs	9% 16	17% 30	20% 35	9% 16	6% 11	37% 64	100% 172
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	23% 40	9% 15	2% 3	1% 1	1% 2	65% 111	100% 172
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	22% 38	15% 26	19% 32	10% 18	5% 9	28% 49	100% 172
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	27% 47	17% 29	7% 12	5% 8	3% 5	41% 71	100% 172
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	22% 38	6% 10	4% 7	3% 6	2% 4	62% 107	100% 172
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	8% 14	13% 22	24% 41	13% 23	20% 34	22% 38	100% 172
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	12% 21	16% 28	12% 21	8% 13	9% 15	43% 74	100% 172
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	6% 10	9% 16	21% 36	23% 39	28% 48	13% 23	100% 172
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	9% 16	13% 22	24% 41	20% 34	17% 30	17% 29	100% 172
Total	16% 240	13% 198	15% 228	10% 158	10% 158	37% 566	100% 1548

Others (please state):

'Offline' Wom
The City/country's own national website for tourism/activities/sports
Generally I talk to other travellers
Friends
google
Recommendations of friends
Hotels.com
Friends
Kilroy
Kilroy
What you hear from other travellers
hotels.com etc.
month to month... what is good
Kilroy
Agoda, hostelworld etc
Mouth to mouth
local guides or kilroy

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Travel Blogs	1.74	2.68	1.64
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	0.54	0.83	0.91
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	1.76	2.39	1.55
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	1.15	1.73	1.32
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	0.72	1.46	1.21
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	2.58	3.20	1.79
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	1.55	2.87	1.69
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	3.17	2.86	1.69
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	2.73	2.85	1.69
Total	1.77	3.04	1.74

To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to tours/activities:

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	I never use this type of online media (= 0)	Total
Travel Blogs	19% 32	15% 25	14% 24	10% 18	5% 8	38% 65	100% 172
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	26% 45	6% 10	2% 3	1% 1	2% 3	64% 110	100% 172
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	28% 49	17% 30	18% 31	7% 12	3% 5	26% 45	100% 172
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	31% 54	15% 25	8% 14	5% 9	2% 3	39% 67	100% 172
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	20% 34	5% 9	8% 13	2% 3	2% 4	63% 109	100% 172
Rating & Review Sites(e.g. TripAdvisor)	11% 19	15% 25	25% 43	14% 24	9% 15	27% 46	100% 172
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	14% 24	15% 25	15% 26	9% 16	4% 7	43% 74	100% 172
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	6% 10	9% 16	23% 39	24% 42	26% 45	12% 20	100% 172
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	9% 15	10% 18	21% 36	27% 46	20% 34	13% 23	100% 172
Total	18% 282	12% 183	15% 229	11% 171	8% 124	36% 559	100% 1548

Others (please state):

?
See previous answer
Friends
Recommendation of friends
friends
Kilroy
Kilroy
What you hear from other travellers
we use Lonely Planet books more than the internet
Month to month...what is good
kilroy
Mouth to mouth

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Travel Blogs	1.55	2.48	1.58
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	0.54	0.89	0.95
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	1.60	1.90	1.38
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	1.15	1.60	1.26
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	0.72	1.44	1.20
Rating & Review Sites(e.g. TripAdvisor)	2.15	2.77	1.66
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	1.46	2.47	1.57
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	3.21	2.63	1.62
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	2.98	2.73	1.65
Total	1.70	2.85	1.69

When searching for travel information, to what degree do you trust information found on the below online media?

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	I never use this type of online media (= 0)	Total
Travel Blogs	3% 6	8% 13	37% 63	23% 39	5% 9	24% 42	100% 172
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	5% 8	16% 27	15% 25	2% 4	1% 2	62% 106	100% 172
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	8% 14	17% 30	31% 53	16% 28	6% 11	21% 36	100% 172
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	9% 16	24% 42	24% 41	8% 13	3% 6	31% 54	100% 172
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	7% 12	10% 18	16% 28	3% 5	1% 2	62% 107	100% 172
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	3% 5	6% 10	31% 53	28% 49	15% 25	17% 30	100% 172
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	5% 9	10% 18	24% 42	14% 24	6% 10	40% 69	100% 172
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	3% 5	2% 3	16% 27	37% 63	34% 58	9% 16	100% 172
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	5% 8	10% 17	23% 39	31% 54	21% 36	10% 18	100% 172
Total	5% 83	11% 178	24% 371	18% 279	10% 159	31% 478	100% 1548

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Travel Blogs	2.45	2.57	1.60
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	0.95	1.76	1.33
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	2.33	2.36	1.54
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	1.77	2.16	1.47
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	0.94	1.83	1.35
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	2.94	2.62	1.62
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	1.84	2.98	1.72
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	3.69	2.23	1.49
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	3.23	2.34	1.53
Total	2.24	3.12	1.77

When searching for travel information via online media, to what degree do you find the following senders of information trustworthy:

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	Total
Family	2% 3	2% 4	10% 17	52% 90	34% 58	100% 172
Friends	1% 1	1% 1	10% 18	53% 91	35% 61	100% 172
Friends of friends	2% 3	8% 14	47% 81	33% 56	10% 18	100% 172
Peers I share similar interests with, but do not know in person(s)	5% 9	23% 39	51% 87	18% 31	3% 6	100% 172
Individuals whom I do not know in person	12% 20	37% 64	40% 69	10% 17	1% 2	100% 172
Group of individuals that jointly form an average (e.g. in rankings/ratings)	7% 12	24% 42	54% 93	13% 23	1% 2	100% 172
Travel agents	4% 7	15% 25	46% 79	30% 52	5% 9	100% 172
Travel journalists	4% 7	12% 20	45% 78	33% 57	6% 10	100% 172
Total	5% 62	15% 209	38% 522	30% 417	12% 166	100% 1376

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Family	4.14	0.67	0.82
Friends	4.22	0.49	0.70
Friends of friends	3.42	0.72	0.85
Peers I share similar interests with, but do not know in person(s)	2.92	0.75	0.87
Individuals whom I do not know in person	2.52	0.75	0.87
Group of individuals that jointly form an average (e.g. in rankings/ratings)	2.77	0.66	0.81
Travel agents	3.18	0.79	0.89
Travel journalists	3.25	0.79	0.89
Total	3.30	1.03	1.01

When do you normally purchase the majority of the following travel products? (Includes both online and offline purchases)

Frequency / Per Cent	6 months before departure	3-5 months before departure	1-2 months before departure	Less than one month before departure	After departure while on the go	Total
Accommodation	8% 13	19% 32	23% 39	24% 41	27% 47	100% 172
Tours / Activities	4% 7	13% 22	17% 30	15% 26	51% 87	100% 172
Total	6% 20	16% 54	20% 69	19% 67	39% 134	100% 344

To what degree does content on the below online media influence your final decision to purchase accommodation:

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	I never use this type of online media (= 0)	Total
Travel Blogs	20% 34	15% 26	19% 32	12% 20	7% 12	28% 48	100% 172
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	19% 33	11% 19	9% 15	1% 2	1% 2	59% 101	100% 172
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	23% 39	24% 41	15% 26	13% 23	3% 5	22% 38	100% 172
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	30% 52	18% 31	15% 26	3% 5	1% 1	33% 57	100% 172
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	17% 29	10% 18	9% 15	3% 6	1% 1	60% 103	100% 172
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	8% 14	12% 20	23% 40	21% 36	17% 29	19% 33	100% 172
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	10% 18	12% 21	18% 31	16% 27	3% 6	40% 69	100% 172
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	5% 9	7% 12	20% 35	32% 55	23% 40	12% 21	100% 172
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	8% 13	9% 16	32% 55	23% 40	16% 28	12% 20	100% 172
Total	16% 241	13% 204	18% 275	14% 214	8% 124	32% 490	100% 1548

Others (please state):

..
I simply just Google and check locations on maps..
Familie og venners erfaringer
Friends and family
Friends/fam
Friends/fam
friends
Kilroy
word of mouth
word of mouth

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Travel Blogs	1.87	2.59	1.61
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	0.78	1.30	1.14
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	1.84	2.04	1.43
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	1.26	1.41	1.19
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	0.81	1.43	1.20
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	2.69	2.97	1.72
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	1.69	2.75	1.66
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	3.24	2.58	1.61
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	2.97	2.34	1.53
Total	1.91	2.87	1.69

To what degree does content on the below online media influence your final decision to purchase tours/activities:

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	I never use this type of online media (= 0)	Total
Travel Blogs	15% 25	17% 29	21% 36	13% 22	6% 11	28% 49	100% 172
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	20% 35	13% 23	8% 13	2% 3	0% 0	57% 98	100% 172
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	21% 36	24% 42	16% 28	11% 19	4% 7	23% 40	100% 172
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	28% 48	19% 32	16% 27	3% 6	2% 4	32% 55	100% 172
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	17% 30	12% 21	6% 10	2% 3	1% 2	62% 106	100% 172
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	9% 15	12% 20	29% 50	18% 31	15% 25	18% 31	100% 172
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	9% 15	16% 28	19% 33	12% 20	3% 6	41% 70	100% 172
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	5% 8	8% 14	16% 27	36% 62	26% 45	9% 16	100% 172
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	5% 8	11% 19	27% 46	28% 49	21% 36	8% 14	100% 172
Total	14% 220	15% 228	17% 270	14% 215	9% 136	31% 479	100% 1548

Others (please state):

..
..
Family and friends
Friends/fam
Friends/Fam
Friends/fam
friends
Kilroy
word of mouth from other travelers
word of mouth

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Travel Blogs	1.94	2.59	1.61
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	0.77	1.12	1.06
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	1.83	2.09	1.45
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	1.38	1.69	1.30
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	0.72	1.24	1.12
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	2.64	2.73	1.65
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	1.63	2.56	1.60
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	3.43	2.34	1.53
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	3.26	2.10	1.45
Total	1.95	2.90	1.70

When travelling, do you normally bring a digital device for accessing the Internet? (This includes laptop, smart phone/mobile phone, tablet such as iPad etc.)

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
Yes	69% 119
No	28% 49
Don't know	2% 4
Total	100% 172

When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (This includes text, reviews, check-ins, status updates, pictures, video, links etc. – Please tick all that may apply)

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
Upon purchase	5% 8
After purchase, but before check-in	4% 7
While I am actually staying at my accommodation	28% 48
After having checked-out of my accommodation	28% 48
I do not share this information online	48% 83
Total	113% 194

When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (This includes text, reviews, check-ins, status updates, pictures, video, links etc. – Please tick all that may apply)

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
Upon purchase	5% 9
After purchase, but before beginning the tour/activity	6% 10
While I am actually on the tour/activity	13% 22
After having finished the tour/activity	53% 91
I do not share this information online	39% 67
Total	116% 199

When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is...:

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	Total
Extraordinary – beyond the ordinary	13% 22	5% 9	12% 21	34% 59	35% 61	100% 172
Great – just what I expected	20% 35	10% 17	31% 53	27% 46	12% 21	100% 172
Somewhat average	35% 61	28% 49	30% 52	5% 9	1% 1	100% 172
Negative – compared to expectations	37% 64	19% 33	30% 51	9% 16	5% 8	100% 172
Extremely negative – below acceptable	30% 52	12% 21	20% 34	23% 40	15% 25	100% 172
Challenging my initial beliefs	27% 47	10% 17	35% 60	20% 35	8% 13	100% 172
Developing community with fellow travellers with local culture and people	23% 39	12% 20	27% 47	27% 46	12% 20	100% 172
Challenging my personal boundaries and abilities	26% 44	12% 20	23% 39	27% 47	13% 22	100% 172
Total	26% 364	14% 186	26% 357	22% 298	12% 171	100% 1376

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Extraordinary – beyond the ordinary	3.74	1.78	1.33
Great – just what I expected	3.01	1.68	1.30
Somewhat average	2.07	0.92	0.96
Negative – compared to expectations	2.25	1.40	1.19
Extremely negative – below acceptable	2.80	2.12	1.45
Challenging my initial beliefs	2.71	1.62	1.27
Developing community with fellow travellers with local culture and people	2.93	1.76	1.33
Challenging my personal boundaries and abilities	2.90	1.93	1.39
Total	2.80	1.87	1.37

Why would you want to share experiences online? (Please tick all that may apply)

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
To keep friends and family updated on my travel experiences	87% 150
To be perceived/build reputation as a travel expert	3% 5
To give something back to someone who already has or might help me	30% 51
If I receive a reward for sharing	6% 10
To be part of an online travel community	7% 12
For the enjoyment of helping other travellers	41% 70
It is my obligation to help other travellers	5% 8
I want to help promote the travel company	8% 13
I want to help the travel company with constructive feedback	16% 27
I want to harm the image of a travel company due to a bad experience	6% 11
Other (please state)	10% 17
Total	217% 374

Others (please state):

I want to encourage other travellers to travel a specific way (e.g. ecologically, helping the locals)
To get response from friends and maybe start a funny interaction with them.
To recommend/help spread the word of something really good.
Do not share online
Do not share
I seldom share, but in a few cases I have posted information on Facebook in regards to travel experiences, but this was just to keep family and friends updated
I don't share
do not share
I don't want to share experiences online
I do not share
I do not share online
Show off how awesome I am (perceived) ☺
Left blank...
do not share
I want to warn others of a travel company due to a bad experience
I enjoy writing
I do not share

When travelling, to what degree would you use the following social media to share your experiences online?

Frequency / Per Cent	To a very low degree (= 1)	To a low degree (= 2)	To an average degree (= 3)	To a high degree (= 4)	To a very high degree (= 5)	I never use this type of social media (= 0)	Total
Travel Blogs	24% 41	11% 19	9% 16	5% 8	5% 9	46% 79	100% 172
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	26% 44	9% 15	4% 7	1% 2	1% 2	59% 102	100% 172
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	14% 24	6% 11	13% 23	22% 38	33% 56	12% 20	100% 172
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	34% 59	9% 16	7% 12	1% 2	2% 3	47% 80	100% 172
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	27% 47	6% 11	3% 5	1% 1	1% 2	62% 106	100% 172
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	26% 45	6% 11	11% 19	7% 12	8% 13	42% 72	100% 172
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	27% 46	5% 9	10% 18	3% 5	2% 4	52% 90	100% 172
Total	25% 306	8% 92	8% 100	6% 68	7% 89	46% 549	100% 1204

Statistics	Mean	Variance	SD
Travel Blogs	1.19	2.18	1.48
Microblogs (e.g. Twitter)	0.66	1.02	1.01
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	3.18	3.18	1.78
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	0.87	1.21	1.10
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	0.57	0.85	0.92
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	1.38	2.63	1.62
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	0.92	1.63	1.28
Total	1.25	2.49	1.58

What is your age?

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
18 – 25	63% 109
26 – 35	37% 63
Total	100% 172

What is your country of residence?

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
Asia Pacific	6% 11
Europe (-Scandinavia)	30% 52
North America	9% 15
Denmark	49% 85
Scandinavia	5% 9
Total	100% 172

What is your gender?

Frequency / Per Cent	Total
Female	57% 98
Male	43% 74
Total	100% 172

8.3 User Guide to Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ONLINE SOCIAL TRAVEL

An academic study of traveller's online use of electronic word-of-mouth in the purchase process

Background:

In cooperation with VB, I am currently writing my thesis on Social Travelling in an online context including who and what influence traveller's decision-making when purchasing accommodation and tours. The aim is to give valuable inputs to Visit Beyond's online presence and priorities.

To gain an indebt understanding of this phenomenon it is necessary and extremely important to get feedback from a large pool of travellers. And I really hope for your help in this effort!

Below you will find further information and guidelines...

WHAT is it?

- An online electronic questionnaire consisting of 20 questions
- It will take approximately 8-10 minutes to fill out
- Strictly anonymous

WHO should fill it out?

ALL TRAVELLERS who come by New Road Guest House either:

- Staying at hotel (check-in/out)
- Stop by the service office

Also please note that the questionnaire is to be filled out by all individuals regardless of travelling as part of a group or family (children below 15, however, excluded). Hence, all travellers must be approached!

HOW and WHERE will they fill it out?

PAPER QUESTIONNAIRE

- Physical form to be handed to people. To be finished immediately and returned to service office.
 - o E.g. when travellers are waiting at reception or service office
 - o Have questionnaires lying at the desk in the service office + at reception desk
- Included in check-in letters/envelope handed to guests upon check-in

LINK ON PAPER

- The questionnaire is filled in online via a link, which is handed to travellers on paper

WHY should they fill it in?

- Help VB becoming even better at meeting the needs of travellers
- 15 minutes of free internet if they will just use a few of them to fill in the questionnaire
- Travellers will enter the competition to win 2 x VB gift vouchers on DKK 500 / EUR 70

WHEN should it be filled out

- Start on 30th Jun 2012 if possible (or latest at 1st Jul)
- *Expected* deadline is 15th Aug

TARGET:

200 respondents

PROCEDURE – WHAT I ASK YOUR HELP FOR:

Since I will not personally be in Bangkok until the end of July I appreciate your help and effort in the following:

PREPARATIONS:

- Inform all staff about 1) importance and 2) procedure
- Print and cut attached codes for access to online Questionnaire
- Print copies of the questionnaire for physical hand-out
- Print signposts and put up where possible (Internet café?)
- Coordinate free internet voucher with reception

ENCOURAGE TRAVELLERS TO RESPOND:

- Reception:
 - o Physical copy in check-in letter envelope – to be handed to guests upon check-in
 - o Mention to people waiting (hand out in print)
 - o Have physical copies lying at the reception desk
- Service office:
 - o Mention in service office
 - Hand out via paper link *or* hand out in physical form
 - o Gather and keep all finished questionnaires

In general, if there are any issues, technically or practically, with the distribution of the questionnaire, or issues in understanding questions, please contact me and I will try to correct/aid.

Once again, thank you for your effort – it is greatly appreciated!

8.4 Interview Summary and After Evaluation

INTERVIEW # 1:

Felicity, 27, US // 23rd Aug 2012 16.15 to 16.45 // New Road Guest House, Bangkok

SUMMARY:

Felicity values her freedom and flexibility more than planning ahead and feeling safe as to the next step. Her reasoning is that more opportunities arise. Due to a bad experience she values cleanliness and often check reviews online as to percentages and prices for a potential accommodation. Equally important she values ambience and other travellers at a given place and mostly remembers this, not the actual place she stayed. She travels with an iPhone, which she constantly uses to access the online world.

Felicity started a blog, but since she expects nobody reads it, she mostly uses it as a personal diary to remember good experiences. She also uses Facebook when on the road to share experiences (not accommodation) with friends, family and newfound friends from travelling. She primarily does so through photos and like that people comment on her updates.

She also gladly share when people ask her travel related questions on Facebook, for example based on an update she did or because they go travelling soon. In this sense, she likes that people ask for her opinion as it makes her “feel pretty good”. She does, however, not post reviews since she finds it too much hassle.

Felicity likewise asks others for help on Facebook and uses it to exchange experiences though she tends to trust friends more than random people who give advice on for example review sites. She does, however, use HostelWorld to look at percentages and price as to accommodation and, furthermore, asks others while on the road. In general she saves advises to her notes on her phone to use it at a later point in time. She is very trusting as to the backpacker community and considers a bond amongst and to these. She does, however, not book more than one night’s accommodation based on a recommendation and always leave a way out if she does not like it.

She also uses CouchSurfing to see what others are up to and places to go or simply just google around. She uses Wikipedia and forums quite a lot and in her own words “get a lot from forums”. She does not use Lonely Planet much.

In all Felicity mostly travels based on WOM recommendations and feels she has gotten better experiences this way, plus it has been easier and more convenient.

AFTER EVALUATION:

First interview conducted, which also served as a test of the interview guide as well as how much emphasis should be on the questions/structure versus narratives and rich answers of the subject.

A balance was attempted to allow subject to speak passionate about travelling endeavours while still maintaining an eye on the area of focus, the online context. Rapport was good and interviewer sought to express understanding as to subject's viewpoints while still trying to clarify meaning and dig further into area of interest.

One thing the interviewer had expected and which was confirmed was the influence of other travellers while on the road. That is, influencers outside of the online context. The interviewer made a conscious choice not to interrupt subject when speaking about traditional WOM as it allowed the interviewer to redirect the conversation into Facebook, which was a phenomenon the interviewer had wanted to explore further, based on feedback in the questionnaires.

Basically, the above was also based on the fact that the online and offline world are impossible to separate in practice. Technology and social media are just enablers of WOM and though they connect individuals to random peers, they also let them communicate in an online context with friends and family. So when subject talked about traveller communication while on the go, it allowed the interviewer to steer the conversation into and explore further the use of social media to communicate with trustees/influencers.

In regards to introduction and debriefing the interviewer had met subject the day before and she had also filled in the questionnaire. Hence she already knew beforehand the topic of interest.

Nevertheless, the interviewer did a short recap and especially in regards to the debriefing, subject was very interested in the whole project and curious as to final results. This increased the rapport and mutual excitement as to the phenomenon though interviewer and subject may not necessarily have the same viewpoint on the topic.

INTERVIEW # 2:

Isak, 21, Netherlands // 29th Aug 2012 14:02 to 14:38 // New Road Guest House, Bangkok

SUMMARY:

Isak did a two months stay in Taiwan with seven days layover in Bangkok on the way home. In Taiwan he did everything himself while he let Kilroy handle entire layover in Thailand. It is his first time travelling as an individual traveller and he is generally very passionate and likes to write about his experiences. He has a lot of faith in people and tend to be very trusting if he believes they have the information he needs and know what they are talking about. Isak has brought with him his personal laptop to access the internet while travelling.

Isak has a blog, but only maintained it the first three weeks he was away. He did it for memories to self and because he loves to write and like to inform friends what he is doing. He also uses Facebook a lot to post short random, amazing and arbitrary things in both pictures and writing and does so whenever there is a computer handy. He adds people he has met while travelling to Facebook and exchange advices. He does not post reviews and after he has returned home, he only share information if someone asks. Then, however, he would be happy to go into details and would then emphasise the good experiences since he himself thinks these are more reliable.

In his own words, Isak tend to sometimes be too trusting towards people and relies greatly on recommendations from others if they are knowledgeable in their particular area. If so, he would ask these for advise on Facebook and other channels, but generally trust friends more than friends of friends. He also thinks a lot about commissions in regards to travel agents, but overall trust these since these are people who's income is dependent on recommending good things to people in order to stay in business. He thinks this adds to reliability and the same goes for travel journalists represented by for example Lonely Planet.

In regards to platforms/forums, where he does not know people he tends to send emails forth and back to build trust and ultimately buy. He uses forums quite a lot as well as specific interest communities/groups on websites and Facebook.

Isak normally search information until he has what he needs. Therefore, if the first website he enters has everything he is looking for, he is satisfied and will look no further. He explains as an example that he would not even do any research if it was his friend (who is also a travel organiser) who organised a

tour in Taiwan. Lastly, he explains that if he was to go back to a place he has already been, for example Thailand, he would not use a travel agent, but base it on his experiences from his current tour.

AFTER EVALUATION:

Second interview conducted with minor additions to the interview guide including a couple of questions on what could evoke a behaviour not currently taking place (for example check-in or share content online), on how subject normally communicate on Facebook (since it apparently is the main sharing platform) and the role of travel agents and travel journalists.

Yet again, a balance was sought between steering the conversation and letting the subject elaborate narratively even though it may be outside the scope of the assignment. In this case, subject had been on a two months study sojourn in Taiwan, which had made a huge impact on him. In this regard, subject's experience with travelling and seeking information was a bit biased, but the interviewer still found him to have very relevant perspectives and experiences with travelling, while he was in Taiwan and afterwards, and hence choose to maintain him as a subject.

As expected, subject confirmed the emphasis of people when choosing to travel and widely discussed trust both offline and online. Also subject emphasised the link between the recommendation of a person or company by a trusted person. One aspect is if a person recommends a tour or accommodation directly, another is if a trusted person recommends another person or a company. In regards to the last aspect, this person or company could then recommend tours and accommodation that subject would trust without questioning (very much at least), because the initial trust had already been established through the trusted person (in this case subject's sister).

The subject's perspectives was a bit unusual in that he was not very critical (or at least not very conscious) as to who was the sender of information on websites. If the site had the info he needed, he was very likely to trust it and then ask for further details needed before booking – without looking for alternatives. Furthermore, he did not use reviews at all, but tended to trust based on other peoples recommendations or his own gut feeling.

Subject primarily used Facebook for sharing and was not afraid of mentioning or promoting people, join groups and so on. Furthermore, he was more likely to share positive than negative experiences – simply because it was easier to comprehend.

During the course of the interview, the interviewer tried as far as possible to direct the conversation back to online social travel but since subject's travel tales were a bit unusual and he was a very

passionate storyteller it was a bit difficult not to ask questions that had not already been covered. Further, the interviewer choose to maintain the experiment in the interview guide because even though it is found impossible to ask all questions, it always generate unusual finding. Hence it will stay.

In regards to introduction and debriefing the interviewer had met Isak randomly at the guesthouse just before and did not know much about his travelling until the interview started (or his experience with being a student in Taiwan for two months). Hence he was both briefed and debriefed, but he had nothing to add and did not have a specific wish to be anonymous.

INTERVIEW # 3:

Stephanie, 25, Denmark // 3rd Sep 2012 16.24 to 17.24 // Private apartment, Bangkok

SUMMARY:

Stephanie likes to travel individually but prefers to have an overall plan and book some things in advance around these fixed points. She is not good at being impulsive, but actually likes the experiences it brings.

Stephanie is a very avid user of online media. She travels with her iPhone and uses Facebook a lot to share updates, check-ins and pictures – Not indebt information, but more general experiences so that people can ask if they are interested. If so, she will be glad to share further recommendations.

Stephanie is also often reviewing accommodation she has stayed at, but mostly does so at the site she has used to make the booking (HostelWorld and Agoda). She does this because she imagine people actually reads the reviews and is especially keen on recommending if it has been a really cool place that exceeded her expectations. This she base on ambience and staff, not décor and details and she reviews immediately because she thinks the place deserves her praise and to urge other travellers to go for a good experience. For negative reviews she provides constructive feedback and share so that others do not end up in the same situation. She does not share average experiences, at mostly just rates with stars.

When Stephanie meets people on the go, she connects with them on Facebook afterwards to help each other and exchange advice. She, however, listens much more to her good friend because they know what each other like and mostly have the same perception. Additional information is often found on blogs and reviews and she always reads a lot “between the lines” to understand who is behind the review and if they have similar perceptions. If not, she mostly just uses the facts. In this sense she also prefers to find reviews on HostelWorld since she finds people here emphasise the same

things as her. She mostly uses it for accommodation and not for tours/activities. Furthermore, she is not scared of negative reviews as long as majority is positive.

Stephanie also uses travel agents' websites a lot to get an overview of country, highlights and travel routes, and then adds her own touch within this framework. This often includes reading Lonely Planet, which she in her own words is quite influenced by, since she has found that what it says also holds true in real life. However, in the end she always forms an opinion based on her own gut feeling and mostly once the decision is made there is not much that can make her change her mind.

When Stephanie is going travelling, she normally research extensively beforehand. If she is going travelling for a longer period of time, she plans overall and book fix points such as transport and accommodation. For shorter tours, where time is an issue, she often plans the entire trip in details. When going she does not want to experience too much of the same and hence previous experiences and decisions impacts her subsequent behaviour and choices. This is also the case for destination choice and booking in advance. If it is a new territory to her she is more likely to book a pre-planned (group) tour, whereas she is more likely to book herself (and on the go) if she feels she knows the destination.

AFTER EVALUTION:

Third interview conducted and for the first time it was done so in Danish due to a wish from the subject. Since interviewer also speaks Danish this was possible and deemed not to have significant affect on results, only allow the subject to feel more confident and being able to elaborate more widely.

The interviewer has met Stephanie a couple of times before the interview and knew she was a passionate individual traveller and keen talker, but not much more than this. The interviewer had on purpose sought not to discuss the subject of the interview nor conversations in general with subject before the actual interview to allow for more spontaneous answers and questions during the course of the interview.

This seemed to be no problem since Stephanie elaborated widely and in a very narrative manner. Several interesting findings occurred and was followed up and clarified by interviewer. The interview guide was only used limited since subject covered most of the questions with her own words, without interviewer having to ask.

This also resulted in not doing the experiment since the interview lasted an hour and subject had already widely covered all aspects.

What stroke the interviewer is the confirmation from all subjects as to the validity of the overall theory and human behaviour in regards to eWOM and trust. But at the same time that individual travellers and their behaviour varies greatly in regards to for example risk acceptance leading to information search and pre-booking as well as the extent to which people share content online (especially in regards to reviews).

Yet again, focus was on Facebook (apparently despite nationality) and in regards to accommodation the booking sites such as Agoda and HostelWorld were in focus including reviews found here (not necessarily TripAdvisor). More specifically for Stephanie, she used Lonely Planet quite a lot as well as travel agents' website in general. Mostly as a starting point for information in regards to itinerary and tours, but also as ultimate decision point as to recommendation (for example a dive company in Australia).

8.5 Interview Guide

INTERVIEW GUIDE – *Online Social Travel*

Intro information:

- Area of scope (online social travel context, where we seek info, who we trust and how we share – all to influence our purchase decision)
- Take about 30-45 minutes
- Confidentiality – anonymous names, but recording attached. Okay?
 - o Only I and the university will have access to recordings while VB also have access to result of analysis

Soft beginning:

- How has it been like travelling on an individual basis and making decisions as you go?
- Where did you find information and inspiration to your travel plans (acc. & tours)?
- Have you used online media during your endeavours and for what?

Experiment (Keep in mind the PURCHASING DECISION):

BEFORE:

- Can you think of a place you haven't been and REALLY want to go?
- Where is it and why do you want to go there?
- Now imagine that I gave you the ticket and you where to go shortly (for a longer period of time), without knowing anything about the destination – what would you then do?
- If you were to find additional information, where would you start searching?
- Would you search in an online context and if so, how? Also, in a social media context?
- Would you book anything in advance?

DURING:

- Now imagine that you are already on the road and you have your digital device with you/have entered an Internet café. How would you use the access while on the road?
- Info search/booking?
- Sharing?

AFTER:

- Lastly, you have now returned to your home country after a great adventure with ups and downs in regards to both tours and accommodation. Would you use the online media in any way for sharing reflections and the like?

Concrete situation – accommodation:

- How did you first hear about NRGH?
- Did you seek additional information in this regard?
- What made you decide that this was where you would want to stay?

- Have you reported as to your stay here to anyone in particular or are you planning to/would you?
- If you where to share information online on accommodation, how/where would you do it?
- Is this the typical way in which you choose accommodation?

Concrete situation – your last tour:

- How did you first hear about the tour?
- Did you seek additional information in this regard?
- What made you decide that this was the tour for you?
- Have you told anyone else about the tour or are you going to/would you do so?
- If you where to share information online on the tour, how/where would you do it?
- Is this the typical way, you decide on tours?

In general – exploring SN/Facebook further:

- How do you keep in contact with people (both old and new friends) while travelling?
- Do you use Facebook and if so, how do you use it in a travelling context?
 - o How does postings by friends influence you e.g. do you want to travel when you see a photo? Seek further info from a friend?

Debriefing

- Anything you want to add or any questions to the onwards process?
- Do you want to be anonymous?

REMINDERS TO SELF:

- Clarify meanings while interviewing (e.g. ask to specify)
- Try to avoid using “why”
- Repeat significant words and ask for further elaboration
- Probe questions asking subjects to further elaborate

8.6 Data Calculations

RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS:

Travel experience vs. Age

Column: Is this your first time travelling on a free individual tour, i.e. non-fixed package tour?

Row: What is your age?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval)

0,05

Observed Frequencies

	Yes	No	Row totals
18-25	55,	50,	105,
Percent of total	0,33133	0,3012	0,63253
26-35	16,	45,	61,
Percent of total	0,09639	0,27108	0,36747
Column totals	71,	95,	166,
Percent of total	0,42771	0,57229	

Expected Frequencies

	Yes	No	Row totals
18-25	45,	60,	105,
Percent of total	0,27054	0,36199	0,63253
26-35	26,	35,	61,
Percent of total	0,15717	0,2103	0,36747
Column totals	71,	95,	166,
Percent of total	0,42771	0,57229	

Statistics	Value	p-level
Chi-square (df=1)	10,78044	0,00103

Travel form vs. Age

Column: What is your age?

Row: How are you travelling?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval)

0,05

Observed Frequencies

	18-25	26-35	Row totals
Alone	96,	42,	138,
Percent of total	0,55814	0,24419	0,80233
Not alone	13,	21,	34,
Percent of total	0,07558	0,12209	0,19767
Column totals	109,	63,	172,
Percent of total	0,63372	0,36628	

Expected Frequencies

	18-25	26-35	Row totals
Alone	87,	51,	138,
Percent of total	0,50845	0,29388	0,80233
Not Alone	22,	12,	34,
Percent of total	0,12527	0,0724	0,19767
Column totals	109,	63,	172,
Percent of total	0,63372	0,36628	

Statistics	Value	p-level
Chi-square (df=1)	11,53554	0,00068

Travel form vs. Gender

Columns: How are you travelling?

Row: What is your gender?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval)

0,05

Observed Frequencies

	Not Alone	Alone	Row totals
Female	84,	14,	98,
Percent of total	0,48837	0,0814	0,56977
Male	54,	20,	74,
Percent of total	0,31395	0,11628	0,43023
Column totals	138,	34,	172,
Percent of total	0,80233	0,19767	

Expected Frequencies

	Not Alone	Alone	Row totals
Female	78,62791	19,37209	98,
Percent of total	0,45714	0,11263	0,56977
Male	59,37209	14,62791	74,
Percent of total	0,34519	0,08505	0,43023
Column totals	138,	34,	172,
Percent of total	0,80233	0,19767	

Statistics**Value****p-level**

Chi-square (df=1)

4,31575

0,03776

Everyday use of Social Networks vs. Travelling with Digital Device

Columns: When travelling, do you normally bring a digital device for accessing the Internet?

Row: How often do you use the following Social Media?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARs	Yes	No	Total
I don't have an account / Never	5,	4,	9,
Several times per day	49,	8,	57,
Once a day	36,	20,	56,
3-6 times per week	14,	15,	29,
1-2 times per week	6,	2,	8,
A couple of times per month or less	9,	0,E+0	9,
Total	119,	49,	168,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Yes	No
I don't have an account / Never	6,375	2,625
Several times per day	40,375	16,625
Once a day	39,66667	16,33333
3-6 times per week	20,54167	8,45833
1-2 times per week	5,66667	2,33333
A couple of times per month or less	6,375	2,625

Row Proportions

VARs	Yes	No	Total
I don't have an account / Never	0,55556	0,44444	1,
Several times per day	0,85965	0,14035	1,
Once a day	0,64286	0,35714	1,
3-6 times per week	0,48276	0,51724	1,
1-2 times per week	0,75	0,25	1,
A couple of times per month or less	1,	0,E+0	1,
Total	0,70833	0,29167	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Yes	No	Total
I don't have an account / Never	0,04202	0,08163	0,05357
Several times per day	0,41176	0,16327	0,33929
Once a day	0,30252	0,40816	0,33333
3-6 times per week	0,11765	0,30612	0,17262
1-2 times per week	0,05042	0,04082	0,04762
A couple of times per month or less	0,07563	0,E+0	0,05357
Total	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	Yes	No	Total
I don't have an account / Never	0,02976	0,02381	0,05357
Several times per day	0,29167	0,04762	0,33929
Once a day	0,21429	0,11905	0,33333
3-6 times per week	0,08333	0,08929	0,17262
1-2 times per week	0,03571	0,0119	0,04762
A couple of times per month or less	0,05357	0,E+0	0,05357
Total	0,70833	0,29167	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	Yes	No
I don't have an account / Never	0,29657	0,72024
Several times per day	1,84249	4,47462
Once a day	0,33894	0,82313
3-6 times per week	2,08325	5,05932
1-2 times per week	0,01961	0,04762
A couple of times per month or less	1,08088	2,625

Summary

Chi-square	19,41166
d.f.	5
p-level > X	0,00161

Travel Duration Vs. Travelling with Digital Device

Column: When travelling, do you normally bring a digital device for accessing the Internet?

Row: In total, for how long will you be away from your country of residence?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	YES	NO	Total
0-14 Days	7,	5,	12,
15-21 Days	20,	18,	38,
22-28 Days	17,	10,	27,
29 Days or more	75,	16,	91,
Total	119,	49,	168,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	YES	NO
0-14 Days	8,5	3,5
15-21 Days	26,91667	11,08333
22-28 Days	19,125	7,875
29 Days or more	64,45833	26,54167

Row Proportions

VARS	YES	NO	Total
0-14 Days	0,58333	0,41667	1,
15-21 Days	0,52632	0,47368	1,
22-28 Days	0,62963	0,37037	1,
29 Days or more	0,82418	0,17582	1,

Total	0,70833	0,29167	1,
<i>Column Proportions</i>			
VARs	YES	NO	Total
0-14 Days	0,05882	0,10204	0,07143
15-21 Days	0,16807	0,36735	0,22619
22-28 Days	0,14286	0,20408	0,16071
29 Days or more	0,63025	0,32653	0,54167
Total	1,	1,	1,
<i>Proportions of Total</i>			
VARs	YES	NO	Total
0-14 Days	0,04167	0,02976	0,07143
15-21 Days	0,11905	0,10714	0,22619
22-28 Days	0,10119	0,05952	0,16071
29 Days or more	0,44643	0,09524	0,54167
Total	0,70833	0,29167	1,
<i>Chi-squared Values</i>			
VARs	YES	NO	
0-14 Days	0,26471	0,64286	
15-21 Days	1,77735	4,31642	
22-28 Days	0,23611	0,57341	
29 Days or more	1,72401	4,18688	
<i>Summary</i>			
Chi-square	13,72174		
d.f.	3		
p-level > X	0,00331		

MOTIVATION TO TRUST:

Trust in Senders of Information

When searching for travel information via online media, to what degree do you find the following senders of information trustworthy:

Comparing Multiple Independent Samples

	Sample size	Sum of Ranks
Family	172	175.072,
Friends	172	179.838,5
Friends of friends	172	124.951,
I share similar interests with, but do not know in person(s)	172	91.944,
Individuals I do not know in person	172	67.680,5
Group of individuals that jointly form an average (e.g. in rankings/ratings)	172	82.546,5
Travel agents	172	110.204,
Travel journalists	172	115.139,5
<i>Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA</i>		
H	429,52113	N 1376
Degrees Of Freedom	7	p-level 0,E+0
H (corrected)	470,83572	

Trust in Online Media

When searching for travel information, to what degree do you trust information found on the below online media?

Comparing Multiple Independent Samples

	Sample size	Sum of Ranks
Travel Blogs	172	141.877,
Micro Blogs (e.g. Twitter)	172	78.172,5

Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	172	135.595,5
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	172	111.560,
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	172	78.662,5
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	172	163.277,5
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	172	116.449,5
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	172	197.281,5
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	172	176.050,
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA		
<i>H</i>	398,01546	<i>N</i> 1548
Degrees Of Freedom	8	<i>p-level</i> 0,E+0
<i>H (corrected)</i>	419,75912	

Comparison of Mean Trust in Information found on stated Online Media

When searching for travel information, to what degree do you trust information found on the below online media?

Comparing Means [t-test assuming equal variances (homoscedastic)]

Descriptive Statistics

VAR	Sample size	Mean	Variance
Rating & Review Sites	172	2,93605	2,62162
Travel Agents'/Tour Operator's Websites	172	3,22674	2,3401

Summary

Degrees Of Freedom	342	Hypothesized Mean Difference	0,E+0
Test Statistics	1,71155	Pooled Variance	2,48086

Two-tailed distribution

<i>p-level</i>	0,08789	<i>t Critical Value (5%)</i>	1,96692
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Correlation between Trust in TA/TO's websites and Trust in Travel Agents as senders of information

Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Sample size		154	Critical value (5%)	1,97569
		TA	TA/TO	
Travel Agents (TA)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	<i>R Standard Error</i>			
	<i>t</i>			
	<i>p-value</i>			
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>			
Travel agents/tour operators' websites (TA/TO)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,56676	1,	
	<i>R Standard Error</i>	0,00447		
	<i>t</i>	8,48107		
	<i>p-value</i>	1,84297E-14		
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable	R
TATO vs. TA	0,56676

Correlation between Trust in Publishers/Travel Professionals' websites and Trust in Travel Journalists as senders of information
Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Sample size		156	Critical value (5%)	1,97549
			TJ	Publishers
Travel Journalists (TJ)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient		1,	
	<i>R Standard Error</i>			
	<i>t</i>			
	<i>p-value</i>			
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>			
Publishers/travel professionals' Websites (Publishers)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient		0,45899	1,
	<i>R Standard Error</i>		0,00513	
	<i>t</i>		6,41108	
	<i>p-value</i>		0,	
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>		rejected	
<i>R</i>				
Variable vs. Variable		<i>R</i>		
Publishers vs. TJ		0.45899		

Lowest value identified // Correlation between trust in Travel Blogs used for Information Search and Trust in Content found on Travel Blogs
Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
			Info Search	Trust in Content
Travel Blogs (Trust in Content)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient		1,	
	<i>R Standard Error</i>			
	<i>t</i>			
	<i>p-value</i>			
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>			
Travel Blogs (Info Search)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient		0,41454	1,
	<i>R Standard Error</i>		0,00487	
	<i>t</i>		5,93937	
	<i>p-value</i>		0,	
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>		rejected	
<i>R</i>				
<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>		<i>R</i>		
<i>Info Search vs. Trust in Content</i>		0.41454		

Highest value identified // Correlation between trust in Content found on Forums and Content found on Forum's impact on the purchase decision
Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)		1,97402
			Trust in Content	Impact on Purchase Decision	
Forums (Trust in Content)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient		1,		
	<i>R Standard Error</i>				
	<i>t</i>				
	<i>p-value</i>				

	<i>H0 (5%)</i>		
Forums (Impact on Purchase Decision)	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,74965	1,
	<i>R Standard Error</i>	0,00258	
	<i>t</i>	14,7685	
	<i>p-value</i>	0,E+0	
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>	rejected	

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Impact on Purchase Decision vs. Trust in Content	0,74965

Travel Form Vs. Trust in content found on TA/TO's websites

Column: When searching for travel information, to what degree do you trust information found on the below online media? (Focus: Travel agents/tour operators' websites. Note: Categories collapsed due to less than 5 observations)

Row: How are you travelling?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Not Alone	14,	31,	78,	123,
Alone	11,	8,	12,	31,
Total	25,	39,	90,	154,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
Not Alone	19,96753	31,14935	71,88312
Alone	5,03247	7,85065	18,11688

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Not Alone	0,11382	0,25203	0,63415	1,
Alone	0,35484	0,25806	0,3871	1,
Total	0,16234	0,25325	0,58442	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Not Alone	0,56	0,79487	0,86667	0,7987
Alone	0,44	0,20513	0,13333	0,2013
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Not Alone	0,09091	0,2013	0,50649	0,7987
Alone	0,07143	0,05195	0,07792	0,2013
Total	0,16234	0,25325	0,58442	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
Not Alone	1,78347	0,00072	0,52052
Alone	7,07634	0,00284	2,06527

Summary

<i>Chi-square</i>	11,44915
<i>d.f.</i>	2
<i>p-level > X</i>	0,00326

Travel Experience Vs. Trust in “Peers I share similar interests with, but do not know in person”

Column: When searching for travel information via online media, to what degree do you find the following senders of information trustworthy? (Focus: Peers I share similar interests with, but do not know in person. Note: Categories collapsed due to less than 5 observations)

Row: Is this your first time travelling on a free individual tour?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	31,	32,	8,	71,
No	17,	50,	28,	95,
Total	48,	82,	36,	166,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
Yes	20,53012	35,07229	15,39759
No	27,46988	46,92771	20,60241

Row Proportions

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	0,43662	0,4507	0,11268	1,
No	0,17895	0,52632	0,29474	1,
Total	0,28916	0,49398	0,21687	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	0,64583	0,39024	0,22222	0,42771
No	0,35417	0,60976	0,77778	0,57229
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	0,18675	0,19277	0,04819	0,42771
No	0,10241	0,3012	0,16867	0,57229
Total	0,28916	0,49398	0,21687	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
Yes	5,33939	0,26913	3,55408
No	3,99049	0,20114	2,65621

Summary

Chi-square	16,01045
d.f.	2
p-level > X	0,00033

Travel Experience Vs. Trust in “Individuals whom I do not know in person”

Column: When searching for travel information via online media, to what degree do you find the following senders of information trustworthy? (Focus: Individuals whom I do not know in person. Note: Categories collapsed due to less than 5 observations)

Row: Is this your first time travelling on a free individual tour?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	43,	20,	8,	71,
No	40,	45,	10,	95,
Total	83,	65,	18,	166,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
Yes	35,5	27,8012	7,6988
No	47,5	37,1988	10,3012

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	0,60563	0,28169	0,11268	1,
No	0,42105	0,47368	0,10526	1,
Total	0,5	0,39157	0,10843	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	0,51807	0,30769	0,44444	0,42771
No	0,48193	0,69231	0,55556	0,57229
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
Yes	0,25904	0,12048	0,04819	0,42771
No	0,24096	0,27108	0,06024	0,57229
Total	0,5	0,39157	0,10843	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
Yes	1,58451	2,18907	0,01178
No	1,18421	1,63604	0,00881

Summary

Chi-square	6,61442
d.f.	2
p-level > X	0,03662

MOTIVATION TO SHARE:**Travel with Digital Device vs. Sharing of Information – Accommodation**

Column: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: I do not share)

Row: When travelling, do you normally bring a digital device for accessing the Internet?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval) 0,05

Observed Frequencies

	Share	Do Not Share	Row totals
Bring Digital Device	70,	49,	119,
Percent of total	0,41667	0,29167	0,70833
Do Not Bring Digital Device	16,	33,	49,
Percent of total	0,09524	0,19643	0,29167
Column totals	86,	82,	168,
Percent of total	0,5119	0,4881	

Expected Frequencies

	Share	Do Not Share	Row totals
Bring Digital Device	61	58	119,
Percent of total	0,3626	0,34573	0,70833
Do Not Bring Digital Device	25	24	49,
Percent of total	0,14931	0,14236	0,29167
Column totals	86,	82,	168,
Percent of total	0,5119	0,4881	

Statistics	Value	p-level
Chi-square (df=1)	9,514	0,00204

Travel with Digital Device vs. Sharing of Information – Tours/Activities

Column: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: I do not share)

Row: When travelling, do you normally bring a digital device for accessing the Internet?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval) 0,05

Observed Frequencies

	Share	Do Not Share	Row totals
Bring Digital Device	79,	40,	119,
Percent of total	0,47024	0,2381	0,70833
Do Not Bring Digital Device	22,	27,	49,
Percent of total	0,13095	0,16071	0,29167
Column totals	101,	67,	168,
Percent of total	0,60119	0,39881	

Expected Frequencies

	Share	Do Not Share	Row totals
Bring Digital Device	72	47	119,
Percent of total	0,42584	0,28249	0,70833
Do Not Bring Digital Device	29	20	49,
Percent of total	0,17535	0,11632	0,29167
Column totals	101,	67,	168,
Percent of total	0,60119	0,39881	

Statistics	Value	p-level
Chi-square (df=1)	6,68455	0,00973

Travel with Digital Device vs. Sharing of Information while staying at Accommodation

Column: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation?

Row: When travelling, do you normally bring a digital device for accessing the Internet?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval) 0,05

Observed Frequencies

	Not During	During	Row totals
Yes	75,	44,	119,
Percent of total	0,44643	0,2619	0,70833
No	45,	4,	49,
Percent of total	0,26786	0,02381	0,29167
Column totals	120,	48,	168,
Percent of total	0,71429	0,28571	

Expected Frequencies

	Not During	During	Row totals
Yes	85,	34,	119,
Percent of total	0,50595	0,20238	0,70833
No	35,	14,	49,
Percent of total	0,20833	0,08333	0,29167
Column totals	120,	48,	168,
Percent of total	0,71429	0,28571	

Statistics	Value	p-level
Chi-square (df=1)	14,11765	0,00017

Gender vs. Sharing to keep Friend and Family updated on Travel Experiences

Column: Why would you want to share experiences online? (Focus: To Keep friends and family updated on my travel experiences)

Row: What is your Gender?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval) 0,05

Observed Frequencies

	No	Yes	Row totals
Female	6,	92,	98,

Percent of total	0,03488	0,53488	0,56977
Male	16,	58,	74,
Percent of total	0,09302	0,33721	0,43023
Column totals	22,	150,	172,
Percent of total	0,12791	0,87209	
Observed Frequencies			
	No	Yes	Row totals
Female	13,	85,	98,
Percent of total	0,07288	0,49689	0,56977
Male	9,	65,	74,
Percent of total	0,05503	0,3752	0,43023
Column totals	22,	150,	172,
Percent of total	0,12791	0,87209	
Statistics	Value	p-level	
Chi-square (df=1)	9,08007	0,00258	

Travel Form vs. Sharing to give back to someone who has already helped

Column: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: To give something back to someone who already has or might help me)

Row: How are you travelling?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval)

0,05

Observed Frequencies

	No	Yes	Row totals
Not Alone	105,	33,	138,
Percent of total	0,61047	0,19186	0,80233
Alone	16,	18,	34,
Percent of total	0,09302	0,10465	0,19767
Column totals	121,	51,	172,
Percent of total	0,70349	0,29651	

Expected Frequencies

	No	Yes	Row totals
Not Alone	97	41	138,
Percent of total	0,56443	0,2379	0,80233
Alone	24	10	34,
Percent of total	0,13906	0,05861	0,19767
Column totals	121,	51,	172,
Percent of total	0,70349	0,29651	

Statistics

Value

p-level

Chi-square (df=1)

11,01968

0,0009

Travel Form vs. Sharing for the Enjoyment of Helping Others

Column: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: For the enjoyment of helping other travellers)

Row: How are you travelling?

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval)

0,05

Observed Frequencies

	No	Yes	Row totals
Not Alone	87,	51,	138,
Percent of total	0,50581	0,29651	0,80233
Alone	15,	19,	34,
Percent of total	0,08721	0,11047	0,19767

Column totals	102,	70,	172,
Percent of total	0,59302	0,40698	
Expected Frequencies			
	No	Yes	Row totals
Not Alone	82	56	138,
Percent of total	0,4758	0,32653	0,80233
Alone	20	14	34,
Percent of total	0,11723	0,08045	0,19767
Column totals	102,	70,	172,
Percent of total	0,59302	0,40698	
Statistics	Value	p-level	
Chi-square (df=1)	4,04854	0,04421	

Experiences that Motivates to Share

When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online?

An experience, which is... :

Comparing Multiple Independent Samples

	Sample size	Sum of Ranks
Extraordinary	172	164.495,5
Great	172	128.501,5
Somewhat Average	172	82.257,
Negative	172	91.184,5
Extremely Negative	172	118.406,
Challenging Initial Beliefs	172	113.849,
Developing Community	172	125.025,
Challenging Personal Boundaries and abilities	172	123.657,5
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA		
H	160,76504	N 1376
Degrees Of Freedom	7	p-level 0,E+0
H (corrected)	169,31349	

Gender Vs. Motivation to share Extraordinary Experiences

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online?

An experience, which is... : (Focus: Extraordinary)

Row: What is your gender?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	6,	1,	14,	40,	37,	98,
Male	16,	8,	7,	19,	24,	74,
Total	22,	9,	21,	59,	61,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Female	12,53488	5,12791	11,96512	33,61628	34,75581
Male	9,46512	3,87209	9,03488	25,38372	26,24419

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,06122	0,0102	0,14286	0,40816	0,37755	1,
Male	0,21622	0,10811	0,09459	0,25676	0,32432	1,
Total	0,12791	0,05233	0,12209	0,34302	0,35465	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,27273	0,11111	0,66667	0,67797	0,60656	0,56977
Male	0,72727	0,88889	0,33333	0,32203	0,39344	0,43023

Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,
<i>Proportions of Total</i>						
VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,03488	0,00581	0,0814	0,23256	0,21512	0,56977
Male	0,09302	0,04651	0,0407	0,11047	0,13953	0,43023
Total	0,12791	0,05233	0,12209	0,34302	0,35465	1,
<i>Chi-squared Values</i>						
VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
Female	3,40687	3,32292	0,34607	1,21227	0,14491	
Male	4,5118	4,40062	0,45831	1,60543	0,1919	
<i>Summary</i>						
Chi-square	19,6011					
d.f.	4					
p-level > X	0,0006					

Gender Vs. Motivation to share Experiences that Develop Community

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Developing Community...)

Row: What is your gender?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	18,	7,	30,	27,	16,	98,
Male	21,	13,	17,	19,	4,	74,
Total	39,	20,	47,	46,	20,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
Female	22,22093	11,39535	26,77907	26,2093	11,39535	
Male	16,77907	8,60465	20,22093	19,7907	8,60465	

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,18367	0,07143	0,30612	0,27551	0,16327	1,
Male	0,28378	0,17568	0,22973	0,25676	0,05405	1,
Total	0,22674	0,11628	0,27326	0,26744	0,11628	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,46154	0,35	0,6383	0,58696	0,8	0,56977
Male	0,53846	0,65	0,3617	0,41304	0,2	0,43023
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,10465	0,0407	0,17442	0,15698	0,09302	0,56977
Male	0,12209	0,07558	0,09884	0,11047	0,02326	0,43023
Total	0,22674	0,11628	0,27326	0,26744	0,11628	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
Female	0,80178	1,69535	0,38741	0,02385	1,86065	
Male	1,06181	2,24519	0,51305	0,03159	2,46411	

Summary

Chi-square	11,0848					
d.f.	4					
p-level > X	0,02563					

Lowest value identified // Correlation between Every Day use of Social Media and Social Media used for Sharing (Focus: Forums)
Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
Everyday use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient R Standard Error t p-value H0 (5%)		Everyday Use 1,	Use for Sharing
Use for Sharing	Pearson Correlation Coefficient R Standard Error t p-value H0 (5%)		0,34235 0,00519 4,75085 0, rejected	1,
R				
Variable vs. Variable		R		
Use for Sharing vs. Everyday Use		0,34235		

Highest value identified // Correlation between Every Day use of Social Media and Social Media used for Sharing (Focus: Microblogs)
Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
		Everyday Use		Use for Sharing
Everyday use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
Use for Sharing	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,52593		1,
	R Standard Error	0,00426		
	t	8,06238		
	p-value	1,27676E-13		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		
R				
Variable vs. Variable		R		
Use for Sharing vs.				
Everyday Use		0,52593		

Travellers sharing to Keep Friends and family updated vs. Use of Social Networks to do so

Column: When travelling, to what degree would you use the following social media to share your experiences online? (Focus: Social Networks)

Row: Why would you want to share experiences online? (Focus: To Keep friends and family updated on my travel experiences)

Chi Square Test
Observed Frequencies

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	11,	4,	1,	16,
Yes – Share	24,	19,	93,	136,
Total	35,	23,	94,	152,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	
No – Do not share	3,68421	2,42105	9,89474	
Yes – Share	31,31579	20,57895	84,10526	

Row Proportions

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,6875	0,25	0,0625	1,

Yes – Share	0,17647	0,13971	0,68382	1,
Total	0,23026	0,15132	0,61842	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,31429	0,17391	0,01064	0,10526
Yes – Share	0,68571	0,82609	0,98936	0,89474
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,07237	0,02632	0,00658	0,10526
Yes – Share	0,15789	0,125	0,61184	0,89474
Total	0,23026	0,15132	0,61842	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
No – Do not share	14,52707	1,02975	7,9958
Yes – Share	1,70907	0,12115	0,94068

Summary

Chi-square	26,32351
d.f.	2
p-level > X	0,

Gender vs. Use of Social Networks to Share

Column: When travelling, to what degree would you use the following social media to share your experiences online? (Focus: Social Networks)

Row: What is your gender?

Chi Square Test*Observed Frequencies*

VARS	Do not use	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	10,	8,	9,	7,	26,	38,	98,
Male	10,	16,	2,	16,	12,	18,	74,
Total	20,	24,	11,	23,	38,	56,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Do not use	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Female	11,39535	13,67442	6,26744	13,10465	21,65116	31,90698
Male	8,60465	10,32558	4,73256	9,89535	16,34884	24,09302

Row Proportions

VARS	Do not use	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,10204	0,08163	0,09184	0,07143	0,26531	0,38776	1,
Male	0,13514	0,21622	0,02703	0,21622	0,16216	0,24324	1,
Total	0,11628	0,13953	0,06395	0,13372	0,22093	0,32558	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Do not use	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,5	0,33333	0,81818	0,30435	0,68421	0,67857	0,56977
Male	0,5	0,66667	0,18182	0,69565	0,31579	0,32143	0,43023
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	Do not use	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
Female	0,05814	0,04651	0,05233	0,0407	0,15116	0,22093	0,56977
Male	0,05814	0,09302	0,01163	0,09302	0,06977	0,10465	0,43023
Total	0,11628	0,13953	0,06395	0,13372	0,22093	0,32558	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	Do not use	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
Female	0,17086	2,35469	1,19138	2,84378	0,8735	1,16354
Male	0,22627	3,11837	1,57777	3,76609	1,1568	1,5409

Summary

Chi-square	19,98395
d.f.	5
p-level > X	0,00126

Use of Social Networks to share vs. Sharing when at Accommodation

Column: When travelling, to what degree would you use the following social media to share your experiences online? (Focus: Social Networks)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: While I am actually staying at my accommodation)

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	33,	18,	55,	106,
Yes – Share	2,	5,	39,	46,
Total	35,	23,	94,	152,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
No – Do not share	24,40789	16,03947	65,55263
Yes – Share	10,59211	6,96053	28,44737

Row Proportions

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,31132	0,16981	0,51887	1,
Yes – Share	0,04348	0,1087	0,84783	1,
Total	0,23026	0,15132	0,61842	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,94286	0,78261	0,58511	0,69737
Yes – Share	0,05714	0,21739	0,41489	0,30263
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,21711	0,11842	0,36184	0,69737
Yes – Share	0,01316	0,03289	0,25658	0,30263
Total	0,23026	0,15132	0,61842	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
No – Do not share	3,02461	0,23964	1,69876
Yes – Share	6,96975	0,55221	3,91453

Summary

Chi-square	16,39948
d.f.	2
p-level > X	0,00027

Use of Social Networks to share vs. Sharing after having finished the Tour/Activity

Column: When travelling, to what degree would you use the following social media to share your experiences online? (Focus: Social Networks)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (Focus: After having finished the tour/activity)

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	22,	13,	32,	67,
Yes – Share	13,	10,	62,	85,
Total	35,	23,	94,	152,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
No – Do not share	15,42763	10,13816	41,43421

Yes – Share	19,57237	12,86184	52,56579	
<i>Row Proportions</i>				
VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,32836	0,19403	0,47761	1,
Yes – Share	0,15294	0,11765	0,72941	1,
Total	0,23026	0,15132	0,61842	1,
<i>Column Proportions</i>				
VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,62857	0,56522	0,34043	0,44079
Yes – Share	0,37143	0,43478	0,65957	0,55921
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,
<i>Proportions of Total</i>				
VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Do not share	0,14474	0,08553	0,21053	0,44079
Yes – Share	0,08553	0,06579	0,40789	0,55921
Total	0,23026	0,15132	0,61842	1,
<i>Chi-squared Values</i>				
VARS	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	
No – Do not share	2,79991	0,80785	2,14809	
Yes – Share	2,20699	0,63678	1,6932	
<i>Summary</i>				
Chi-square	10,29282			
d.f.	2			
p-level > X	0,00582			

AWARENESS & INVESTIGATION

Gender vs. Start searching for Travel Info

Column: When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products? (Focus: Accommodation)

Row: What is your gender?

Chi Square Test

<i>Observed Frequencies</i>							
VARS	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	4,	16,	19,	18,	23,	18,	98,
Male	1,	1,	11,	17,	13,	31,	74,
Total	5,	17,	30,	35,	36,	49,	172,
<i>Expected Frequencies</i>							
VARS	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	
Female	2,84884	9,68605	17,09302	19,94186	20,51163	27,9186	
Male	2,15116	7,31395	12,90698	15,05814	15,48837	21,0814	
<i>Row Proportions</i>							
VARS	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	0,04082	0,16327	0,19388	0,18367	0,23469	0,18367	1,
Male	0,01351	0,01351	0,14865	0,22973	0,17568	0,41892	1,
Total	0,02907	0,09884	0,17442	0,20349	0,2093	0,28488	1,
<i>Column Proportions</i>							
VARS	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	0,8	0,94118	0,63333	0,51429	0,63889	0,36735	0,56977
Male	0,2	0,05882	0,36667	0,48571	0,36111	0,63265	0,43023
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	0,02326	0,09302	0,11047	0,10465	0,13372	0,10465	0,56977
Male	0,00581	0,00581	0,06395	0,09884	0,07558	0,18023	0,43023
Total	0,02907	0,09884	0,17442	0,20349	0,2093	0,28488	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.
Female	0,46516	4,11582	0,21275	0,18909	0,30188	3,52377
Male	0,61603	5,45068	0,28175	0,25042	0,39978	4,66661

Summary

<i>Chi-square</i>	20,47374
<i>d.f.</i>	5
<i>p-level > X</i>	0,00102

Gender vs. Start searching for Travel Info

Column: When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products? (Focus: Tours/Activities)

Row: What is your gender?

Chi Square Test*Observed Frequencies*

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	5,	11,	8,	25,	25,	24,	98,
Male	3,	0,E+0	6,	18,	16,	31,	74,
Total	8,	11,	14,	43,	41,	55,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.
Female	4,55814	6,26744	7,97674	24,5	23,36047	31,33721
Male	3,44186	4,73256	6,02326	18,5	17,63953	23,66279

Row Proportions

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	0,05102	0,11224	0,08163	0,2551	0,2551	0,2449	1,
Male	0,04054	0,E+0	0,08108	0,24324	0,21622	0,41892	1,
Total	0,04651	0,06395	0,0814	0,25	0,23837	0,31977	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	0,625	1,	0,57143	0,5814	0,60976	0,43636	0,56977
Male	0,375	0,E+0	0,42857	0,4186	0,39024	0,56364	0,43023
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Female	0,02907	0,06395	0,04651	0,14535	0,14535	0,13953	0,56977
Male	0,01744	0,E+0	0,03488	0,10465	0,09302	0,18023	0,43023
Total	0,04651	0,06395	0,0814	0,25	0,23837	0,31977	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Don't Search	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.
Female	0,04283	3,57356	0,00007	0,0102	0,11507	1,71791
Male	0,05673	4,73256	0,00009	0,01351	0,15239	2,27508

Summary

<i>Chi-square</i>	12,69
<i>d.f.</i>	5
<i>p-level > X</i>	0,02646

Travel Duration vs. Start searching for Travel Info

Column: When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products? (Focus: Accommodation)

Row: In total, for how long will you be away from your country of residence?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Don't search	More than 1 M bef	Less than 1 M	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	1,	37,	10,	4,	52,
22 – 28 Days	1,	18,	4,	6,	29,
29 Days or more	3,	27,	22,	39,	91,
Total	5,	82,	36,	49,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	
Les than 21 Days	1,51163	24,7907	10,88372	14,81395	
22 – 28 Days	0,84302	13,82558	6,06977	8,26163	
29 Days or more	2,64535	43,38372	19,04651	25,92442	

Row Proportions

VARS	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	0,01923	0,71154	0,19231	0,07692	1,
22 – 28 Days	0,03448	0,62069	0,13793	0,2069	1,
29 Days or more	0,03297	0,2967	0,24176	0,42857	1,
Total	0,02907	0,47674	0,2093	0,28488	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	0,2	0,45122	0,27778	0,08163	0,30233
22 – 28 Days	0,2	0,21951	0,11111	0,12245	0,1686
29 Days or more	0,6	0,32927	0,61111	0,79592	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	0,00581	0,21512	0,05814	0,02326	0,30233
22 – 28 Days	0,00581	0,10465	0,02326	0,03488	0,1686
29 Days or more	0,01744	0,15698	0,12791	0,22674	0,52907
Total	0,02907	0,47674	0,2093	0,28488	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	
Les than 21 Days	0,17317	6,01302	0,07176	7,89402	
22 – 28 Days	0,02923	1,2604	0,70578	0,61912	
29 Days or more	0,04755	6,18726	0,45799	6,59497	

Summary

Chi-square	30,05427
d.f.	6
p-level > X	0,00004

Travel Duration vs. Start searching for Travel Info

Column: When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products? (Focus: Tours/Activities)

Row: In total, for how long will you be away from your country of residence?

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Don't search	More than 1 M bef	Less than 1 M	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	3,	24,	18,	7,	52,
22 – 28 Days	1,	15,	6,	7,	29,
29 Days or more	4,	29,	17,	41,	91,
Total	8,	68,	41,	55,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go
Les than 21 Days	2,4186	20,55814	12,39535	16,62791
22 – 28 Days	1,34884	11,46512	6,91279	9,27326
29 Days or more	4,23256	35,97674	21,69186	29,09884

Row Proportions

VARs	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	0,05769	0,46154	0,34615	0,13462	1,
22 – 28 Days	0,03448	0,51724	0,2069	0,24138	1,
29 Days or more	0,04396	0,31868	0,18681	0,45055	1,
Total	0,04651	0,39535	0,23837	0,31977	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	0,375	0,35294	0,43902	0,12727	0,30233
22 – 28 Days	0,125	0,22059	0,14634	0,12727	0,1686
29 Days or more	0,5	0,42647	0,41463	0,74545	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go	Total
Les than 21 Days	0,01744	0,13953	0,10465	0,0407	0,30233
22 – 28 Days	0,00581	0,08721	0,03488	0,0407	0,1686
29 Days or more	0,02326	0,1686	0,09884	0,23837	0,52907
Total	0,04651	0,39535	0,23837	0,31977	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Don't search	More than 1 mth bef	Less than 1 mth	On the go
Les than 21 Days	0,13976	0,57624	2,53419	5,57476
22 – 28 Days	0,09022	1,08986	0,12053	0,55727
29 Days or more	0,01278	1,35296	1,01483	4,86747

Summary

Chi-square	17,93085
d.f.	6
p-level > X	0,00641

Online Media Use to Search for Travel Information

To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to accommodation
Comparing Multiple Independent Samples

	Sample size	Sum of Ranks
Travel Blogs	172	132.583,5
Micro Blogs (e.g. Twitter)	172	80.116,
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	172	136.141,5
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	172	109.912,5
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	172	87.051,
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	172	166.353,
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	172	123.322,5
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	172	189.800,
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	172	173.646,
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA		
H	335,6232	N 1548
Degrees Of Freedom	8	p-level 0,E+0
H (corrected)	357,0464	

Online Media Use to Search for Travel Information

To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to tours/activities

Comparing Multiple Independent Samples

	Sample size	Sum of Ranks
Travel Blogs	172	127.267,
Micro Blogs (e.g. Twitter)	172	80.866,5
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	172	133.721,5
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	172	112.367,
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	172	87.502,
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	172	152.917,5
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	172	122.297,
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	172	195.124,
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	172	186.863,5
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA		
H	364,23865	N 1548
Degrees Of Freedom	8	p-level 0,E+0
H (corrected)	387,43581	

Comparison of Mean Use of Rating & Reviews for Information Search

To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to accommodation / tours/activities?

Comparing Means [t-test assuming equal variances (homoscedastic)]

Descriptive Statistics			
VAR	Sample size	Mean	Variance
	172	2,57558	3,20478
	172	2,14535	2,76822
Summary			
Degrees Of Freedom	342	Hypothesized Mean Difference	0,E+0
Test Statistics	2,30872	Pooled Variance	2,9865
Two-tailed distribution			
p-level	0,02155	t Critical Value (5%)	1,96692

Correlation between use of social media and online media used for travel information

Variable 1: How often do you use the following Social Media?

Variable 2: To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to accommodation

Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Travel Blogs			
Sample size		172	Critical value (5%) 1,97402
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	Everyday Use	Information Search
	R Standard Error	1,	
	t		
	p-value		
	H0 (5%)		
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,15181	1,
	R Standard Error	0,00575	
	t	2,00254	
	p-value	0,04682	
	H0 (5%)	rejected	
R			
Variable vs. Variable		R	

Search vs. Everyday

0,15181

Microblogs

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
		Everyday Use	Information Search	
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,39793	1,	
	R Standard Error	0,00495		
	t	5,65545		
	p-value	0,		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable

R

Search vs. Everyday

0,39793

Social Networks

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
		5,3	No 7,3	
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,33213	1,	
	R Standard Error	0,00523		
	t	4,5911		
	p-value	0,00001		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable

R

Search vs. Everyday

0,33213

Media Sharing Sites

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
		Everyday Use	Information Search	
Everyday use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,33709	1,	
	R Standard Error	0,00521		
	t	4,66835		
	p-value	0,00001		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable

R

Search vs. Everyday

0,33709

Social News & Bookmarking Sites

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
		Everyday Use	Information Search	
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			

	<i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>		
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,40847 0,0049 5,83467 0, rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,40847

Rating & Review Sites

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	1,	
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,42584 0,00482 6,13643 0, rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,42584

Forums

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	1,	
Information search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,4732 0,00457 7,00347 5,55784E-11 rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,4732

Correlation between use of social media and social media used for travel information

Variable 1: How often do you use the following Social Media?

Variable 2: To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information in regards to tours/activities

Correlation Coefficients Matrix**Travel Blogs**

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i>	1,	

	<i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>		
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,17776 0,0057 2,35527 0,01965 rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,17776

Microblogs

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	1,	
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,46015 0,00464 6,75763 0, rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,46015

Social Networks

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	1,	
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,27107 0,00545 3,67177 0,00032 rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,27107

Media Sharing Sites

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
--------------------	-----	----------------------------	---------

		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	1,	
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i>	0,29608 0,00537 4,04168	1,

<i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,00008 <i>rejected</i>	
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R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,29608

Social News & Bookmarking Sites

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,	
	<i>R Standard Error</i>		
	<i>t</i>		
	<i>p-value</i>		
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>		
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,45929	1,
	<i>R Standard Error</i>	0,00464	
	<i>t</i>	6,74151	
	<i>p-value</i>	0,	
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>	<i>rejected</i>	

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,45929

Rating & Review Sites

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,	
	<i>R Standard Error</i>		
	<i>t</i>		
	<i>p-value</i>		
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>		
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,47147	1,
	<i>R Standard Error</i>	0,00457	
	<i>t</i>	6,97054	
	<i>p-value</i>	6,66864E-11	
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>	<i>rejected</i>	

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,47147

Forums

<i>Sample size</i>	172	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97402
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		<i>Everyday Use</i>	<i>Information Search</i>
Everyday Use	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,	
	<i>R Standard Error</i>		
	<i>t</i>		
	<i>p-value</i>		
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>		
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,49333	1,
	<i>R Standard Error</i>	0,00445	
	<i>t</i>	7,39466	
	<i>p-value</i>	6,17217E-12	
	<i>H0 (5%)</i>	<i>rejected</i>	

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
Search vs. Everyday	0,49333

PURCHASE

Correlation between time of information search and time of purchase – Accommodation

Variable 1: When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products

Variable 2: When do you normally purchase the majority of the following travel products?

Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Correlation Coefficients matrix				
Sample size		167	Critical value (5%)	1,97445
		Information Search	Purchase	
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
Purchase	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,69538	1,	
	R Standard Error	0,00313		
	t	12,42935		
	p-value	0,E+0		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable	R
Purchase vs. Search	0,69538

Correlation between time of information search and time of purchase – Tours/Activities

Variable 1: When do you normally search for information online regarding the following travel products

Variable 2: When do you normally purchase the majority of the following travel products?

Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Correlation Coefficients Matrix				
Sample size		164	Critical value (5%)	1,97472
		Information Search		Purchase
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
Purchase	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,63838		1,
	R Standard Error	0,00366		
	t	10,5561		
	p-value	0,E+0		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable	R
Purchase vs. Search	0,63838

Travel Duration vs. Time of Purchase – Accommodation

Column: When do you normally purchase the majority of the following travel products?

Row: In total, for how long will you be away from your country of residence?

Chi Square Test

Observed Frequencies

VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
21 Days or less	34,	11,	7,	52,
22-28 Days	20,	3,	6,	29,
More than 29 Days	30,	27,	34,	91,
Total	84,	41,	47,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep
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21 Days or less	25,39535	12,39535	14,2093	
22-28 Days	14,16279	6,91279	7,92442	
More than 29 Days	44,44186	21,69186	24,86628	
<i>Row Proportions</i>				
VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
21 Days or less	0,65385	0,21154	0,13462	1,
22-28 Days	0,68966	0,10345	0,2069	1,
More than 29 Days	0,32967	0,2967	0,37363	1,
Total	0,48837	0,23837	0,27326	1,
<i>Column Proportions</i>				
VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
21 Days or less	0,40476	0,26829	0,14894	0,30233
22-28 Days	0,2381	0,07317	0,12766	0,1686
More than 29 Days	0,35714	0,65854	0,7234	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,
<i>Proportions of Total</i>				
VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
21 Days or less	0,19767	0,06395	0,0407	0,30233
22-28 Days	0,11628	0,01744	0,03488	0,1686
More than 29 Days	0,17442	0,15698	0,19767	0,52907
Total	0,48837	0,23837	0,27326	1,
<i>Chi-squared Values</i>				
VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	
21 Days or less	2,9155	0,15707	3,65775	
22-28 Days	2,40581	2,21473	0,46734	
More than 29 Days	4,69304	1,29894	3,35494	
<i>Summary</i>				
Chi-square	21,16511			
d.f.	4			
p-level > X	0,00029			

Travel Duration vs. Time of Purchase – Tours/Activity

Column: When do you normally purchase the majority of the following travel products?

Row: In total, for how long will you be away from your country of residence?

Chi Square Test

Observed Frequencies

VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
21 Days or less	23,	12,	17,	52,
22-28 Days	12,	5,	12,	29,
More than 29 Days	24,	9,	58,	91,
Total	59,	26,	87,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	
21 Days or less	17,83721	7,86047	26,30233	
22-28 Days	9,94767	4,38372	14,6686	
More than 29 Days	31,21512	13,75581	46,02907	

Row Proportions

VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
21 Days or less	0,44231	0,23077	0,32692	1,
22-28 Days	0,41379	0,17241	0,41379	1,
More than 29 Days	0,26374	0,0989	0,63736	1,
Total	0,34302	0,15116	0,50581	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
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21 Days or less	0,38983	0,46154	0,1954	0,30233
22-28 Days	0,20339	0,19231	0,13793	0,1686
More than 29 Days	0,40678	0,34615	0,66667	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep	Total
21 Days or less	0,13372	0,06977	0,09884	0,30233
22-28 Days	0,06977	0,02907	0,06977	0,1686
More than 29 Days	0,13953	0,05233	0,33721	0,52907
Total	0,34302	0,15116	0,50581	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	More than 1 M bef	Less 1 M bef	After dep
21 Days or less	1,49431	2,17999	3,28995
22-28 Days	0,42342	0,08664	0,48549
More than 29 Days	1,66771	1,64423	3,11332

*Summary**Chi-square* 14,38507*d.f.* 4*p-level > X* 0,00616**Travel Experience vs. Time of Purchase – Accommodation***Column: When do you normally purchase the majority of the following travel products?**Row: Is this your first time travelling on a free individual tour, i.e. non-fixed package tour?***Chi Square Test***Observed Frequencies*

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	10,	20,	16,	12,	13,	71,
No	3,	12,	23,	25,	32,	95,
Total	13,	32,	39,	37,	45,	166,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.
Yes	5,56024	13,68675	16,68072	15,8253	19,24699
No	7,43976	18,31325	22,31928	21,1747	25,75301

Row Proportions

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	0,14085	0,28169	0,22535	0,16901	0,1831	1,
No	0,03158	0,12632	0,24211	0,26316	0,33684	1,
Total	0,07831	0,19277	0,23494	0,22289	0,27108	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	0,76923	0,625	0,41026	0,32432	0,28889	0,42771
No	0,23077	0,375	0,58974	0,67568	0,71111	0,57229
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	0,06024	0,12048	0,09639	0,07229	0,07831	0,42771
No	0,01807	0,07229	0,13855	0,1506	0,19277	0,57229
Total	0,07831	0,19277	0,23494	0,22289	0,27108	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.
Yes	3,54507	2,9121	0,02778	0,92465	2,02758
No	2,64948	2,17641	0,02076	0,69106	1,51535

*Summary**Chi-square* 16,49025

d.f. 4
p-level > X 0,00243

Travel Experience vs. Time of Purchase – Tours/Activity

Column: When do you normally purchase the majority of the following travel products?

Row: Is this your first time travelling on a free individual tour, i.e. non-fixed package tour?

Chi Square Test

Observed Frequencies

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	7,	13,	13,	10,	28,	71,
No	0,E+0	8,	16,	16,	55,	95,
Total	7,	21,	29,	26,	83,	166,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	2,99398	8,98193	12,40361	11,12048	35,5	
No	4,00602	12,01807	16,59639	14,87952	47,5	

Row Proportions

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	0,09859	0,1831	0,1831	0,14085	0,39437	1,
No	0,E+0	0,08421	0,16842	0,16842	0,57895	1,
Total	0,04217	0,12651	0,1747	0,15663	0,5	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	1,	0,61905	0,44828	0,38462	0,33735	0,42771
No	0,E+0	0,38095	0,55172	0,61538	0,66265	0,57229
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	0,04217	0,07831	0,07831	0,06024	0,16867	0,42771
No	0,E+0	0,04819	0,09639	0,09639	0,33133	0,57229
Total	0,04217	0,12651	0,1747	0,15663	0,5	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	6 M bef.	3-6 M bef.	1-2 M bef.	Less 1 M	After Dep.	Total
Yes	5,36017	1,79749	0,02868	0,1129	1,58451	
No	4,00602	1,34339	0,02143	0,08438	1,18421	

Summary

Chi-square	15,52317
d.f.	4
p-level > X	0,00373

Degree to which stated online media influence final decision to purchase

To what degree does content on the below online media influence your final decision to purchase accommodation

Comparing Multiple Independent Samples

	Sample size	Sum of Ranks	Mean of ranks
Travel Blogs	172	132.747,	771,78
Micro Blogs (e.g. Twitter)	172	82.497,	479,63
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	172	132.962,	773,03
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	172	107.575,5	625,44
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	172	83.494,5	485,43
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	172	166.769,5	969,59
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	172	123.192,5	716,24
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely	172	190.176,	1105,67

Planet, National Geographic Traveller)

Travel agents/tour operators' websites 172 179.512, 1043,67

Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA

H 358,35658 N 1548

Degrees Of Freedom 8 p-level 0,E+0

H (corrected) 375,84365

Degree to which stated online media influence final decision to purchaseTo what degree does content on the below online media influence your final decision to purchase tours/activities**Comparing Multiple Independent Samples**

	Sample size	Sum of Ranks	Mean of ranks
Travel Blogs	172	133.329,	775,17
Micro Blogs (e.g. Twitter)	172	80.590,5	468,55
Social Networks (e.g. Facebook)	172	129.894,	755,20
Media Sharing Sites (e.g. YouTube, Flickr)	172	109.965,5	639,33
Social News & Bookmarking (e.g. Pinterest, Digg.com)	172	77.708,5	451,79
Rating & Review Sites (e.g. TripAdvisor)	172	163.132,5	948,44
Forums (e.g. Thorn Three)	172	118.463,	688,74
Publishers/travel professionals' websites (e.g. Lonely Planet, National Geographic Traveller)	172	196.210,5	1140,76
Travel agents/tour operators' websites	172	189.632,5	1102,51
Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA			
H	426,71727	N	1548
Degrees Of Freedom	8	p-level	0,E+0
H (corrected)	446,51636		

Lowest value identified // Correlation between Online Media used to Search Information and content found on online media's impact on the decision to purchase (Focus: Accommodation – Travel Agents/Tour Operator's Website)**Correlation Coefficients Matrix**

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
		Information Search		Impact
Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
Impact	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,53729	1,	
	R Standard Error	0,00418		
	t	8,30627		
	p-value	2,9754E-14		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable	R
Impact vs. Search	0,53729

Highest value identified // Correlation between Online Media used to Search Information and content found on online media's impact on the decision to purchase (Focus: Tours/Activities – Social News & Bookmarking Sites)**Correlation Coefficients Matrix**

Sample size		172	Critical value (5%)	1,97402
		Information Search		Impact

Information Search	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	1,	
Impact	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,71266 0,00289 13,24572 0,E+0 rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
<i>Impact vs. Search</i>	0,71266

Comparison of Mean for Rating & Reviews in regards to Tours/Activities

Variable 1: To what degree do you use the below online media to search for information

Variable 2: To what degree does content on the below online media influence your final decision to purchase

Comparing Means [t-test assuming equal variances (homoscedastic)]

Descriptive Statistics				
VAR	Sample size	Mean	Variance	
	172	2,14535	2,76822	
	172	2,63953	2,7348	
Summary				
Degrees Of Freedom	342	Hypothesized Mean Difference		0,E+0
Test Statistics	2,76283	Pooled Variance		2,75151
Two-tailed distribution				
p-level	0,00604	t Critical Value (5%)		1,96692
One-tailed distribution				
p-level	0,00302	t Critical Value (5%)		1,64932

Comparison of Mean Trust in Travel Agents and content found on TA/TO's website's impact on Decision to Purchase Accommodation

Variable 1: When searching for travel information via online media, to what degree do you find the following senders of information trustworthy (Focus: Travel Agent)

Variable 2: To what degree does content on the below online media influence your final decision to purchase (Focus: Travel Agents/Tour Operator's Website)

Correlation Coefficients Matrix

<i>Sample size</i>	152	<i>Critical value (5%)</i>	1,97591
		<i>Travel Agent</i>	<i>TA/TO Website</i>
Travel Agent	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	1,	
TA/TO Website	Pearson Correlation Coefficient <i>R Standard Error</i> <i>t</i> <i>p-value</i> <i>H0 (5%)</i>	0,53215 0,00478 7,69801 1,7204E-12 rejected	1,

R

<i>Variable vs. Variable</i>	<i>R</i>
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TA/TO vs. TA

0,53215

Comparison of Mean Trust in Travel Agents and Content found on TA/TO's Website's Impact on Decision to Purchase Tours/Activities

Variable 1: When searching for travel information via online media, to what degree do you find the following senders of information trustworthy (Focus: Travel Agent)

Variable 2: To what degree does content on the below online media influence your final decision to purchase (Focus: Travel Agents/Tour Operator's Website)

Correlation Coefficients Matrix

Sample size		158	Critical value (5%)	1,97529
		Travel Agent		TA/TO Website
Travel Agent	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	1,		
	R Standard Error			
	t			
	p-value			
	H0 (5%)			
TA/TO Website	Pearson Correlation Coefficient	0,48632	1,	
	R Standard Error	0,00489		
	t	6,95148		
	p-value	9,29536E-11		
	H0 (5%)	rejected		

R

Variable vs. Variable	R
TA/TO vs. TA	0,48632

DELIVERY
Experiences to Share vs. Sharing while at the accommodation

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Extraordinary)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: While I am actually staying at my accommodation)

Chi Square Test
Observed Frequencies

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not share	21,	7,	18,	40,	38,	124,
Yes – Share	1,	2,	3,	19,	23,	48,
Total	22,	9,	21,	59,	61,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not share	15,86047	6,48837	15,13953	42,53488	43,97674
Yes – Share	6,13953	2,51163	5,86047	16,46512	17,02326

Row Proportions

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not share	0,16935	0,05645	0,14516	0,32258	0,30645	1,
Yes – Share	0,02083	0,04167	0,0625	0,39583	0,47917	1,
Total	0,12791	0,05233	0,12209	0,34302	0,35465	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not share	0,95455	0,77778	0,85714	0,67797	0,62295	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,04545	0,22222	0,14286	0,32203	0,37705	0,27907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not share	0,12209	0,0407	0,10465	0,23256	0,22093	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,00581	0,01163	0,01744	0,11047	0,13372	0,27907
Total	0,12791	0,05233	0,12209	0,34302	0,35465	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not share	1,66545	0,04034	0,54046	0,15107	0,81228
Yes – Share	4,30241	0,10422	1,39618	0,39026	2,09839

Summary

Chi-square	11,50106
d.f.	4
p-level > X	0,02147

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing while at the Tour/Activity

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Challenging my Initial Beliefs)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (Focus: While I am actually on the tour/activity)

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Not Share	61,	52,	37,	150,
Yes – Share	3,	8,	11,	22,
Total	64,	60,	48,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
No – Not Share	55,81395	52,32558	41,86047
Yes – Share	8,18605	7,67442	6,13953

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,40667	0,34667	0,24667	1,
Yes – Share	0,13636	0,36364	0,5	1,
Total	0,37209	0,34884	0,27907	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,95313	0,86667	0,77083	0,87209
Yes – Share	0,04688	0,13333	0,22917	0,12791
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,35465	0,30233	0,21512	0,87209
Yes – Share	0,01744	0,04651	0,06395	0,12791
Total	0,37209	0,34884	0,27907	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low – Low	Average	High – Very High
No – Not Share	0,48187	0,00203	0,56435
Yes – Share	3,28548	0,01381	3,84787

Summary

Chi-square	8,19541
d.f.	2
p-level > X	0,01661

POST PURCHASE EVALUATION

Motivation to Share vs. Share after having Checked Out of Accommodation

Column: Why would you want to share experiences online? (Focus: For the enjoyment of helping other travellers)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: After having checked-out of my accommodation)

2x2 Tables Analysis

Alpha value (for confidence interval)

0,05

Observed Frequencies	Do not share	Share for enjoyment	Row totals
Do not share	86,	38,	124,
Percent of total	0,5	0,22093	0,72093
Share after having stayed	16,	32,	48,
Percent of total	0,09302	0,18605	0,27907
Column totals	102,	70,	172,
Percent of total	0,59302	0,40698	
Observed Frequencies	Do not share	Share for enjoyment	Row totals
Do not share	74	50	124,
Percent of total	0,42753	0,2934	0,72093
Share after having stayed	28	20	48,
Percent of total	0,16549	0,11357	0,27907
Column totals	102,	70,	172,
Percent of total	0,59302	0,40698	
Statistics	Value	p-level	
Chi-square (df=1)	18,60445	0,00002	

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Checked-Out of Accommodation

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Great)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: After having checked-out of my accommodation)

Chi Square Test

Observed Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	32,	13,	37,	30,	12,	124,
Yes – Share	3,	4,	16,	16,	9,	48,
Total	35,	17,	53,	46,	21,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	25,23256	12,25581	38,2093	33,16279	15,13953
Yes – Share	9,76744	4,74419	14,7907	12,83721	5,86047

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,25806	0,10484	0,29839	0,24194	0,09677	1,
Yes – Share	0,0625	0,08333	0,33333	0,33333	0,1875	1,
Total	0,20349	0,09884	0,30814	0,26744	0,12209	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,91429	0,76471	0,69811	0,65217	0,57143	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,08571	0,23529	0,30189	0,34783	0,42857	0,27907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,18605	0,07558	0,21512	0,17442	0,06977	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,01744	0,02326	0,09302	0,09302	0,05233	0,27907

Total	0,20349	0,09884	0,30814	0,26744	0,12209	1,
<i>Chi-squared Values</i>						
VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
No – Not Share	1,81505	0,04519	0,03827	0,30164	0,65106	
Yes – Share	4,68887	0,11674	0,09887	0,77924	1,68189	
<i>Summary</i>						
Chi-square	10,21682					
d.f.	4					
p-level > X	0,03693					

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Checked-Out of Accommodation

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Negative)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: After having checked-out of my accommodation)

Chi Square Test

Observed Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	57,	23,	31,	9,	4,	124,
Yes – Share	7,	10,	20,	7,	4,	48,
Total	64,	33,	51,	16,	8,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
No – Not Share	46,13953	23,7907	36,76744	11,53488	5,76744	
Yes – Share	17,86047	9,2093	14,23256	4,46512	2,23256	

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,45968	0,18548	0,25	0,07258	0,03226	1,
Yes – Share	0,14583	0,20833	0,41667	0,14583	0,08333	1,
Total	0,37209	0,19186	0,29651	0,09302	0,04651	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,89063	0,69697	0,60784	0,5625	0,5	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,10938	0,30303	0,39216	0,4375	0,5	0,27907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,3314	0,13372	0,18023	0,05233	0,02326	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,0407	0,05814	0,11628	0,0407	0,02326	0,27907
Total	0,37209	0,19186	0,29651	0,09302	0,04651	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
No – Not Share	2,55637	0,02628	0,9047	0,55706	0,54164	
Yes – Share	6,60395	0,06789	2,33713	1,43907	1,39922	

Summary

Chi-square	16,43332					
d.f.	4					
p-level > X	0,00249					

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Checked-Out of Accommodation

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Extremely Negative)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to accommodation? (Focus: After having checked-out of my accommodation)

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	47,	15,	23,	26,	13,	124,
Yes – Share	5,	6,	11,	14,	12,	48,
Total	52,	21,	34,	40,	25,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	37,48837	15,13953	24,51163	28,83721	18,02326
Yes – Share	14,51163	5,86047	9,48837	11,16279	6,97674

Row Proportions

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,37903	0,12097	0,18548	0,20968	0,10484	1,
Yes – Share	0,10417	0,125	0,22917	0,29167	0,25	1,
Total	0,30233	0,12209	0,19767	0,23256	0,14535	1,

Column Proportions

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,90385	0,71429	0,67647	0,65	0,52	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,09615	0,28571	0,32353	0,35	0,48	0,27907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,27326	0,08721	0,13372	0,15116	0,07558	0,72093
Yes – Share	0,02907	0,03488	0,06395	0,0814	0,06977	0,27907
Total	0,30233	0,12209	0,19767	0,23256	0,14535	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	2,41331	0,00129	0,09322	0,27914	1,40003
Yes – Share	6,23438	0,00332	0,24082	0,72112	3,61674

Summary

Chi-square	15,00339
d.f.	4
p-level > X	0,00469

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Finished the Tour/Activity

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Great)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (Focus: After having finished the tour/activity)

Chi Square Test**Observed Frequencies**

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	29,	11,	24,	13,	4,	81,
Yes – Share	6,	6,	29,	33,	17,	91,
Total	35,	17,	53,	46,	21,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARS	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	16,48256	8,00581	24,9593	21,66279	9,88953
Yes – Share	18,51744	8,99419	28,0407	24,33721	11,11047

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,35802	0,1358	0,2963	0,16049	0,04938	1,
Yes – Share	0,06593	0,06593	0,31868	0,36264	0,18681	1,
Total	0,20349	0,09884	0,30814	0,26744	0,12209	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,82857	0,64706	0,45283	0,28261	0,19048	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,17143	0,35294	0,54717	0,71739	0,80952	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,1686	0,06395	0,13953	0,07558	0,02326	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,03488	0,03488	0,1686	0,19186	0,09884	0,52907
Total	0,20349	0,09884	0,30814	0,26744	0,12209	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	9,50619	1,11983	0,03687	3,46419	3,50741
Yes – Share	8,46155	0,99677	0,03282	3,08351	3,12198

Summary

<i>Chi-square</i>	33,33111
<i>d.f.</i>	4
<i>p-level > X</i>	0,

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Finished the Tour/Activity

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Extremely Negative)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (Focus: After having finished the tour/activity)

Chi Square Test*Observed Frequencies*

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	33,	12,	14,	14,	8,	81,
Yes – Share	19,	9,	20,	26,	17,	91,
Total	52,	21,	34,	40,	25,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	24,48837	9,88953	16,01163	18,83721	11,77326
Yes – Share	27,51163	11,11047	17,98837	21,16279	13,22674

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,40741	0,14815	0,17284	0,17284	0,09877	1,
Yes – Share	0,20879	0,0989	0,21978	0,28571	0,18681	1,
Total	0,30233	0,12209	0,19767	0,23256	0,14535	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,63462	0,57143	0,41176	0,35	0,32	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,36538	0,42857	0,58824	0,65	0,68	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,19186	0,06977	0,0814	0,0814	0,04651	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,11047	0,05233	0,11628	0,15116	0,09884	0,52907
Total	0,30233	0,12209	0,19767	0,23256	0,14535	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	2,95846	0,45038	0,25273	1,24215	1,20931
Yes – Share	2,63335	0,40089	0,22496	1,10565	1,07641
Summary					
Chi-square	11,55429				
d.f.	4				
p-level > X	0,02099				

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Finished the Tour/Activity

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Challenging my initial beliefs)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (Focus: After having finished the tour/activity)

Chi Square Test

Observed Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	36,	7,	21,	13,	4,	81,
Yes – Share	11,	10,	39,	22,	9,	91,
Total	47,	17,	60,	35,	13,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	22,13372	8,00581	28,25581	16,48256	6,12209
Yes – Share	24,86628	8,99419	31,74419	18,51744	6,87791

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,44444	0,08642	0,25926	0,16049	0,04938	1,
Yes – Share	0,12088	0,10989	0,42857	0,24176	0,0989	1,
Total	0,27326	0,09884	0,34884	0,20349	0,07558	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,76596	0,41176	0,35	0,37143	0,30769	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,23404	0,58824	0,65	0,62857	0,69231	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,2093	0,0407	0,12209	0,07558	0,02326	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,06395	0,05814	0,22674	0,12791	0,05233	0,52907
Total	0,27326	0,09884	0,34884	0,20349	0,07558	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	8,68691	0,12637	1,86322	0,73582	0,73558
Yes – Share	7,73231	0,11248	1,65847	0,65496	0,65475

Summary

Chi-square	22,96086
d.f.	4
p-level > X	0,00013

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Finished the Tour/Activity

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Developing Community...)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (Focus: After having finished the tour/activity)

Chi Square Test*Observed Frequencies*

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	32,	8,	22,	16,	3,	81,
Yes – Share	7,	12,	25,	30,	17,	91,
Total	39,	20,	47,	46,	20,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	18,36628	9,4186	22,13372	21,66279	9,4186
Yes – Share	20,63372	10,5814	24,86628	24,33721	10,5814

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,39506	0,09877	0,2716	0,19753	0,03704	1,
Yes – Share	0,07692	0,13187	0,27473	0,32967	0,18681	1,
Total	0,22674	0,11628	0,27326	0,26744	0,11628	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,82051	0,4	0,46809	0,34783	0,15	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,17949	0,6	0,53191	0,65217	0,85	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Column "1"	Column "2"	Column "3"	Column "4"	Column "5"	Total
No – Not Share	0,18605	0,04651	0,12791	0,09302	0,01744	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,0407	0,06977	0,14535	0,17442	0,09884	0,52907
Total	0,22674	0,11628	0,27326	0,26744	0,11628	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	10,12063	0,21367	0,00081	1,48029	4,37416
Yes – Share	9,00847	0,19019	0,00072	1,31762	3,89348

Summary

<i>Chi-square</i>	30,60004
<i>d.f.</i>	4
<i>p-level > X</i>	0,

Experiences to Share vs. Sharing after having Finished the Tour/Activity

Column: When travelling, to what degree would the below experiences motivate you to share them online? An experience, which is... : (Focus: Challenging Personal Boundaries...)

Row: When do you normally share information online in regards to tours/activities? (Focus: After having finished the tour/activity)

Chi Square Test*Observed Frequencies*

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	33,	9,	21,	10,	8,	81,
Yes – Share	11,	11,	18,	37,	14,	91,
Total	44,	20,	39,	47,	22,	172,

Expected Frequencies

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	20,72093	9,4186	18,36628	22,13372	10,36047
Yes – Share	23,27907	10,5814	20,63372	24,86628	11,63953

Row Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,40741	0,11111	0,25926	0,12346	0,09877	1,
Yes – Share	0,12088	0,12088	0,1978	0,40659	0,15385	1,
Total	0,25581	0,11628	0,22674	0,27326	0,12791	1,

Column Proportions

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,75	0,45	0,53846	0,21277	0,36364	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,25	0,55	0,46154	0,78723	0,63636	0,52907
Total	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,	1,

Proportions of Total

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	Total
No – Not Share	0,19186	0,05233	0,12209	0,05814	0,04651	0,47093
Yes – Share	0,06395	0,06395	0,10465	0,21512	0,0814	0,52907
Total	0,25581	0,11628	0,22674	0,27326	0,12791	1,

Chi-squared Values

VARs	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High
No – Not Share	7,27649	0,0186	0,37768	6,65171	0,53779
Yes – Share	6,47687	0,01656	0,33617	5,92076	0,4787

Summary

<i>Chi-square</i>	28,09133
<i>d.f.</i>	4
<i>p-level > X</i>	0,00001

8.7 List of Abbreviations

For ease of reading this thesis, a list of abbreviations and references is hereby stated:

Abbreviation	Referring to
ACC	Accommodation
eWOM	Electronic Word-of-Mouth
eWOMM	Electronic Word-of-Mouth Marketing
MS	Media Sharing Sites
H	Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA Statistics
H“#”	Hypothesis “#” / Referring to specific hypothesis number stated
NRGH	New Road Guest House
Publishers	Publishers/Travel Professional’s websites
r	Pearson Correlation Coefficient Statistics
R&R	Ratings & Reviews
SN	Social Network Sites
T/A	Tours/Activities
TA/TO	Travel Agents/Tour Operator’s Websites
t	T-Tests Statistics
UGC	User Generated Content
VB	Visit Beyond
WOM	Word-of-Mouth
WOMM	Word-of-Mouth Marketing
χ^2	Chi-square Statistics