



Social media marketing and brand recognition in companies in the hotel sector in Tarapoto, 2023

Marketing en redes sociales y reconocimiento de marca en empresas del sector hotelero de Tarapoto, 2023

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Submitted: 25-05-2023 | Revised: 01-09-2023 | Accepted: 03-01-2024 | Published: 04-01-2024

ABSTRACT

In nowadays digital, companies seek to remain present in the psyche of their customers to generate a positive image of their brand and to be remembered at the mention of their name. To this end, they have resorted to the use of social networks, an effective tool in this process. In this context, the goal was to analyze the connection between brand recognition and social media marketing in the tourism industry of Tarapoto. This study is framed within a quantitative, non-experimental and relational methodology. Two surveys were used, directed to a sample of 384 guests and potential clients. The findings showed that more than 50 % of respondents perceive both social media marketing and brand awareness in the hotel industry as insufficient. In addition, moderate correlations were found between the various dimensions of brand awareness and social media marketing. It was deduced that there is a significant relationship between these two variables, with a Spearman correlation index equal to 0,687 and the significance level equal to 0,001 in hotel companies in Tarapoto, for the year 2023.

Keywords: Marketing; Brand Recognition; Social Media; Hotel Industry.

RESUMEN

En la actualidad digital, las compañías buscan permanecer presentes en la psique de sus clientes para generar una imagen positiva de su marca y ser recordados al mencionar su nombre. Para ello, han recurrido al uso de las redes sociales, una herramienta eficaz en este proceso. Con este contexto, se estableció como meta analizar la conexión entre el reconocimiento de marca y el marketing en redes sociales en la industria turística de Tarapoto. Este estudio se enmarca en una metodología cuantitativa, no-experimental y de tipo relacional. Se emplearon dos encuestas dirigidas a una muestra de 384 huéspedes y posibles clientes. Los hallazgos mostraron que más del 50 % de los encuestados perciben como insuficiente tanto el marketing en redes sociales como el reconocimiento de marca en el ámbito hotelero. Además, se descubrieron correlaciones de moderadas entre las diversas dimensiones del reconocimiento de marca y el marketing en redes sociales. Se dedujo que hay una relación significativa entre estas dos variables, con un índice de correlación de Spearman igual a 0,687 y el nivel de significancia igual a 0,001 en empresas hoteleras de Tarapoto, para el año 2023.

Palabras clave: Marketing; Reconocimiento de Marca; Redes Sociales; Sector Hotelero.

INTRODUCTION

Brand appreciation and recognition became essential factors in the contemporary digital environment, where social media assumed a leading role in communication between companies and consumers. The expansion of platforms such as Facebook and Instagram profoundly modified organizations' interaction and positioning strategies, which shifted from dependence on traditional media to the construction of active communities in virtual spaces. In this new context, companies found social media to be an effective way to improve their visibility, consolidate their image, and strengthen customer loyalty, generating a closer and more personalized connection with their audience. (1)

At the international level, several studies confirmed the positive impact of social networks on consumer perception and loyalty. Bilgin (2) reported in Turkey that an entertainment company achieved favorable results in the evaluation of its brand image and customer loyalty thanks to the management of its virtual networks, reaching above-average levels of satisfaction. Similarly, in Latin America, consistent results were observed: in Lima, it was evident that 100% of consumers followed at least one company on social networks and that 75.9% recognized the brand when mentioning it, demonstrating the effectiveness of these platforms as a means of recall. On the other hand, in San Martín, Aching (3) highlighted that, although many companies used networks to promote their products, their performance was rated as regular by most of the respondents, which revealed opportunities for improvement in digital management.

In the local context of Tarapoto, a city recognized for its tourism potential and biodiversity, the hotel sector faces significant limitations in leveraging digital marketing. Despite offering quality services, numerous establishments fail to position themselves in the virtual environment because of insufficient implementation of social media marketing strategies. Among the main causes identified were a lack of training in digital competencies, reduced budgets, and limited adaptation to the characteristics and expectations of the target audience.

This situation poses a challenge to the competitiveness of local tourism. If hotels in Tarapoto do not strengthen their presence on social media, they risk losing visibility to external competitors with more effective digital strategies. This could translate into a decrease in bookings, loss of profitability, and the eventual closure of establishments. Therefore, the study of social media marketing and its relationship with brand recognition is essential to understand how these tools can contribute to the sustainable development of the hotel sector and to the city's tourism projection.

What is the relationship between social media marketing and brand recognition among companies in the hotel sector of Tarapoto, 2023?

Objective: To determine the relationship between social media marketing and brand recognition in companies in the hotel sector of Tarapoto in 2023.

METHODS

Scope of the research

The city of Tarapoto is located at an altitude of 342 m above sea level and occupies an area of 45 km². Geographically, it lies at the coordinates 06° 29' 16" south latitude and 76° 21' 35" west longitude. According to 2021 data, the district has a population of 84 794 inhabitants.(4)

Figure 1. Geographic location of the district of Tarapoto.



Execution period

The research was conducted in 2023.
Authorizations and permissions
Not applicable.
Environmental control and biosafety protocol
Not applicable.
Application of international ethical principles

According to the Belmont Report, ethical principles were based on three fundamental pillars in the research: 1) Respect for people, this principle emphasizes the autonomy of individuals and the need to provide protection to those who do not have the capacity to make informed decisions. 2) Beneficence, seeks to achieve a balance between risks and benefits for the individuals involved in the research. 3) Justice, focuses on guaranteeing equal treatment for all, without making distinctions. (5) In the context of this study, the will of the people was respected in case they chose not to participate in the survey, thus honoring their autonomy. Given the research topic, the participants were not exposed to risks, complying with the principle of beneficence. In addition, as it was a probabilistic study, justice was promoted, ensuring equal treatment in the inclusion of the participants.

System of variables

Main variables

Independent variable: social media marketing
First empirical variable: content preferences, attractive advertising, and content dissemination.
Second empirical variable: results via Google; contact via WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram; and presence on social media.
Third empirical variable 3: advertising email sends, customer data, responses to customers, and interaction with customers.
Dependent variable: brand recognition
First empirical variable: slogan association, ad recall, spontaneous recognition, and brand familiarity.
Second empirical variable: color coherence, design, logo clarity, and visual simplicity.
Third empirical variable: interaction with visual content, modern design, visual appeal, and aesthetic attraction.
Fourth empirical variable: narrative of personal experiences, emotional connection, associated feelings, and brand emotion.
Fifth empirical variable: favorable opinions in perception surveys, ratings on review platforms, positive mentions on social media, and social reputation.

Representation of the variable for the first specific objective. SO No. 1: Identify the current status of social media marketing.

Abstract	Concrete	Unit (measurement)	Medium (record)
Social media marketing	Customer interaction; Content dissemination; Social media presence	Ordinal	Questionnaire

Representation of the variable for the second specific objective. SO No. 2: Identify the current status of brand recognition.

Abstract	Concrete	Unit (measurement)	Medium (record)
Brand recognition	Social reputation; Brand emotion; Aesthetic appeal; Visual simplicity; Brand familiarity	Ordinal	Questionnaire

Representation of the variables for the third specific objective. SO No. 3: Establish the relationship between social media marketing and brand familiarity.

Abstract	Concrete	Unit (measurement)	Medium (record)
Brand familiarity	Slogan association; Spontaneous recognition; Ad recall	Ordinal	Questionnaire

Representation of the variables for the fourth specific objective. SO No. 4: Establish the relationship between social media marketing and visual simplicity.

Abstract	Concrete	Unit (measurement)	Medium (record)
Visual simplicity	Design; Logo clarity; Color coherence	Ordinal	Questionnaire

Representation of the variables for the fifth specific objective. SO No. 5: Establish the relationship between social media marketing and aesthetic appeal.

Abstract	Concrete	Unit (measurement)	Medium (record)
Aesthetic appeal	Interaction with visual content; Modern design; Visual appeal	Ordinal	Questionnaire

Representation of the variables for the sixth specific objective. SO No. 6: Establish the relationship between social media marketing and brand emotion.

Abstract	Concrete	Unit (measurement)	Medium (record)
Brand emotion	Narrative of personal experiences; Emotional connection; Associated feelings	Ordinal	Questionnaire

Representation of the variables for the seventh specific objective. SO No. 7: Establish the relationship between social media marketing and social reputation.

Abstract	Concrete	Unit (measurement)	Medium (record)
Social reputation	Favorable opinions in perception surveys; Ratings on review platforms; Positive mentions on social media	Ordinal	Questionnaire

Research procedures

Type of research

The applied study focuses on research designed for a specific purpose, seeking not only to generate new knowledge but also to use previously acquired knowledge to address practical problems.(6) Following this perspective, recommendations were offered based on the analysis conducted on the variables.

Level of research

The correlational level is dedicated to examining how two or more variables relate within a data set without intervening in or altering those variables. This non-experimental approach aims to understand the nature of the connection between the variables, without focusing on establishing causal relationships, but rather on recognizing the magnitude and direction (positive or negative) of the correlation.(7) Since the objective was to analyze the relationship between the main variables, this study was classified as correlational.

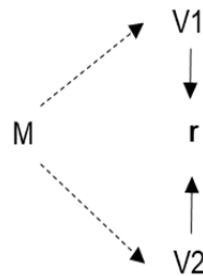
Research design

Quantitative research focuses on the collection and analysis of numerical data, with an emphasis on the measurement of variables and the confirmation of apparent ones.(8) In this case, the study was non-experimental or observational in nature, which involved obtaining data from subjects in their usual environments. This approach is characterized as diagnostic or predictive and generally uses a cross-sectional method. It is commonly associated with comparative and case studies, as well as cohort studies.(9)

In this paper, a cross-sectional approach was used, which means that measurements were performed at a specific time.(10) No experiments were performed on the variables in question, and both were evaluated on a single occasion, without measurement at different times, which confirms the non-experimental cross-sectional design.

Scheme

Representation of the variables for the seventh specific objective. SO No. 7: Establish the relationship between social media marketing and social reputation.



Where:

M: hosts.

r: correlation.

V1: Marketing on social media.

V2: Brand recognition.

Population and sample

Population

The population is the total set of individuals or entities that are the subject of a research study. Sometimes, it is neither feasible nor appropriate to investigate all members of this population. The selection of the sample can be based on various criteria, such as age, economic status, or marital status.(11) In the present study, the population consisted of tourists who stayed overnight during 2023, amounting to a total of 605 962 clients.(12)

Sample

The sample consists of a specific subset of the total population, comprising 384 customers or potential customers of hotels in Tarapoto in 2023. This selection was made to avoid ambiguities and was based on the specific attributes that the researcher considered relevant to the research objective.(13) To calculate the sample size, the following formula will be applied:

$$n = \frac{Z^2 N p q}{e^2 (N - 1) + Z^2 p q}$$

Where:

N = population size

Z = value of the standardized normal curve distribution with a 95 % confidence level, 1,96; p

= proportion of the probability of the variable under study, 50 % (0,50); q = p – 1

E = permissible error in sample calculation, 5 % (0,05)

Figure 9. Social media marketing

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (605962) (0.5) (0.5)}{(0.05)^2 (605962 - 1) + (1.96)^2 (0.5) (0.5)}$$

$$n = 384 \text{ clientes}$$

Simple random probability sampling is characterized by giving each element of the population the same opportunity to be selected.(14) In this study, a range of years was established for the analysis, selected according to the researcher's criteria.

Research techniques and instruments

The survey was the research technique used to collect data through pre-established questions, avoiding interference with the environment; in addition, the results were presented in graphs and/or tables.(15) The questionnaires were written instruments that contained questions designed to obtain information on specific variables, and they were used in the research, being able to be administered in person or digitally.(16) In this study, 2 questionnaires were used as part of this technique.

The first questionnaire, designed to assess social media marketing, consists of 16 items covering 8 indicators distributed across 3 dimensions. Each participant responded using a Likert scale that includes 5 options, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These options were numbered from the first to 5 in ascending order. Likewise, the second questionnaire, designed to assess Brand Recognition, comprises 30 items involving 15 indicators distributed across 5 dimensions. Using the Likert scale ranging from the first to 5, the response options and values are identical to those used in the first questionnaire.

Validity is described as the capacity to accurately measure what is intended to be assessed. To ensure this validity, various methods were used, such as in-depth knowledge of the groups under study, ensuring appropriate predictive validity, and including questions that allowed for cross-verification.(17) On the other hand, reliability relates to the precision and consistency of the measurements performed. It refers to the consistency and stability of measurements when the process is repeated, or to the quality that evaluates the coherence and precision of the measure.(18) Reliability was assessed by calculating Cronbach's alpha, ensuring that the results were consistent and reliable.

Data processing and analysis

Within the framework of specific objective 1, an evaluation of the level of marketing on social media of companies in the hotel sector was conducted. The data collected through the survey were segmented by dimensions, and the total scores of the variable were calculated for each client. Then, a scale was established to categorize the performance levels, which were represented graphically using a frequency table in Excel to provide a more organized visualization. Finally, the results obtained were interpreted. The remaining specific objectives were addressed using a similar approach, in which various aspects were measured, such as brand recognition and the relationship between social media marketing and variables such as brand familiarity and its variables. These activities involved the separation and summation of values, and the preparation of the normality test.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test in SPSS 27 and Spearman correlations. Spearman correlations were selected because the data distribution did not follow a normal distribution. The main objective of these analyses was to validate or refute the hypotheses proposed by the researcher.

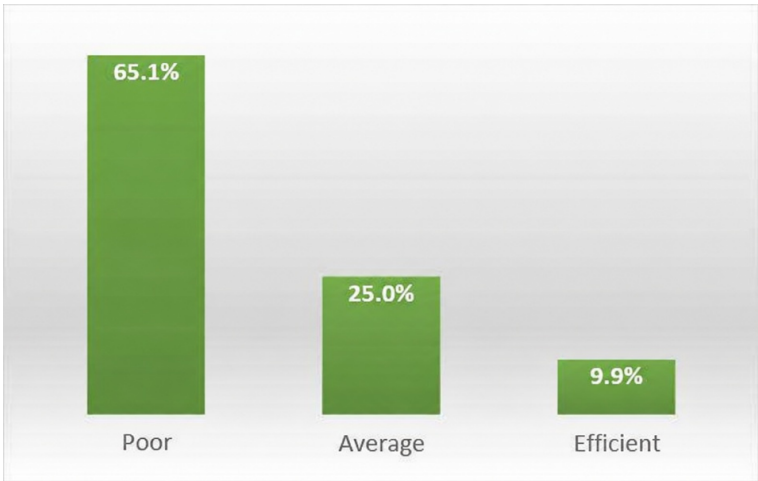
Results and Discussion

First specific result

Table 1. Social media marketing

	From	Until	F	%
Deficient	16	36	250	65,1
Regular	37	57	96	25
Efficient	58	80	38	9,9
Total			384	100

Figure 10. Brand recognition

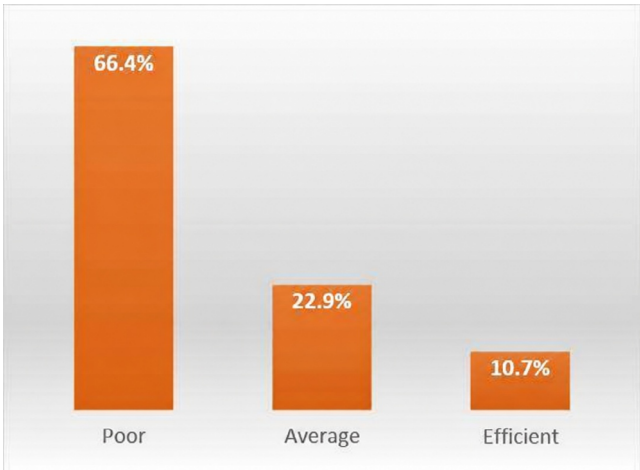


The variable was examined in a group of guests, 65.1% judge this marketing as deficient, this can be attributed to a lack of attractive and relevant material for their target guests, an irregular advertising tactic, or a lack of direct interaction with guests in such places. In addition, this could be an indication of a limited understanding on the part of hotel companies about using social media effectively to establish connection with their audience and foster lasting bonds. On the other hand, 25% rated it as regular, and the remaining 9.9% saw it as effective.

Second specific result

Table 2. Brand recognition

	From	Up to	F	%
Deficient	30	70	255	66,4
Regular	71	111	88	22,9
Efficient	112	150	41	10,7
Total			384	100



For this variable, 66.4% of all customers rate Brand Recognition as deficient; this may suggest that modern marketing tactics are not generating a notable impact on guests' minds. It could also result from poorly defined brand communications, inconsistent information exchange, or marketing targeting that fails to connect with people. Similarly, it could indicate a lack of uniqueness in the market, resulting in consumers not recognizing distinctive brand characteristics.

In addition, 22.9% rated it as fair, and 10.7% considered it efficient.

Third specific result

As evidenced, a significant and positive relationship exists between the variable and the dimension, as the p value was .001 and the coefficient (r) was .678. This suggests that when a deficiency in social media marketing is evident, brand knowledge among guests would also be deficient.

Fourth specific result

Table 3. Social media marketing and brand familiarity

Spearman	V1	R P	D1V2	0.678** 0,001
		N		384

Table 4. Social media marketing and visual simplicity

Spearman	V1	R P	D2V2	0,677** 0,001
		N		384

A significant and positive relationship is observed between the variable and the dimension, with a p-value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) of 0.677, which implies a relationship between the way companies use digital platforms for marketing purposes and how people perceive visual clarity of the brand. Therefore, an effective social media marketing strategy appears to be linked to a brand vision that consumers perceive as clear and simple.

Fifth Specific Result

Table 5. Social media marketing and aesthetic attraction

Spearman	V1	R P	D3V1	0.678** 0,001
		N		384

A significant and positive relationship exists between the variable and the dimension, with a p-value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) of 0.678. This indicates a strong association between how companies implement their marketing on social media platforms and how customers perceive the aesthetic beauty of the brand. In other words, a well-executed social media marketing strategy appears to be fundamental to enhancing the aesthetic appreciation that guests have of the brand.

Sixth Specific Result

Evidence indicates a significant and positive relationship between the variable and the dimension, with a p-value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) of 0.692. This suggests a strong relationship between the way companies manage their digital media marketing and the way guests feel and emotionally connect with the brand. Therefore, it can be inferred that a well-designed and executed social media marketing strategy has a significant effect on the development of an emotional bond between customers and the brand.

Seventh Specific Result

Table 6. Social media marketing and brand emotion

Spearman	V1	R P	D4V2	0,692** 0,001
		N		384

Table 7. Social media marketing and social reputation

Spearman	V1	R P	D5V2	0,679** 0,001
		N		384

A significant and positive relationship is observed between the variable and the dimension, with a p-value of .001 and a coefficient (r) of .679. This implies a relationship between how hotels manage their social media marketing and how people perceive their social reputation. Thus, a well-executed strategy can play a significant role in improving the brand's social prestige.

Overall Result

Table 8. Social media marketing and brand recognition

Spearman	V1	R P	V2	0.68 7** 0,00 1
		N		384

A significant and positive relationship is shown between the variable and the dimension, with a p-value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) of 0.687. This indicates that marketing activities on social platforms are closely related to the level of recognition that people have of a brand. Thus, an effective social media marketing strategy is considered a key element in improving the brand's prestige in the market.

DISCUSSION

The study of social media marketing and its relationship to brand recognition for hotel businesses in Tarapoto during 2023 has become a prominent topic in the current digital era. Given the increasing reliance on digital media for promotion and consumer interaction, this analysis aimed to examine how tactics used on social media affect the image and popularity of hotel brands in Tarapoto. This study investigated how factors such as content, visual clarity, emotion management, and social reputation on these networks may affect the success and positioning of these brands in a highly competitive and constantly evolving sector.

Regarding the first specific objective, it was found that a significant proportion of people perceive shortcomings in the area of social media marketing, with 65.1% rating it as insufficient. These findings could suggest that the marketing tactics currently employed in the hotel industry in Tarapoto are not effective or do not match the expectations and needs of guests. This could be due to unappealing content, poor interaction with stakeholders, or limited understanding of best practices on social media. It could also indicate a lack of resources or specialized skills for in-house digital marketing within hotel companies.

In addition, the study conducted by Blas (19) aligns with these findings, as it found that marketing performance was perceived as low by 56.9% of workers. This result is consistent with our findings, which indicate that a deficient social media marketing strategy can adversely impact brand recognition in the hotel sector.

Furthermore, in the theoretical literature, Jamil et al.(20) and Appel et al.(21) highlight how marketing on social networks establishes relationships with customers and promotes services, emphasizing the importance of effective bidirectional interaction between brands and consumers. Thus, shortcomings may be found in the creation of interesting content, in communication with consumers, or in the overall marketing strategy on digital and social platforms. This is reflected in visitors' unfavorable perception of the hotel sector.

As an opinion, these results not only point to a challenge in the execution of digital marketing tactics in the hotel sector of Tarapoto, but also still present a considerable opportunity to improve these strategies. People's adverse perception of current strategies should be considered a stimulus to reevaluate marketing practices. In this scenario, it is essential to conduct a detailed analysis of the characteristics of the target customer, in order to understand their preferences more exhaustively and, in this way, guide the development of material more tailored to users and the fostering of a more relevant dialogue on social platforms.

In accordance with specific objective 2, it is observed that most respondents rate brand recognition as insufficient (66.4%). These findings point to a widespread perception of deficiency regarding brand identity, which highlights the need to strengthen both brand identity and brand presence in the sector. This could be related to the fact that the social media marketing approaches used by these hotels are not effectively impacting their audience. It could indicate a lack of relevant content, inconsistent Marketing campaigns, or insufficient interaction on virtual media that fails to establish strong brand recognition in visitors' minds. These factors are crucial in the hotel industry, where brand image can have a significant effect on guests' decisions.

Moreover, the publication by Faisal (22) provides a valuable perspective for understanding the result mentioned above. They found that online marketing in Indonesia had a significant relationship with both brand image and consumers' purchase intention. They also noted that social media marketing increased brand awareness. This corroborates our results, which show a poor perception of brand identification among buyers. This finding highlights the importance of implementing an effective social media marketing strategy to improve both brand recognition and brand image in the hotel industry in Tarapoto.

Likewise, the interpretation of the results related to the second specific objective can be linked to the theories presented by Rahman et al.(23) and Zhou (24). These authors emphasize the degree to which a brand is recognized and how a person's perception is formed through previous experiences and information about the brand. Furthermore, they highlight that a recognized brand fosters loyalty and establishes lasting relationships. These notions, when related to the findings themselves, suggest that improving social media marketing skill is essential to reinforce both loyalty and brand recognition, especially in the hotel sector of one popular tourist destination such as Tarapoto. This indicates that more practical social media marketing management could positively influence the way customers perceive and relate to hotel brands.

From my point of view, the aforementioned results suggest that the hotel sector in Tarapoto is facing a significant challenge regarding the creation and management of its brand identity. I consider that the procedure is not limited solely to perfecting the quality of the coherent content of social media initiatives, but also to contributing to achieving a deeper understanding of the history and the values that distinguish each hotel. It is crucial to focus on creating unique narratives that resonate with the audience, managing digital networks as a platform to express the essence of the brand. This means moving beyond traditional Marketing forms toward a more holistic view that establishes an emotional connection with customers.

Also, with the third specific objective, a significant relationship was identified between brand familiarity and social media marketing, evidenced by a p value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) equal to 0.678. This could be attributed to a greater online presence, the generation of attractive and relevant content, as well as practical interaction with people. These factors are essential for strengthening the image in the competitive hotel sector.

In addition to the above, El Aydi's research (25) provides a valuable perspective to understand our results, as it found that there is a significant correlation between online communities and their interaction with a brand, and brand recognition. The Pearson coefficients obtained in his study, which vary between 0.307 and 0.606, point to a remarkable relationship between different aspects, such as user interaction, the number of shares in advertisements, the credibility and accessibility of brand discounts. Although these coefficients come from a parametric test, unlike the one used in our research, El Aydi's findings support the significant correlation we have found between brand familiarity and social media marketing. This highlights the influence that social media marketing has on brand recognition and perception, underscoring its importance in digital marketing strategy.

The interpretation of our findings is enriched by the concepts proposed by Rahman et al.(23), which are particularly relevant. They emphasize that recognizing the brand is a decisive factor in consumers' purchasing dispositions and that a famous brand fosters loyalty and establishes enduring relationships. This perspective highlights the importance of social media marketing in strengthening both recognition of and familiarity with the product identity among consumers. It underscores that effective social media marketing expertise not only increases brand visibility but also plays a crucial role in building a solid and lasting relationship with customers, which is essential in the field of marketing and brand management.

Regarding the fourth specific objective, a significant correlation was found between the visual simplicity of the brand and social media marketing, reflected in an index, as evidenced by a p value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) equal to 0.677. It can be interpreted that marketing expertise effectively implemented on social media contributes to projecting a consistent brand image. In the context of the hotel industry, a simple brand image can positively impact customer dispositions. Visual simplicity, achieved through striking sensory content and direct messages on social media, is a crucial element in building a strong and easily identifiable brand identity. This approach helps hotels stand out in a saturated market and connect more effectively with their target audience.

Likewise, authors such as Urrutia (26) complement and support our results. In their article in Lima, they evidenced that brand design, as well as its management and market position, were significantly related to purchases through virtual social media. In their study, they found a Spearman correlation coefficient of .81 for the relationship between brand appearance and purchases made through social networks, and a Rho of .792 in the association between brand design and purchase levels. These results indicate that a brand in a high position and managed on social platforms

influences individuals' purchasing behaviors. This finding aligns with the results; furthermore, it underscores the importance of an attractive brand representation on virtual networks to optimize guests' perception and impact. In the context of the hotel market, effective design and management of brand image on digital platforms can play a fundamental role in attracting and retaining customers, reinforcing the idea that visual simplicity and consistency in brand presentation are key elements for success in digital Marketing strategies.

Furthermore, Keramitsoglou et al.(27) provide one relevant perspective in this context, focusing on the importance of visual simplicity in the discernment of a brand. They argue that a coherent logo design, accompanied by an appropriate selection of colors, can enhance brand information and facilitate its appreciation by consumers. This perspective aligns with our findings, which show a significant correlation between visual simplicity and social media marketing. This point highlights the need to adopt a fresh visual presentation on internet networks to reinforce the hotel brand image.(28,29,30,31)

In the fifth specific objective, a significant correlation was established between brand aesthetic appeal and social media marketing, as evidenced by a p value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) of 0.678. This may be attributed to the capacity of social media to provide an attractive and uniform sensory representation of the brand, an essential aspect in the lodging industry, where aesthetic affinity becomes a determining element in individuals' decisions. This correlation underscores the importance of incorporating striking and coherent visual elements into social media marketing strategies to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the brand.(32,33,34,35)

In sum, Urrutia (26) complements the aforementioned results, as they discovered a significant relationship between the design and appearance of the brand, as well as its management, and the levels of acquisition in virtual networks, with a Spearman correlation index of 0.81, 0.792 and 0.774, respectively. These findings support the connection between aesthetic attraction and the brand's social media marketing, highlighting the relevance of an interesting and efficiently processed visual exposure on social networks to influence customers' purchasing decisions. In addition, from a theoretical approach, Rahman et al.(23) offer an essential perspective to understand these results, emphasizing that a contemporary visual design and a practical interaction with visual information are key in the perception of a product or service, mainly in digital environments. This underscores the importance of carefully designed visual aesthetics and interactive content management in social media marketing strategies to strengthen the brand's image and its impact on the public. (36,37,38,39,40)

According to the sixth specific objective, a significant correlation was found between brand-associated emotion and social media marketing, reflected by a Spearman correlation coefficient of 0.692. This demonstrates a robust relationship between social media marketing management and the development of an emotional bond among hotel guests. This result may be due to the capacity of social media to generate an experience that resonates emotionally. Social platforms provide a unique channel for storytelling, collaborating on visually striking content, and interacting directly with guests, which can intensify emotional connection with the brand.(41,42,43)

In the hotel context, where the visitor experience is a crucial aspect, social media Marketing expertise that highlights genuine experiences, people's testimonials, and the beauty of the hotel environment can increase emotional resonance with the place. This is especially important considering that the decision to choose lodging is frequently influenced by personal experiences or emotions. Thus, the correlation found implies that in Tarapoto, hotels that effectively use social media for Marketing purposes are able to notably improve the emotional perception and connection of their guests. Establishing this emotional connection not only fosters customer loyalty but can also positively influence their accommodation decisions and recommendations.(44,45,46)

In addition, Rahman et al.(23) offer a valuable perspective on brand emotion in the marketing discussion, emphasizing that it arises from an "emotional branding" strategy that is narrative and constructed through individuals' emotions and sensations. This view highlights how a well-executed social media network marketing tactic can positively influence consumers' emotional response toward a brand. This finding aligns with the significant and positive correlation identified in our research between Social Media Marketing and brand emotion. It underscores the effectiveness of social media as powerful tools for creating and strengthening emotional bonds between consumers and brands, especially in the hotel sector, where emotional and sensory experiences play a fundamental role in customer choice and loyalty.(47,48)

In accordance with the seventh specific objective, a relationship was identified between social reputation and social media marketing of a brand, as evidenced by a p value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) equal to 0.679. These results can be understood by considering the crucial role that social media play in aligning the social reputation of a service. In the hotel sector, where ex-

periences are published, effective social media marketing management has a significant impact on customers' perception of an establishment's reputation. High-quality posts, constructive interaction with guests, and an active online presence are elements that support a more favorable perception of social awareness, which is reflected in the observed correlation. This underscores the importance of well-planned and accomplished social media skills in improving and maintaining a hotel's social reputation.(49)

This result is consistent with trends in the tourism and hospitality industry, highlighting the growing importance of social platforms as key tools. Social networks enable personalized interaction with people, which not only increases a favorable perception of the brand but also fosters trust. Studies such as Urrutia's (26) support this perspective, demonstrating that a consistent presence on social networks is related to an increase in purchase decisions and a positive perception of a service. The findings highlight the need to implement targeted and efficient digital marketing strategies to enhance social popularity and, consequently, promote commercial success in the competitive hotel market, particularly in a context such as that of Tarapoto. These strategies should focus not only on promoting the brand but also on building and maintaining lasting and meaningful relationships with guests.(50)

Regarding the general objective, a significant relationship was established between brand recognition and social media marketing, reflected by a p value of 0.001 and a coefficient (r) equal to 0.687. This result is attributed to the powerful influence that social media exert on brand transparency in the hotel industry. Social media provide an accessible platform for services to present their values and identity to a broad audience. This greater visibility, combined with attractive tactics and active engagement with stakeholders, can significantly increase brand recognition among guests. In a highly competitive market environment, where customer decisions are frequently based on trust in the service or product, a clear and strategically planned presence on social media becomes a crucial element for the success and differentiation of a lodging establishment. This underscores the relevance of social media not only as advertising channels but also as fundamental strategic tools for building and strengthening hotel brand identity.

The findings of our study are reinforced by the research of ElAydi (25) and Faisal (22), which also highlights the relationship of social media marketing with brand image. Faisal and Ekawanto reported a coefficient equal to 1.071 in relation to brand image and 0.568 in purchase intention. Likewise, a relationship was established between virtual communities and brand recognition, with coefficients ranging from 0.307 to 0.606 in elements such as ease of access. These studies support the correlation identified in our study, suggesting that social media marketing is fundamental for brand recognition, especially in the hotel industry, where perception and image play a crucial role in success. The effectiveness of social media marketing in improving visibility and service perception in this sector highlights the importance of well-planned and executed digital marketing strategies that not only promote the brand but also build solid and trustworthy relationships with customers.

CONCLUSIONS

Social media marketing was found to be deficient, suggesting significant challenges regarding the delivery of relevant and attractive information, as well as productive interaction with target guests, particularly in the hospitality field.

Brand recognition was observed to be insufficient, suggesting that current tactics may fail to effectively convey the distinctive values of the accommodations.

A significant relationship was identified among efficacy, the level of customer knowledge, and social media marketing regarding the brand. This demonstrates that social platforms play a crucial role in how visitors recognize and understand the hotel brand.

A significant relationship was found between brand visual simplicity and social media marketing. This demonstrates the influence of a clear visual representation on how a service's identity is perceived.

A significant relationship was identified between aesthetic appeal and social media marketing, highlighting the relevance of captivating visual representation on public networks for enhancing the hotel's aesthetic perception.

A significant relationship was found between brand-associated emotion and social media marketing, emphasizing how efficient social media management can intensify users' emotional connection with the brand. A significant relationship was demonstrated between social reputation and social media marketing, highlighting the positive impact that a well-implemented social media strategy can have on reputation perception in this sector.

A significant relationship was identified between brand recognition and social media marketing. This indicates that the degree of brand recognition is directly related to and is affected by the quality and extent of the marketing carried out on social media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Hotel marketing managers in Tarapoto should optimize and personalize their social media marketing techniques. This can be achieved by using data analysis tools, such as A/B tests, to better understand customer preferences and by creating personalized content based on this information. This will increase their effectiveness, resulting in a more favorable perception and greater customer engagement with the brand.

Branding managers should focus on developing clearer and more distinctive communication of the hotel's identity. This implies creating a coherent narrative across all platforms, using a consistent tone of voice and visual aesthetic. This action will contribute significantly to improving differentiation and brand recognition in a competitive hotel market.

Digital marketing experts in the sector should leverage social media to increase brand identification by using striking, interactive, and visually attractive content, such as storytelling campaigns and the use of augmented reality or virtual tours. This practice will strengthen users' connection with the brand and increase their identification with it.

Hotel marketing managers and designers should focus on maintaining visual clarity and simplicity in their presentations on social platforms. This can be achieved by adopting a minimalist design and focusing on visual quality over the amount of information, which will help improve brand recognition and recall among customers.

The creators of the hotel's virtual content should prioritize striking visual aesthetics in their publications. Using high-quality photography and graphic design and experimenting with current visual trends will improve the hotel's aesthetic appeal, thereby increasing its visibility and overall attractiveness.

Those in charge of communicative interactions at the hotel should add social media marketing tactics that promote an emotional connection with the place. This can be done by sharing real stories and highlighting the local culture and the hotel's authenticity, which will strengthen customer loyalty and satisfaction.

Social media managers in the hotel sector should optimize their online management to strengthen the place's social reputation. This can be achieved by actively responding to comments and reviews and posting content that reflects the hotel's values and quality, which will have a positive impact on customers' perception of the brand.

Hotel digital marketing teams should increase both the quality and reach of their social media marketing. Investing in professional training, exploring new platforms and trends, and measuring the impact of campaigns will help increase brand recognition, thereby improving their position in a competitive market.

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FUNDING

The authors did not receive funding for the development of this research.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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