

IDENTIFYING FUTURE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES IN ONLINE CONSUMER REVIEWS: THE CASE STUDY OF “TRIPADVISOR”

ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to identify future research opportunities for using online consumer reviews websites such as TripAdvisor.com as a case study. The literature review covers the Internet and growth of eTourism, virtual communities, virtual community typologies, and the importance of TripAdvisor.com for travel research, electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), social networking and the impact of online travel reviews on consumers. Propositions and future research opportunities are then raised.

Keywords: online consumer travel reviews, Trip Advisor, consumer purchase intentions, ETourism, eWOM, virtual community typologies

INTRODUCTION

We are all becoming more networked than ever. A recent survey of 22 countries for the Global Attitudes Projectⁱ showed Internet, cell phone and computer usage have increased and social networking via websites such as Facebook.com, MySpace.com and YouTube are particularly widespread across early adopter countries such as USA (46%), Poland (43%), Britain (43%) and South Korea (40%). The Global Attitudes Project also found significant demographic differences in social networking between age and educational level across the countries, but little gender difference. In general, social networking and Internet usage is popular amongst the younger (under 30s) and college educated. Education gaps of 50 percentage points or more were found between college educated and other education levels in Jordan, Egypt, Kenya, Brazil, Turkey and Mexico. Whereas in Norway, a national survey foundⁱⁱ (Statistics Norway, September 2010) 93% of the population having used the Internet over the last three months. These statistics show some demographic trends in Internet usage across the globe, as well as the general shift for people to become more “technologically connected” and “socially networked.” At the same time, there is an increasing “technology divide” between those who have Internet, cell phone, computer and social networking website access and those who do not.

In terms of this research paper, the aim is to identify future research opportunities in one type of virtual community, the *online consumer review website*. There is an emphasis placed on

travel review websites such as www.TripAdvisor.com. The literature review starts by covering the Internet and growth of eTourism then moves to virtual communities and virtual community typologies. Following this, the importance of TripAdvisor.com for travel research is then covered followed by electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), social networking and the impact of online travel reviews on consumers. Propositions and future research opportunities are then raised. The paper now begins with the Internet and growth of eTourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Internet and growth of eTourism

Having reviewed 149 eTourism research articles over the past twenty years, Buhalis and Law (2008) state how there are few service industries that have experienced so profound and fast-moving change to their business strategy, structures and processes over this period than for travel and tourism. These changes occurred alongside rapid growth in Information and Communications technologies (ICT), such as establishment of the Computer Reservation Systems (CRSs) in the 1970s, Global Distribution Systems (GDSs) in the 1980s and development of the Internet in the late 1990s. In terms of pre-Internet strategy, tourism suppliers had no choice but to use traditional intermediaries, such as travel agents and tour operators for distribution functions, as well as CRSs and GDSs for intermediation processes (Buhalis and Law, 2008; O'Connor, 2003; Sheldon, 1997). Buhalis and Licata (2002) showed how traditional electronic intermediaries were being replaced by new tourism eMediaries selling direct via the Internet including; *tourism suppliers, destination management systems, web-based travel agencies, offline travel agent, internet portals, vertical portals, media companies, television networks, online last minute agencies, reversed pricing agencies and auction sites*. Buhalis and Law (2008) added *Web 2.0 or Travel 2.0 providers and price prediction sites* to these earlier categorisations. Buhalis and Law (2002) saw conditions for emergence of new eMediaries being based on three ePlatforms; the Internet, Interactive Digital Television (iTV) and mobile devices if forecasting forward by 5 and 15 years. Buhalis and Law (2008) uncovered three main themes in the tourism and hospitality literature regarding eTourism: *a) consumer and demand dimensions; b) technological innovations and c) industry and business functions*. *Consumer and demand dimensions* relate to aspects such as online information search, impact on pricing, consumer behaviour, security and privacy

issues, virtual communities, expanding consumer choice, use of recommendation systems, complaints and feedback systems, as well as differential online tourist market segments. *Technological innovations* cover increased multimedia developments, increased web design functionality, usability and progress in mobile and wireless technologies and increased interoperability and ontology. *Industry and business functions* cover strategic and operational dimensions of ICTs for tourism strategy, including changes to marketing and distribution. Buhalis and Law (2008) note how previous tourism research has used Porter's Five Forces (1979, 1980, 2001) to show how the Internet has changed conditions for competition in the marketplace. Buhalis and Law (2008) saw the Internet promoting mass-customisation of tourism products, supporting the industry to target niche markets in different geographical locations and as a means of boosting interactivity between partners to maximise value-added to customers. Finally, Buhalis and Law (2008) see eTourism research being in its' infancy with future research being centred on understanding consumer-centric technologies that support organisations to dynamically interact with their customers. Future innovative technologies will support interoperability, personalisation and constant networking. Dynamic interaction via virtual communities and website types are now covered below.

Virtual communities and virtual community typologies

Community has been at the heart of the Internet since its inception. For years, scientists used the Internet to share data, collaborate on research and exchange messages (Wang, Yu, and Fesenmaier, 2002). This scientific emphasis expanded to cover commercial online activities and during the 1990s there was a convergence of email, groupware systems and the World Wide Web that provided the general public with the opportunity to participate in groups where there was little or no face-to-face interaction (Cothrel and Williams, 1999). Online communities, virtual communities and electronic communities are all synonyms for what Rheingold (1993) originally termed the "virtual community." See Figure 2 for Rheingold's definition.

Armstrong & Hagel (1997) discussed the need for virtual communities from both a vendor and member perspective. They saw virtual communities aggregating people and providing an engaging environment for interaction. People are drawn to virtual communities to fulfil four basic needs; *a) interests b) relationships c) fantasy d) transactions* (Armstrong and Hagel, 1997). Preece (2000) see online communities consisting of *a) people who interact* as they

strive to satisfy their own needs or perform special roles; *b) a shared purpose* of people with shared interests, needs, information exchange or service requirements *c) policies* that guide people's interactions *d) the computer systems* that support and mediate the social interaction and facilitate a sense of togetherness. Wang, Yu, and Fesenmaier (2002) provide a theoretical foundation for the concept of virtual community, including core characteristics of virtual communities and fundamental needs of community members. The core characteristics of virtual community are; *a) virtual community as place b) virtual community as symbol* and *c) virtual community as virtual* (Wang, Yu, and Fesenmaier, 2002). Place is where people can develop and maintain social and economic relationships whilst exploring new social organizations centred around certain communalities such as fellowship, profession or interest. Symbol refers to the symbolic dimension of meaning that humans attach to the community. Virtual refers to the new communication element i.e. the computer that is used in the process of community building online. It is just the means of communication that differs. Also in line with Fernback (1999), Wang, Yu, and Fesenmaier, (2002, p. 411) see,

“The virtual communities are characterized by common value systems, norms, rules and the sense of identity, commitment and associations that also characterize various physical communities”

Wang, Yu, and Fesenmaier, (2002) also saw virtual communities fulfilling three fundamental user needs; *a) functional needs b) psychological needs* and *c) social needs*.

Virtual community website typologies, both general and travel specific, have also been created. Kozinets (1999) pinpoint five different types of virtual communities of consumption based on social structure and group focus. These include *a) boards, b) rings c) lists, d) dungeons e) chat rooms*. In terms virtual community travel typologies, constant networking, personalisation and interoperability (Buhalis and Law, 2002, p. 620) have already impacted heavily on the ways in which consumers search for travel information on the Internet and make their consumer choice behaviour. For example, pricing and quality information has become more transparent over the past 10 years, as consumers seek information through a variety of social media sources that appear in their search engine in the context of travel-related searches. Fernández-Barcala, González-Díaz, and Prieto-Rodríguez (2010) differentiate between *a) sales websites b) advice website* in this context. However, Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan, (2008) note how online searches are carried out through company-sponsored websites as well as via independent sources such as product review sites or even

hate sites. Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan (2008) provide their breakdown of websites as part of a general typology of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) channels. This can also be applied to the travel and tourism industry. The typology is shown as Figure 1.

Figure 1: A typology of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) channels (Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan, 2008, p. 462)

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan (2008) see interpersonal communications and eWOM as key when consumers purchase intangible products, such as a hotel room booking or beach holiday. The article helps position social media websites within a eWOM context and highlights the increasing importance of online sources in the consumer's decision-making process. Xiang, Wöber, and Fesenmaier, (2008) study of travel information searches using the Google engine found travellers only access a small f

raction of information on the domain and a relatively small number of websites dominate the search results. In a follow-up study, Xiang and Gretzel (2010) found significant differences in both type and frequency of social media websites uncovered by the Google search engine when searching for travel information purposes. Only a relatively small number of unique domain names (335 Websites) formed a core of the results. The top 20 unique domain names represented approximately 50% of all the 1150 websites. The largest of these domains was TripAdvisor.com. Virtual communities (40%), consumer review websites (27%) and blogs (15%) were the largest three social media website types represented in the findings.

Differences in information search were also found by Pavlou and Dimoka (2006). Here, customers rarely viewed feedback comments online beyond the first two pages on the website EBay.com. The articles from this section are summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Virtual Communities & Virtual Community Typologies

INSERT FIGURE 2 (TABLE) HERE

Why use TripAdvisor.com in travel research

Findings from Xiang and Gretzel (2010) show TripAdvisor.com holds a strong and powerful place as a unique domain name in the Google information search for travel information relating to 9 U.S. cities. This makes TripAdvisor.com an important consumer review website for research purposes. TripAdvisor® Media Group is operated by TripAdvisor LLC and attracts more than 50 million unique monthly visitors across 18 popular travel brands (ComScore Metrix, Worldwide, August 2010). The TripAdvisor-branded sites alone make up the largest travel community in the world, with more than 40 million unique monthly visitors (ComScore Metrix, Worldwide, August 2010), 20 million members, and over 45 million reviews and opinions. The sites operate in 27 countries worldwide. TripAdvisor.com sells its services as an advertising agency Trip Advisor for Business that offers advertisers the vehicles to reach Trip Advisor's large customer base. As Xiang and Gretzel (2010) show, TripAdvisor.com holds a dominant position in consumer online travel reviews and on this basis, should form the object of analysis for future online consumer travel review research, particularly concerning attitude towards reviewer.

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and social networking

In Europe, social networks are playing an increasing role in everyday life, particularly in terms of online travel information search and decision-making. A recent poll of 1,000 UK holidaymakersⁱⁱⁱ surveyed respondents about the impact of social media during their decision-making phase. 64% of the sample did not use social media sites. But within the remaining 36%, Trip Advisor was the most popular site, with 66% of those polled consulting the site. Around 34% referred to Facebook, 21% to YouTube and 17% to Twitter. Travel and tourism chat rooms and forums attracted 28% of the social media users and blogs 9%. WTM's research found that 42% of social media users went ahead and booked their original choice, but more than 35% changed their hotel as a result. (HOTELMARKETING.COM, November 2010)^{iv}. This shows the real impact social networking sites are having on consumer decision-making in the travel and tourism sector and yet little research exists in this area. This also applies to eWOM in a travel context, so three general eWOM research findings now follow.

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) has been defined as,

“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 institutions via the Internet.” (Hennig-Thurau et al, 2004, p.39)

Building on Balasubramanian and Maharan 's (2001) earlier eWOM framework which included three types of social interaction utility; focus-related utility, consumption utility and approval utility, Henning-Thurau et al (2004) extended the typology to include moderator-related utility and homestase utility. Henning-Thurau et al (2004) extracted 8 factors that impact on consumer motives for eWOM which were; *platform assistance, venting negative feelings, concern for other consumers, extraversion/ positive self-enhancement, social benefits, economic incentives, helping the company and advice seeking*. The findings showed *social benefits* having the strongest positive impact on consumer platform visiting frequency and on the number of comments written on virtual platforms. Social benefits were closely followed by *concern for other consumers* and *extraversion/ positive self-enhancement* in terms of strength of positive impact. Whereas, *platform assistance* and *venting negative feelings* had a negative impact on consumer platform visiting frequency and the number of comments written. Hennig-Thurau et al (2004) also used cluster analysis to segment the customers into the following types; a) *self-interested helper* b) *multiple motive consumers* c) *consumer advocates* d) *true altruists*. This study provides understanding of different consumer motives for their eWOM communication and the impact of eWOM on consumer behaviour.

Sen and Lerman (2007) examined negative consumer reviews on the web and found that product type; whether *hedonistic* or *utilitarian* moderated strength of valence of consumer review. Review readers also exhibited negativity bias but for utilitarian product reviews only. Utilitarian products are where utility is measured as a function of the products' tangible attributes (Drolet, Simonsen, and Tversky, 2000), such as with consumer durables. Hedonic products are those where consumption is primarily characterised by an affective and sensory experience of aesthetic or sensory pleasure, fantasy, and fun (Hirshman and Holbrook, 1982). Hedonistic products satisfy emotional wants.

This section highlighted nuances in eWOM, as well as consumer motives towards communicating via eWOM. In terms of social networking and online travel website usage, the effects on consumers will now be covered.

The impact of online travel reviews on consumers

The existing research regarding impact of online travel reviews on tourism service, quality and consumer behaviour/ consumption patterns is still in its' infancy. Some of the most current research will now be reviewed.

Vermeulen and Seegers' (2009) analysed the impact of online hotel reviews on consumer consideration sets in Holland. The study used review valence, hotel familiarity and reviewer experience as independent factors. Findings supported the view that exposure to online reviews enhances both positive and negative attitude towards hotel consideration in consumers. In addition, positive reviews actually improved attitude towards hotels. This effect was stronger for lesser-known hotels than for well-known hotels. Ye, Law, and Gu (2009) also provided a review of impact of review polarity (positive versus negative) on hotel sales using the largest travel website in China, www.ctrip.com. Ye, Law, and Gu (2009) found positive online reviews significantly increase the number of hotel bookings. A 10 % improvement in reviewer rating increased sales by 4.4%. Additionally, variance/polarity of word-of-mouth for reviews had a negative impact on sales volumes. A 10% increase in review variance decreased sales by 2.8%. Ye, Law, and Gu (2009) found hotels with higher star ratings received more online bookings, but room rates had a negative impact on the number of online bookings. Finally, the GDP (CityRank) of the host city had a positive impact on online bookings. In summary, Ye, Law, and Gu (2009) found online consumer-generated reviews having an important impact on online hotel bookings.

Two studies detail hotel quality and appraisal on the Internet. Cunningham et al (2010) compared TripAdvisor.com review ratings of Irish and Las Vegas hotels from 2007-2009. They found an improved rating for Irish hotels but not Las Vegas hotels. The reason Cunningham et al (2010) state for this finding is that the Irish hotel sector is a relative newcomer to Trip Advisor whereas the Las Vegas sector is mature. So, Las Vegas hotels will already have improved service levels reacted on customer feedback from online reviewers, unlike Irish hotels. In the second research, Fernández-Barcala, González-Díaz, and Prieto-Rodríguez (2010), compared star ratings for 744 Spanish hotels on *sales websites* (fee

financed) such as booking.com versus *advice websites* (advertising financed) such as TripAdvisor.com. They showed sale websites provide an assessment quality of hotels on average 7% higher than the equivalent assessment of advice websites. This difference was found to significantly increase with hotel category, with a 9% increase found for 5-star hotels. These results show that there are systematic differences in quality appraisal between the two difference types of information providers.

In terms of analysing the effect of gender and/or age of reviewer on consumer travel purchase intention, this review revealed one existing study by Kim, Lehto, and Morrison (2007) relating to gender differences in information seekers' attitude towards information channels and their search behaviours in the online travel environment. Kim, Lehto, and Morrison (2007) found women more positive towards website functionality than men, searched using different keywords, used both online and offline information sources and become more involved in the online search process. So, further research could pinpoint gender and/or age-based differences in information search on travel online review sites.

Future research may also pinpoint gender and/or age differences in hedonistic versus utilitarian travel product searches online. Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005) examined the effects of online peer versus editorial recommendations, trust and choice in virtual markets. Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005) differentiate between utilitarian and hedonistic product types. Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005) propose when shopping goals are utilitarian, consumers will rely on peer recommenders' level of expertise as a cue to judge trustworthiness. Conversely, when shopping objectives are hedonic, consumers will rely on level of perceived rapport or closeness shared with the recommender to judge trustworthiness. Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005) findings showed many online consumers seek and accept recommendations in order to effectively manage the amount of information available during the online search process. In terms of travel-based online reviews, Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005) and Sen and Lerman (2007) could prove useful in determining differences in holiday product type (hedonistic versus utilitarian travel needs). From Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005) perceived rapport and similarity between reviewer and consumer may play a role in a consumer's strength of purchase intention. So it would be interesting to explore, which elements of the reviewer profile consumers share a high level of trust or rapport with? Does same gender, nationality or similar age impact on the consumer's strength of purchase intention? This is a substantial gap in both the mainstream consumer behaviour and online travel research.

Country of birth /origin cues have been researched and show how consumers are often positively biased in their evaluations in favour of domestic products versus foreign alternatives (Verlegh, 2007). From this perspective, we might expect Trip Advisor reviewers to review home country travel offerings more positively than foreign alternatives and for this bias to be evident in consumer attitude too. In their cross-cultural analysis of travel service consumer evaluations, Crofts and Erdmann (2000) found significant differences between respondents' evaluations dependent on the respondents' country of birth. Differences related to country level of masculinity or femininity from Hofstede's (1980) Value Survey Module (VSM). The research used tourist in-flight and airport surveys from respondents with 5 different "countries of birth" i.e. the United Kingdom, Brazil, Taiwan, Japan, Germany. The sample was split into; high masculinity (Japan), middle masculinity (UK, Germany) and low masculinity (Brazil and Taiwan). Findings showed respondents from high masculinity countries (Japan) raised more complaints about airline and airport facility quality, had lower evaluation scores and more often sat in business or first class on the aircraft than respondents from medium (UK, Germany) and low masculinity (Brazil, Taiwan) countries. So, firms who serve visitors from masculine countries where assertive behaviour is encouraged should expect lower average satisfaction measures when compared to visitors from more feminine countries. The VSM (Hofstede, 1980) contains four further scales a) *power distance* b) *individualism* c) *uncertainty avoidance* d) *long-term orientation*. These national culture dimensions could also affect consumer online review ratings, so future research could pinpoint differences in consumer reviews and consumer attitudes to purchase travel services that fit the Hofstede (1980) dimensions.

Figure 3 summarises some potential future research propositions, based on the literature reviewed in this paper. Propositions 1-9 largely summarize existing research findings, whereas proposition 10- 17 represent potential new research ideas. Many of these new research directions were first proposed by Vermeulen and Seegars (2009, p. 127) and Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan (2008, p. 466).

Figure 3: Table of Propositions for Future Research

INSERT FIGURE 3 HERE

CONCLUSION

This literature review used TripAdvisor.com as it's' research focus, and pinpointed substantial research gaps in our current understanding of consumer review websites. Some research gaps are summarised in Table 2 above. The paper highlights the role of demographic reviewer profile, such as gender, age and nationality cues on *strength of valence (positive and negative)* perception of the review and reviewed. The paper also shows how national cultural dimensions, can play in information search strategies and actual reviewer ratings on online travel review websites. Further, the literature review has revealed eWOM and social networking sites being of increasing importance to both travel and tourism industry and firms in general. Understanding more about attitude towards reviewer profile can help form a basis for future research into the growing size and role of such social networks.

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<http://www.newmediatrendwatch.com/markets-by-country/10-europe/77-norway> (accessed 17th March 2011)

Figure 1: A typology of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) channels (Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan, 2008)

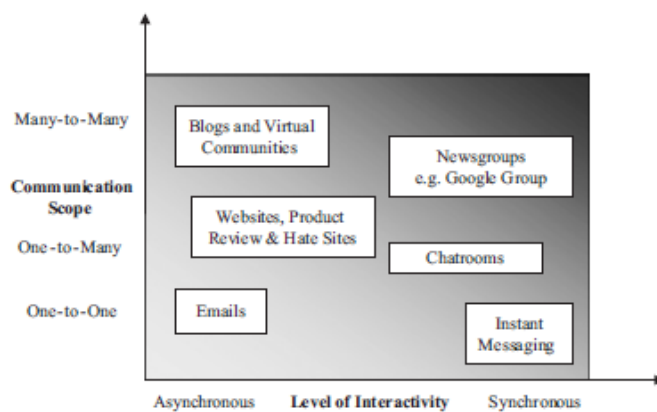


Figure 2: Virtual Communities & Virtual Community Typologies

Article	Type	Main Concepts	Travel Specific
Armstrong and Hagel (1997)	Book	Virtual communities are required from both a vendor and member perspective. People are drawn to virtual communities to fulfil 4 basic needs; <i>a) interests b) relationships, c) fantasy d) transactions</i>	No
Cothrel and Williams (1999)	Review Article	The history of online community growth	No
Fernández-Barcala, González-Díaz, and Prieto-Rodríguez (2010)	Research Article	In their empirical research, the authors differentiate between two types of hotel quality information providers on the Internet <i>a) sales websites</i> (fee financed) <i>b) advice websites</i> (advertising financed)	Yes
Kozinets (1999)	Conceptual Article	Kozinets created a typology of 5 virtual communities of consumption , based on loose versus tight structure and group focus. The typology includes <i>a) boards, b) rings, c) lists, d) dungeons, 5) chat rooms</i>	No
Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan (2008)	Conceptual Article	The authors created a typology of different electronic word of mouth (eWOM) channels , which includes blogs and virtual communities and is applied to hospitality and tourism management. Channels in the typology are differentiated by <i>a) communication scope</i> (many-to-many, one-to-many or one-to-one) and <i>b) level of interactivity</i> (asynchronous versus synchronous)	Yes
Pavlov and Dimoka (2006)	Research Article	Empirical research using the website EBay.com. The findings revealed differences in information search online . Customers rarely view comments beyond the first two pages of feedback text comments	No
Preece (2000)	Research Article	Online communities should consist of; <i>a) people who interact to satisfy needs or perform roles b) a shared interest, need, information exchange or service requirement c) policies d) computer systems</i>	No
Rheingold (1993, 1997)	Book	Was first to define the virtual community as, “ <i>Social aggregations that emerge from the Internet when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace.</i> ” (p. 5)	No
Wang, Yu and Fesenmaier (2002)	Review article	Review the virtual community literature, define the virtual tourist community and draw conceptual models <i>a) pinpointing the core characteristics of virtual communities</i> (virtual, place and symbol) <i>b) fundamental needs of community members</i> (functional, social and psychological)	Yes
Xiang and Gretzel (2010)	Research article	U.S.-based empirical research into the patterns of consumer travel information searches whilst using the Google search engine. The findings revealed significant differences in the type and frequency of social media websites visited when searching for travel information search purposes. The top 20 unique domain names represented approximately 50% of all 1150 websites visited in the study. The largest of these was TripAdvisor.com, with other social media websites also well positioned in the top 20 ranking of domain names. Virtual communities (40%), consumer review websites (27%) and blogs (15%) were the largest three social media website types represented in the findings. The research also uncovered a relationship between social media type and search query keywords a traveller is likely to use. The findings revealed <i>a) virtual communities more closely tied to “core” tourism businesses such as attractions, activities and accommodations; b) consumer review sites related to shopping, hotels and restaurants, c) social networking sites, blogs and photo sharing sites related to events, nightlife and parks.</i>	Yes

Figure 3: Table of Propositions for Future Research

Proposition Number	Proposition	Research referenced
1	Positive online travel reviews will yield positive consumer purchase intention	Vermeulen and Seegars (2009), Ye et al (2009)
2	Negative online travel reviews will yield negative consumer purchase intention	As 1 above
3	Exposure to positive reviews increases consumer purchase intention more for lesser-known hotels than for well-known hotels	As above
4	Exposure to the online reviews increases hotel awareness	As above
5	Hotels with higher star ratings will result in more positive consumer purchase intention	As above
6	City/ Regional GDP will impact positively on consumer purchase intention	As above
7	Price of room will impact negatively on consumer purchase intention	As above
8	Consumers will use sales websites and advice websites for different purposes in their online search process	Cunningham et al (2010), Fernández-Barcala, González-Díaz, and Prieto-Rodríguez (2010)
9	Consumers will trust advice websites (such as Trip Advisor) more than sales websites (such as Booking.com)	As above
10	Male consumers will show greater purchase intention than female consumers when solely one source of information is provided during the information search process	Kim, Lehto, and Morrison (2007), Vermeulen and Seegars (2009)
11	There will be a positive correlation between same gender (male or female) of both the reviewer and consumer and positive purchase intention.	Sen and Lerman (2007), Smith, Menon, and Sivakumar (2005)
12	There will be a positive correlation between similarity of age of both the reviewer and consumer and resulting consumer purchase intention	As 11 above
13	The strength of purchase intention may be moderated by differences in product/ service type (hedonistic versus utilitarian).	As 11 above
14	There will be a positive correlation between consumer purchase intention and similarity of location (country) stated in the profile of the reviewer and the consumer's country of birth	As 11 above
15	Consumers will be more positive towards consumer reviews for home country travel offerings (such as a hotel room) than for foreign country alternatives	Verlegh (2007)
16	There may be a relationship between national country differences in the star rating level and nature of consumer review, dependent on the reviewer's nationality. The effect on consumer purchase intention might be either positive or negative.	Crotts and Erdmann (2000), Hofstede (1980)
17	There may be a positive relationship between consumer purchase intention and similarity of cultural dimension(s) Hofstede (1980) of the reviewer's home country and the consumer's nationality.	As 16 above

ⁱ In Pew Internet Report, April - May 2010 - Global Attitudes Report - see online references

ⁱⁱ In Eurowatch New Media Trends Norway statistics - See online references

ⁱⁱⁱ In Eurowatch New Media Trends Norway & UK statistics - See online references

^{iv} In Eurowatch New Media Trends UK statistics - See online references