THE SUCCESS SOCIAL MEDIA HAS AS A MARKETING TOOL AND HOW THIS MOTIVATES MILLENNIALS TO TRAVEL ABROAD.

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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation has not already been accepted in substance for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree. It is the result of my own independent research except otherwise stated.

Name: Lucy Snell

Signature

Date: 12/04/2018
ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates how social media influences millennial’s to travel abroad. The aim was to determine the success social media has as a marketing tool and how this motivates millennial’s to travel abroad. The researcher has discussed marketing and how it is used within businesses. The author touches upon consumer behaviour to understand how people make decisions, in regard to the millennial generation, word of mouth seemed the most influential when making travel choices. A variety of marketing methods are mentioned and critically analysed to clarify the reasons behind their purpose. The author explores how tourism and travel habits have changed along with the development of social media. Throughout the dissertation UGC and the effects it can have on businesses and consumers has been explored. The researcher used a mixed methods approach by conducting 75 questionnaires on millennial’s and interviewing three reputable travel agents. The findings showed the millennial generation are motivated by social media, although there is no strong correlation that they are reliant on social media for making travel decisions, although it has made information searching easier. The findings revealed travel agents believed UGC and reviews had enhanced their business despite the unmanageable nature of individual’s comments. The researcher made recommendations as to how travel agents can alter their marketing strategies in future.

Key words: Millennial generation, social media, marketing, influence, word of mouth, travel agents, UGC

Word Count: 13,999 (excluding references)
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDA</td>
<td>Attention Interest Desire Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Augmented</td>
<td>Increase in size or value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-producers</td>
<td>Sharing influence and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMO</td>
<td>Destination Management Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-WOM</td>
<td>Electronic Word of Mouth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Service Development</td>
<td>Developing a new service or product for a market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSD</td>
<td>New Service Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive consumers</td>
<td>No engagement or discussion takes place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Segmentation</td>
<td>Process of dividing a market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart Technologies</td>
<td>Technologies that monitor and analyse data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The promotional Mix</td>
<td>Model used to find most suitable marketing methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UGC</td>
<td>User Generate Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIFI</td>
<td>Wireless Fidelity</td>
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Chapter 1
Introduction
1 Introduction

This chapter will highlight key concepts, ideas and definitions that will be discussed throughout the dissertation. To achieve the research aims and objectives the author will first explore marketing and how it is used within businesses.

1.1 Introduction to the Topic

Marketing is defined as “the management process which identifies, anticipates, and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably” (UK Chartered Institute of Marketing, 2015, p.2); it aims to ensure customers engage with an organisation to complete an exchange (Blythe and Martin, 2016). Marketers pay close attention to consumer behaviour to ensure the most appropriate methods are used; Horner and Swarbrooke define consumer behaviour as “the study of why people buy the product they do, and how they make their decisions” (Horner and Swarbrooke, 1996, p. 6). The promotional mix can be drawn upon to understand the marketing process displayed in figure 1.0. Messages from an organisation about its products are communicated via elements of the promotional mix to the consumers, employees, pressure groups and other public. Establishing the most appropriate mix will achieve the best marketing result (Blythe and Martin, 2016).

The Promotional Mix

![Figure 1.0 - The Promotional Mix (Source: Blythe and Martin, 2016, p.199).](image)
Marketing strategies have been comprised to manage the growth of the Internet, initially browsed by passive consumers, known as web 1.0, now web 2.0 has developed, defined by O’Reilly (2005) as, the development of interacting online in an environment where users have control and freedom of dialogue (O’Reilly, 2005). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) suggest web 2.0 is the practice where nearly everything online is continually changed (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010); users can create and distribute content instantly (Sigala et al, 2012), by 2021 it is expected there will be 3.02 billion monthly users (Moens, Li and Chua, 2015). Technologies such as the smartphone have presented opportunities and threats to marketing, the term is defined by Yuan (2005) as “a mobile phone that has computer functionality” (Yuan, 2005, p.xv), this has changed traditional marketing methods which send a “one-way static broadcast” (Zarella, 2010, p.1) using: television, newspapers, radio and magazines (Zarella, 2010) to ‘tradigital’ marketing methods (Tuten and Solomon, 2018). Tradigital marketing refers to; attention gained through interruption, personalisation and interactivity on social media platforms (Tuten and Solomon, 2018).

Social media is defined by Blakeman (2014) as “the visual/verbal sharing of thoughts and ideas with others having the same or similar interests placed on the Internet by non-media professionals” (Blakeman, 2014, p.127), it allows users to share their personal interests and belief, through pictures, videos, messages etc., many people follow specific groups they identify with, these have a colossal influence on users (Cheng et al, 2011). Although social media marketing has expanded (Blakeman, 2014) it has not replaced traditional methods completely. Tuten and Solomon (2018) investigate the reasons why businesses use social media marketing, the top priority was to increase brand awareness as displayed in figure 1.1.
Top Priorities of businesses using social media marketing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand awareness and brand building</td>
<td>45.3%</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
<td>43.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring new customers</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
<td>30.4%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introducing new products and services</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retaining current customer</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand promotions (e.g., contests, coupons)</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
<td>38.6%</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving employee engagement</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing research</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying new customer groups you currently don’t target</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying new products and service opportunities</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving current products or services</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1.1 - Top Priorities of Businesses using social media marketing (Source: Tuten and Solomon, 2018, p.21).

Branding is defined by Tuten and Solomon (2018) as a process of adding value through a brand name and packaging to position a product in a consumer’s mind, a successful brand is easily identified (DeChernatony and McDonald, 1998) with quality, image or convenience (Tuten and Solomon, 2018). A presence on social media maintains brand awareness and competitiveness (Blythe and Martin, 2016).

The researcher will explore the development of tourism and travel habits to understand the changes within the industry. Tourism is defined as “a service which is serviced by a number of other industries such as hospitality and transport” (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016, p.4). The tourism market is very diverse; it incorporates a range of market segments, demanding different characteristics (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016). Tourism was stimulated by an increase in disposable incomes, advances in aircraft technology, an increase in leisure time and growth of tour operators. In 1841 Thomas Cook was developed, they made travel accessible to people who lacked confidence to travel independently. A travel agent acts as “an intermediary between the tourist and the accommodation and transport providers. The main role is to sell holidays, particularly package holidays or inclusive tours” (Quyen, 2010, p.26). Thomas Cook is associated with modern package tourism; in
recent years tourism is about mass appeal and budget prices over elegance and exclusivity (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016).

The development of the two-way communication online has changed the traditional word of mouth to be now known as e-WOM, as many discussions are happening online between strangers (Ismagilova, Dwivedi and Slade, 2017). The term travellers 2.0 is used frequently in tourism, the phrase describes how travel habits have changed, people look on the web to get information on going abroad, they choose to share experiences through a variety of platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram (Chung and Buhalis, 2008). Facebook is a social networking site that allows users to create profiles where they can post photos and write statuses (Tuten and Solomon, 2018). Instagram is a photo-sharing platform that allows users to search for people by name, location and hashtags (Joanne, 2017). Abeyratne (2016) found 97% of millennials’ post travel experiences whilst travelling and 75% post daily (Abeyratne, 2016), many use hashtags so posts reach a wider audience. Hashtags use the hash symbol in front of words turning it into a searchable link, making the information searching process easier (Patel, 2017).

The research project focuses on the millennial generations habits and behaviours, there is a considerable debate over the exact time frame of the millennial generation as many researchers have opposing dates from the 1980’s to the 1990’s (Burstein, 2013). For the purpose of this dissertation the researcher will use the time frame suggested by Fromm and Garton (2013) and refer to the millennial generation as those born between 1977 and 1995, people aged between 22 and 40, it is often referred to as generation Y (Fromm and Garton, 2013), with 1.7 billion millennials worldwide it is the largest generation in history (Burstein, 2013). Millennials are changing the workplace, described as “the most educated, most informed, and most interconnected generation in history” (Weinbaum, Girven and Oberholtzer, 2016, p.2). The generation have been described as having passion to make a difference through optimism and idealism, although have been flawed for being materialistic and overly focused on celebrity culture.
The most popular form of travel planning methods used by millennials is from User Generated Content (UGC), demonstrated in figure 1.2 (Statista, 2017).

**Travel Planning methods of Millennials**

![Graph showing travel planning methods of millennials](image)

User Generated Content (UGC) is defined as data that is posted by users on social media that is made available to the public, this content is often creative and collaborative, the current technology available makes editing and sharing content cheap and easy. UGC can be published on blogs, tweets, podcasts, Instagram and Facebook etc., people post about happenings and events, trip planning, product reviews and problem processing (Moens, Li and Chua, 2015), this has a huge influence on the millennial generation. The amount of people booking travel arrangements online has increased massively; figure 1.3 displays the findings of who used the Internet to make travel arrangements in 2017 by age. The highest cohort was people aged 25 to 34. The smallest proportion to book travel arrangements online were people aged 65 and above (Statista, 2017).
Travel arrangements purchased online by age in 2017

**Figure 1.3 - Travel Arrangements Purchased Online by Age in 2017 (Source: Statista, 2017).**

### 1.2 Research Question

To evaluate how social media influences millennials to travel abroad?

### 1.3 Aims

This dissertation aims to evaluate the success social media has as a marketing tool and how this motivates millennials to travel abroad. To fulfil the aim of the study four objectives have been proposed:

### 1.4 Objectives

1. To critically evaluate the literature on promotional social media marketing.
2. To explore and investigate the different social media platforms individuals use to research travel destinations through questionnaires and interviews.
3. To explore the use of social media by tour operators.
4. Identify what motivates millennials to travel abroad
5. To make a conclusion and recommendations based on the data collected.
1.5 Rationale

The researcher is an avid social media user, their personal interests and behaviour around social media and travelling influenced the topic. The researchers motive is to get a broader understanding of the main reasons millennials use social media and the level of influence it has when choosing to travel abroad as opposed to traditional marketing methods.

1.6 Forms of Data

The research project will use both primary and secondary data. The primary data will be collected through a mixed methods approach of qualitative and quantitative data; the secondary research will be explored in the literature review in chapter 2.

1.7 Study Structure

The study will comprise of seven chapters, each chapter is summarised below.

**Chapter 1 Introduction** - states overall purpose and importance of topic, highlights key definitions and appropriate background information as well as aim and objectives.

**Chapter 2 Literature Review** – explores research that has already been discovered.

**Chapter 3 Methodology** - details methods of data collection the researcher will use.

**Chapter 4 Results and Discussion** - will display results and discuss the findings from the primary research alongside discoveries from the literature review.

**Chapter 5 Conclusion** - summary of the main findings from both primary and secondary research; recommendations for the future will also be discussed.

**Chapter 6 Appendices** - includes all appendices referenced throughout the project.

**Chapter 7 References** - gives details on all references used throughout the study.
Chapter 2

Literature Review
2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction
A literature review is defined by Rhoades as “an account of what was previously published on a specific topic” (Rhoades, 2011, p.61). This section will provide a critical review of the literature which supports the research aims and objectives, detailing what has already been explored on the topic as well as making comparisons; this will be achieved through reading literature in academic books and journals focusing on consumer behaviour, social media, the millennial generation, user generated content (UGC), advertising, travel agents and the electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). Literature reviews prevent reliance on one set of findings and encourage comparisons with other outcomes (Rhoades, 2011).

2.2 Consumer Behaviour
The author has researched consumer behaviour to identify why individuals make certain decisions. Today 3.58 billion people are using the Internet worldwide (Statista, 2017), due to; economic growth, increased internet speed and cheaper roaming costs on a variety of networks as well as the affordability of laptops, tablets and smartphones (Mintel, 2017), these have a huge effect on consumers from almost every socio-demographic group across the world (Assimakopoulos et al, 2017). While many researchers highlight the positives of smartphones Kuar and Tao (2014) argue mobile phones were created to support business communications through phone calls and texting, the smartphone “constitutes misuse since it negates the fundamental reason why it was invented” (Kaur and Tao, 2014, p.116).

The consumer is the organisations central focus; it is vital they understand how consumers make decisions. However, research on consumer behaviour in the tourism industry is still being developed, Horner and Swarbrooke (2016) highlight that consumer’s decisions to purchase now is based on emotional significance. To help understand this Henry Assael’s (1987) classification of types of buying behaviour model has been drawn upon displayed in table 1. This model has four
different types of buying behaviours; complex, dissonance, habitual and variety seeking which are determined based on level of involvement and significance of brands (Kotler, Armstrong and Opresnik, 2017).

**Classification of Types of Buyer Behaviour**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Involvement</th>
<th>Low Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant differences</td>
<td>Complex buying behaviour</td>
<td>Variety-seeking buying behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between brands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Few differences</td>
<td>Dissonance-reducing buying behaviour</td>
<td>Habitual buying behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>between brands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1 - Classification of Types of Buyer Behaviour (Source: Adapted from Henri Assael (1987) Consumer Behaviour and Marketing Action, Kent Publishing Company, Boston in Kotler, Armstrong and Opresnik (2017).)*

Complex buying behaviour requires lots of research, often the product/service has a high cost and the consumer sees significant brand differentiation, it therefore warrants high involvement, e.g. buying a holiday, “the cost of a failed holiday is irreversible” (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016, p.50). Dissonance reducing buying behaviour highly involves the consumer, however there is little difference between brands, e.g. buying carpet. Habitual buying behaviour has low involvement and little significance between brands, e.g. buying milk. Variety seeking exists when there is a significant difference between brands, but price is not high enough to warrant an extensive search, e.g. a packet of biscuits (Assael, 1987). Moloney (2006) notes that media relations help consumers to make decisions on what to buy and where to buy it (Moloney, 2006).

Sigala et al (2012) questions whether theories matter for usage of social media, both Facebook and Twitter were created by people wanting to communicate with their friends (Mezrich and Chamberlain, 2009)(Johnson, 2009), neither was founded through a deep thought process of social media, yet they have become the most
popular platforms. Nevertheless, Roque and Raposo (2014) highlight “without solid understanding of the role played by social media it is not possible for organisations to leverage this strategic knowledge and use it as their benefit” (Roque and Raposo, 2014, p. 60), theories are key to enable organisations and researchers to interpret and analyse data.

Abraham Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs, a theory of motivation has been drawn upon in figure 2.1 to help achieve the research aim. Maslow identified five levels humans rank in order of importance. The lower level needs must be satisfied before higher level needs develop. Lower level needs focus on physiological, safety and social needs. The higher levels concern an individual’s self-esteem and self-actualisation. Marketers must understand the motives of their target audience, so they can change elements in their marketing strategies to satisfy the consumer’s needs. This theory suggests consumers are motivated by dissatisfaction (Maslow, 2012).

**Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943)**

John Dewey’s (1910) buying decision process model in figure 2.2 explains the stages consumers go through when purchasing a product or service, these include: problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase and post purchase evaluation.

**Consumer Buying Decision Process**

![Consumer Buying Decision Process Diagram](image)

*Figure 2.2 - Consumer Buying Decision Process (Source: Pride and Ferell, 2010).*

The first stage involves the buyer becoming aware of a problem or need, the second stage involves researching information to solve the problem or satisfy the need, in the third stage the buyer weighs up alternatives and formulate expectations, in the fourth stage the researcher becomes the consumer, at this stage they add to the information they already are aware of (Pride and Ferrell, 2010). The final stage is where the consumer shares their experience hoping to influence future travellers (Sigala et al, 2012).

### 2.3 Social Media

Social media tools allow users to participate in communication networks and establish their own networks of relationships, connections or friends (Fuchs, 2017). To fulfil the projects aims and objectives the researcher investigated different social media platforms individuals use and how millennials utilise them to research travel choices. The top social media platforms include: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter as shown in figure 2.3 (Statista, 2017), Facebook is considered a successful marketing tool as it encourages engagement and acts as a ‘buzz-generating’ tool which adds to brand value (Blakeman, 2014).
Currently it is estimated that two billion people are active on social networking sites. Facebook has 2.06 billion monthly users, with the majority in the 25-34-age cohort, demonstrated in figure 2.4 (Statista, 2017), this proves millennials are the heaviest users of Facebook (Gemmil and Peterson, 2006).

**Distribution of Facebook users worldwide**

![Distribution of Facebook Users Worldwide as of January 2018 by Age and Gender (Source: Statista, 2017).](image)

Figure 2.4 - Distribution of Facebook Users Worldwide as of January 2018 by Age and Gender (Source: Statista, 2017).
Users are looking to obtain information to help with trip planning, such as; where to stay, where to eat, what to do and what to see (Engel et al, 1990; Rossi and Goetz, 2011), they document this throughout their trip and share with their followers, some use hashtags when they post. Majeed (2016) suggest hashtags help extract information by displaying posts that belong or identify with a certain group or topic, hashtags are particularly popular on Twitter and Instagram. Conversely Patel and Puri (2016) explain hashtags are negative as customers can vent their anger through social media easily after a bad experience (Patel and Puri, in Garg et al, 2018). Social media has been criticised for being fake and unrealistic, according to Shearer (2016) social media is a platform that people are using to present themselves in the best way possible, the ease of editing, adding filters and photo shopping can completely transform a picture, this manipulation has become a formality to many. Shearer (2016) suggests the growth of the smartphone has encouraged this behaviour online (Shearer, 2016).

2.4 The Millennial Generation

To satisfy the research objectives the author investigated the millennial generation to clarify the specific characteristics and motivators of the cohort, they are defined as, those born between 1977 and 1995 (Fromm and Garton, 2013) and are considered to be the largest generation to date (Fry, 2016). The millennial generation have grown up over a period where technology has changed along with people’s priorities and attitudes, they get pleasure from sharing their opinions, experiences and interests by posting pictures and updating their statuses to show their followers they are having a good time (Assimakopoulos et al, 2017), they like this to be received with likes, comments and shares (Luttrell and McGrath, 2016). Constantinides and Stagno (2012) state the millennial generation rely on social media for gathering information and socialising (Constantinides and Stagno, 2012). However, Cheng et al (2011) identified the main reason to be self-status seeking (Cheng et al, 2011). In contrast, Assimakopoulos et al (2017) explain the millennial generation have been encouraged to use social media resources as a valuable tool and to take advantage of the technology available to them, this makes these users

The millennial generation are considered to be a lucrative resource for brands as many of the people in this cohort, according to Fromm and Garton (2013), revel in having the opportunity to participate in the development of a product or service, their willingness to give feedback to friends, family and even strangers can lead to increased brand value, millennials believe a company or brand reaching out gives them a voice (Fromm and Garton, 2013). Johansson (2017) highlights how the millennial generation have smaller incomes and less money compared with previous generations, brands see this opportunity to promote themselves by sending freebies to individuals with large followings (Johansson, 2017). Consequently, it is obvious there are disparities between the millennial generation and previous generations (Assimakopoulos et al, 2017).

2.5 User Generated Content (UGC)

Mangold and Faulds (2009) explain how consumer behaviour is determined through social media; they rely on making decisions about a product or service based on people’s opinions and attitudes created from individual experiences rather than their own personal thoughts (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). Studies have recognised consumers are using social media to evaluate information from products and services (Kim et al, 2004), they are referring to sites such as; TripAdvisor, YouTube, Instagram and Facebook to get an outside opinion. Consumers feel information is more credible from avid social media users as opposed to established businesses despite the fact that UGC can be easily modified (Mangold and Faulds, 2009). However, Boone and Kurtz (2015) found 97% of the millennial generation post their experiences online, this is a huge threat for travel agents as information that is posted has the power to influence millions of people, travel agents may lose business if they are believed to be unsatisfactory or inauthentic (Boone and Kurtz, 2015). However, Sigala (2012) reminds us there are barriers faced by users that share a lot of information online, posting so much online leads to a large amount of
exposure which often may not always result in positive responses (Govani and Pashley, 2005).

The researcher wanted to know why some social networks were more useful than others, Jackson (2013) highlights micro-blogging as a popular tool due to the focus of a “quick-pong” and less on writing and reading long lengthy posts (Jackson, 2013, p.203), this includes sites such as Twitter and Tumblr, this lowers the thought barrier by users (Java et al, 2007). UGC is acting as an AIDA effect, it creates Attention, Interest, Desire and Action (Pan et al, 2007), the acronym founded by St Elmo Lewis (1898) is useful as it has a large impact not only on the behaviour of travellers and decision making but it can also be manipulated for improving effectiveness of business operations (Sigala et al, 2012). However, Ehrenberg et al (2002) argue that just because a consumer notices advertisements does not mean it will influence their attitudes and behaviour, the model assumes the advertisements are unsuccessful if they do not generate a sale (Ehrenberg, 2002).

Many content producers are being approached by companies to promote their business, high profile bloggers are paid to travel to locations and hotels in exchange for publicity, bloggers such as the Bucket List family (The Bucket List Family, 2017) and Louis Cole (Live the Adventure, 2017) tag their location and add hashtags on their posts, bloggers have become extremely influential, “users gain more power as the authority of marketers and institutions declines” (Hays et al, 2013, p. 213). Businesses understand that using customer intelligence can help them gain knowledge on market trends and customer needs, however there is limited research on the role of New Service Development (NSD) effectiveness (Sigala, et al, 2012).

The traditional method of purchasing a guide book such as; the Lonely Planet and the Rough Guide are becoming less popular as more up to date information can be sourced online easily for free, people can type exactly what they want to find out and instantly be presented with a variety of results, they can therefore be more interactive and precise (Sigala et al, 2012). This links appropriately with social exchange theory (Emerson, 1976). The theory demonstrates how humans
communicate and form relationships and communities using a cost benefit structure, showing individuals engage in behaviours they find rewarding and avoid behaviours with a high cost associated or not worth their while (Emerson, 1976). However, this theory has been criticised as the nature of rewards and costs are subjective, it is possible to justify any behaviour in terms of a positive cost benefit outcome (Cardwell and Flanagan, 2003). Even though the cost of technology has dramatically decreased in recent years and the accessibility of Wi-Fi has improved there are still many countries that do not offer this facility, roaming costs for a tourist can be high and accessing social media whilst aboard can become difficult, whereas a travel guide book can be used whenever (Kenteris et al, 2011).

### 2.6 Advertising

Advertising is defined as “an impersonal communication process, placed in various media to reach the correct audiences, media are used to reach large numbers of people with one campaign” (Ogden and Rarick, 2009, p.2). The author researched the development of advertising and investigated the reasons as to why promotional social media marketing has increased among businesses to determine how successful it is as a marketing tool. The general purpose of an organisation using social media is to “enhance the reputation of an organisation and its products, and to influence and inform the target audiences” (Bland et al, 2005, p.55).

To ensure the most appropriate advertising methods are used marketers use segmentation, this groups consumers with similar needs and characteristics. According to Horner and Swarbrooke (2016) tourism marketing relies heavily on segmentation, life-stage segmentation splits the population into groups centred on demographic and psychographic data. Marketers use life stage segmentation to help understand customers future needs, segments include: children, students, families, professionals, empty nesters, retirement stage, grandparents etc. (Drozdenko and Drake, 2002), the needs of students will be different to families and people who are retired.
Social media advertising is considered to be cheap and easy to repeat a message, advertising on social media requires information to be posted at the right time on the right platform. Jackson (2013) state the people on social media want to be entertained, they purposely go out of their way to gain information (Jackson, 2013). The increase in social media marketing has benefited many people, information can easily be accessed online without leaving the house, using social media as a promotional tool has decreased the need for printed materials, organisations are using this to gain a competitive advantage, as Paul, Bhattacharyya and Anand, (2017) suggest green supply chain solutions can help improve corporate image, product image, customer loyalty, satisfaction and reputation (Paul, Bhattacharyya and Anand, 2017). Christensen (2016) also reports millennials are more environmentally conscious than other generations and often select products or services that have a lower carbon footprint. However, Jackson (2013) expresses that assuming an online presence is the only way forward would be wrong, it would not produce any significant or desired effect for a business with a target market which live without evident technologies, for example previous generations were brought up without certain technologies and do not want to learn to use these tools (Jackson, 2013).

Social media allows companies to monitor the success of the marketing activities on each platform, for example information technology has made it possible to measure the amount of views on posts or webpage visits, these techniques can enhance the relationship between companies and their consumers (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008), although Horner and Swarbrooke (2016) explain social media is not a solution for all generations as a form of advertising, for example Saga targets the over fifties market with exclusive direct mail brochures, Statista (2017) showed that user numbers on Facebook started to decrease rapidly for people aged 45 years and above (Statista, 2017) (Horner and Swarbrooke, 2016), therefore proving social media marketing would be ineffective when targeting this age cohort.
2.7 Travel Agents

A travel agent acts as “an intermediary between the tourist and the accommodation and transport providers. The main role is to sell holidays, particularly package holidays or inclusive tours” (Quyen, 2010, p.26). To achieve the projects objectives the researcher explored the positive and negative effects social media and the millennial generation has had on travel agents. Sigala, Christou and Gretzel (2012) look closely at the profile and behaviour of ‘travellers 2.0’ as well as investigating how travel agents have adapted to this generation (Sigala, Christou and Gretzel, 2012). ABTA (2016) found 76% of people booked travel online and only 19% booked in-store, as highlighted in figure 2.5. ABTA also found millennials were the highest age group that booked travel through a tablet or mobile phone, the number of people booking through a smartphone decreased as they found this method difficult to navigate (ABTA, 2016).

Booking methods used in 2016

The Millennial generation travel differently to other generations according to Moos, Pfeiffer and Vinodrai (2017) they use online travel planning tools to reduce the need for some trips, such as travelling into a city centre to visit a travel agent, as the internet and mobile communication technologies have reduced the need for face-to-face communication (Moos, Pfeiffer and Vinodrai, 2017). Edensor (2018) has reported millennials are less likely to use travel agents as they view their products as ‘packages’ which are not tailored to their needs and do not offer the authentic travel experience, Mohn (2014) suggests millennials travel abroad to taste the regional food and socialise with the locals, Mohn found 23% of millennial travellers wanted to
mingle with as many nationalities as possible (Mohn, 2014) whereas Christensen (2016) suggests millennials main motive for travelling is for activities such as trekking and snorkelling whereas using a travel agent will result in a ‘touristy trip’, where they will not experience the local culture (Edensor, 2018).

In contrast Abeyratne (2016) suggests millennials travel choices are based on price and what is on offer, 85% of millennials search a variety of sites before booking to ensure they get the best deal (Abeyratne, 2016) this links with Boone and Kurtz (2015) who suggest millennials lack brand loyalty, 68% of millennials said they would remain loyal to an organisation that offers them the most rewards, upgrades and discounts (Abeyratne, 2016), while older generations have higher disposable incomes (Johansson, 2017) and less knowledge of information searching technologies (Jackson, 2013), they are willing to pay more for the service from a travel agent and remain loyal if they had a good experience. Abeyratne (2016) also highlight that millennials are the generation that mostly use travel apps (Abeyratne, 2016), therefore pose considerable threats to businesses using traditional marketing methods, they need to adapt their strategies to ensure they reach a variety of generations.

The medium of social media has threatened public and private sectors (Belch and Belch, 2014), as the travel industry offers intangible experimental products visitors rely heavily on information delivered to them to evaluate all products on offer, smaller businesses have adapted to using the benefits of web 2.0 to gain a competitive advantage over larger firms, by creating user-friendly platforms makes information searching effortless helping to shrink the gap between the travel agent and the client. However due to the ease of creating content online it is easy for users to post reviews and comments which may not necessarily be welcomed by a travel agent (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008), for example in 2006 two children died from carbon monoxide poisoning on a Thomas Cook holiday, many people took to social media to publicly shame the organisation (Bourke, 2015), travel agents are using UGC to respond hoping to improve their products and advertising methods to increase
brand image, these improvements can be made almost instantly online for users to mitigate criticism (Sigala, 2011).

Travellers have a more active role in the production and consumption of tourism experiences than the travel agent themselves; they hope these “co-designers” will give the travel experience a positive image to promote their business (Sigala, 2011). Firms have recognised this and have redefined their business models to address the needs and expectations of the millennial generation of travellers, travel agents have become more actively involved to exploit the intelligence and social influence of the different chains information travels through to reach the final consumer (Kohler et al, 2011), now consumers are able to make reservations online and adjust itineraries after purchase (Yoo and Gretzel, 2008). Many consumers share post-trip experiences and feedback on very public platforms, these are often negative as according to Sernovitz (2006) people are more likely to share a bad review than a good one (Sernovitz, 2015).

2.8 Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM)

Here the researcher will discuss the literature on the electronic word of mouth to fulfil the project aim. The internet has developed into a two-way communication network, many discussions happen online between strangers, this has changed the traditional word of Mouth (e-WOM) (Ismagilova, Dwivedi and Slade, 2017), this is an advantage as there is a wider audience online where individuals can ask questions whilst remaining anonymous, though according to Sigala et al (2012) this does not always lead to clear responses and can give mix interpretations (Sigala et al, 2012).

Communicating over social media is quick and easy, advice from friends, family and relatives is seen to be the most influential source of information when making travel decisions (Crotts, 1999), this links with Tuten and Solomon (2018) who found 71% said that friends and family recommendations had a substantial influence on purchasing decisions, the population is more trusting when information is obtained through people they know as opposed to from strangers, reviews and
recommendations were only considered credible if they came from mutual friends on social media networks (Tuten and Solomon, 2018). Blythe and Martin (2016) highlight word of mouth to be a negative form of communication and advised marketers to focus their attention on complaint handling to mitigate a bad reputation and encourage positive responses (Blythe and Martin, 2016).

The development of web 2.0 has meant that users are also taking advice from strangers. Asatryan and Oh (2008) used the psychological ownership theory to explain why previous guests go out of their way to give feedback (Asatryan and Oh, 2008), some people felt loyalty to brands they travel with often, and therefore were more inclined to give positive comments to their friends and direct any negative comments to the management, however where loyalty does not exist consumers are much more likely to share a negative or positive review to help future customers (Mattila, 2001).

2.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a critical analysis of existing research around social media, marketing and the behaviour of the millennial generation in regard to making travel choices. Social media has had both positive and negative implications on the travel industry, theorists suggest it has presented firms with opportunities to increase brand awareness, decrease advertising costs and offer improved support for customers. Theorists also suggest social media is not always an effective promotional marketing tool as not all age ranges are active on social media and photo manipulation can make pictures unrealistic. Boone and Kurtz (2015) suggest UGC is threatening reputation as it becomes more open to criticism placing an organisation in a vulnerable position, this contrasts Sigala et al. (2012) who reports social media increases opportunities to exploit UGC to gain knowledge on market trends and customer needs, therefore this has created a gap in the literature, it is not clear whether UGC and review websites such as TripAdvisor have affected travel agents and whether the millennial generation base their decision to not use a travel agent based what they read online.
Chapter 3
Methodology
3 Methodology

3.1 Introduction
This section will critically evaluate and explain the approach and methods of data collection used for the research project to justify the research aims and objectives. Methodology is defined as “the underlying theory and analysis of how research does or should proceed” (Kirsch and Sullivan, 1992, p.2).

3.2 Constructivism
The researcher’s philosophical stance for the project is constructivism. Constructivism proposes humans construct information and meanings from their experiences. The information gathered is subjective as the researcher is using an interpretivist view to create experiences based on an individual’s own knowledge. The researcher’s epistemology, constructivism, is a process to which the knowledge of the research study is acquired. This approach is used when research gathers qualitative data, for example open-ended questions in a semi-structured interview (Denicolo, Long and Bradley-Cole, 2016).

3.3 Triangulation
Triangulation is the term used to describe research collected using a mix methodology approach, used to gain a deeper understanding of a research question (Veal, 2017). When triangulation is used the author will compare the results from each method, if findings produce similar patterns the overall argument stands strong, this can help address issues of validity and reliability. The researcher will use this method to analyse the data from the questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews to discuss similarities and differences that arise (White, 2003). Kapitan (2011) supports this theory as he suggests, “testing one source against another helps to eliminate inadequate alternative explanations” (Kapitan, 2011, p.111).
3.4 Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research
The method of using both qualitative and quantitative research combined “can offset the weaknesses of either approach used by itself” (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007. P9), this method will therefore be used. Quantitative data is considered to consist of numbers gathered from a large sample. Qualitative data can consist of words, pictures and descriptive writing. Mixed methods involve using qualitative and quantitative data in order to answer a research question, the combination can gather information rich in detail to gain a greater understanding of an issue (Ross, 2004). Quantitative data will be gathered using questionnaires and qualitative data will be collected through conducting interviews, a mix of both methods “provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.5).

3.5 Primary Research
Primary research is “immediate, from the time and place under research” (Wisker, 2009, p.51) it is the search for information that has yet to be collected, according to Emilien, Weitkunat and Ludicke (2017) primary research gives researchers full control to ensure the project objectives are met (Emilien, Weitkunat and Ludicke, 2017). Secondary research is an alternate source of information, this information has already been collected and observed (Wisker, 2009), this was demonstrated in the literature review, however this does not always provide answers to all questions posed by researchers (Emilien, Weitkunat and Ludicke, 2017). This research project will use thematic analysis to analyse the primary data.

3.6 Quantitative Data Collection
Quantitative research obtains information through simplifying questions that result in closed-ended answers and numerical data; it often requires large samples (O’Dwyer and Bernauer, 2014). Methods of quantitative data collection are highlighted in Tables 2 and 3.
Advantages and Disadvantages of Questionnaires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of Questionnaires</th>
<th>Disadvantages of Questionnaires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The ability to collect large amounts of data making it easier to generalise a population</td>
<td>• Inability to probe the participants to write freely unlike a semi-structured interview (Gibson and Brown, 2010),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Respondents may be less likely to complete all questions as they may find them irrelevant or uninteresting (Athanasiou, Debas and Darzi, 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cheaper to conduct than interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Online questionnaires also allow the participant to complete the questions at their own pace in their own time (Barker and Powell, 2014).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can be completed online or delivered to participants.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 - Advantages and Disadvantages of Questionnaires

Advantages and Disadvantages of Structured Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of Structured Interviews</th>
<th>Disadvantages of Structured Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to explain question to avoid misinterpretation.</td>
<td>• Lengthy questions can cause confusion and loss of interest; this may affect the validity of the results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Easily replicated to test reliability.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can be done face-to-face or over the phone.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Questions are simple to answer.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 - Advantages and Disadvantages of Structured Interviews

The researcher used Internet based questionnaires over structured interviews as it is a cost-effective method of gathering a large sample (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). The questionnaire collected information about millennial’s opinions and influences around social media.
3.7 Survey Design

The questionnaire was designed using Qualtrics, the researcher aimed to receive 75 responses, as according to Daniel (2012) “quantitative designs tend to require large sample sizes” (Daniel, 2012, p.241). The questionnaire included 29 questions (see appendix B) which concerned millennials behaviour on social media in relation to their travel choices.

3.8 Qualitative Data Collation

Qualitative data is defined by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) as “data consisting of open-ended information that the researcher gathers through interviews” (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007, p.6), the information is “rich or thick description based” (O’Dwyer and Bernauer, 2014, p.8), often the words of someone else but can also be gathered through observations. Qualitative data can be collected through semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Semi-structured interviews are defined as “specific dimensions of a research question while also leaving space for study participants to offer new meanings to the topic” (Galletta and Cross, 2013, p. 2), table 4 discusses their advantages and disadvantages.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Semi-structured Interviews

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of Semi-structured Interviews</th>
<th>Disadvantages of Semi-structured Interviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Delivers information rich in detail.</td>
<td>• Participants may be reluctant to disclose sensitive or confidential information to someone they have little knowledge on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allows author to interact and probe respondent to allow for a more detailed response (Nykiel, 2007).</td>
<td>• Does not give a true representation of the population, been criticized for being unreliable as it is difficult to gather a large sample (Nykiel, 2007).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interactions stimulate discussion that may uncover issues that were not initially anticipated.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 - Advantages and Disadvantages of Semi-structured Interviews
Focus groups are defined as “carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, nonthreatening environment” (Krueger and Casey, 2014, p.2), table 5 indicates their advantages and disadvantages.

**Advantages and Disadvantages of Focus Groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages of Focus Groups</th>
<th>Disadvantages of Focus Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Gather opinions allowing a researcher to identify trends and patterns</td>
<td>• Hard to control particularly if there is a disagreement between participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Data can be difficult to analyse (Krueger and Casey, 2014).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Semi-structured interviews are appropriate to uncover concepts and ideas that are complex (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016), therefore this method was used to gather information from travel agents to explore social media’s impact upon organisations and consumers.

### 3.9 Interview Design

The interview will be conducted on travel agents who agreed to participate prior to the interview. The interview will be semi-structured allowing participants to provide open-ended questions to gather opinions and thoughts (Galletta, 2013). The questions were approved by the Cardiff Metropolitan Ethics Committee then later piloted on the researcher’s supervisor (see appendix G). A face-to-face interview was conducted with three travel agents. The interview lasted around 30 minutes and was recorded using a Dictaphone.

### 3.10 Sampling

The mixed methods approach required two sample groups to be used. Participants were recruited by distributing a questionnaire link on the researchers Facebook account as this platform has a significant number of millennials as highlighted in the
In the literature review, the sample will be purposive, meaning the researcher picks the most appropriate sample to gather the most relevant information (White and Rayner, 2014). Participants may also be found through the snowball technique, the researcher will encourage participants to recommend others aged between 22 and 40 as the research question is concerned with how social media has impacted the millennial generation only (Daniel, 2012), this will help avoid bias from the researcher’s friends on Facebook. The researcher collected 75 questionnaires to increase the reliability (appendix C for completed questionnaire results), the researcher selected three travel agents to interview, detailed in table 6 (Daniel, 2012).

**Semi-structured Interview Sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview A</th>
<th>A global British travel company, founded 177 years ago. Recognised as one of the best-known names in travel. The interview was held with a sales consultant who had been working for the organisation for 14 years.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview B</td>
<td>One of the largest travel companies for students and young people who declare they are experts in round the world adventures; the company has been operating for 39 years. The interview was with the assistant manager who had been working for the organisation for 8 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview C</td>
<td>A UK based travel operator that has been established for 53 years. The interview was with the deputy manager who had been working for the organisation for 10 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 6 - Semi-structured Interview Sample*

The participant’s length of time within the organisations increased the reliability and validity of the information as they have a broad knowledge and awareness of the organisations operations and how they have changed over time. The researcher asked this question to determine whether a participant who had worked with an organisation for a long period had noticed a great change in marketing methods as opposed to someone who had only recently joined the organisation.
3.11 Limitations

It is important the researcher considers potential problems that could be encountered when collecting data to help increase validity (Kumar, 2011). A limitation of the online questionnaire includes a lack of response from millennials; which may mean data collected is not representative to the research question (O’Hara et al, 2011). Participants may also misread the questions and fail to give relevant answers. Interview limitations include the likelihood of not being able to obtain an interview from travel agents within a specific time period, this will be reduced by offering various interview approaches such as a video call or over the telephone. To avoid the probability of causing offence or asking misleading questions the researcher will email the travel agents the questions prior to the interview. To mitigate the risk of limitations the researcher has cautiously planned the methodological approach.

3.12 Thematic Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaires will be automatically analysed using Qualtrics, information will be consolidated into graphs so it is easier to interpret. The qualitative data will be analysed using thematic analysis, the main themes will be recorded in relation to the research question (Kumar, 2011). The interview will be recorded with a Dictaphone then later transcribed (see appendix H, I and J for full interviews), key words and themes will be identified. The researcher will compare the results with the secondary research in chapter 2 to identify any gaps in existing knowledge (Kumar, 2011).

3.13 Reliability and Validity

Validity refers to “interpretations or actions that are made on the basis of test scores” (Lissitz, 2009, p.20). Validity ensures the research design addresses the research questions and objectives that are trying to be achieved. To confirm validity 75 questionnaires will be analysed and at least three interviews will be conducted to identify patterns.
Reliability is about making the findings credible and consistent, this links mostly with repetition (White and Rayner, 2014), using the same method should replicate similar results (Schensul, Schensul and LeCompte, 2013). The interviews will provide subjective information; this could impact the level of reliability. According to Hammersley (1987), the best way to test the accuracy of research is paying close attention to reliability and validity (Hammersley, 1987).

3.14 Ethics
Ethics ensures everyone involved in the project are protected from harm, ethics “implies honesty and integrity” (White and Rayner, 2014, p.200). Participants read a consent form before the questionnaire began, this included all details of the research project (see appendix A). The participant was asked to verify they were between the age of 22 and 40 (millennial age) to certify the most appropriate sample was contributing; all completed consent forms are displayed in appendix F. No names or contact information will be used, and all information will be confidential. All participants will remain anonymous throughout the data collection and write up. Travel agents received a participant information sheet (see appendix D) and consent form (see appendix E) that required a signature before the interview could begin. To ensure the safety and respect of the travel agents interview questions were emailed to organisations prior to the interview to avoid causing offence or asking misleading questions.

3.15 Chapter Summary
To conclude this chapter each method of data collection has been critically evaluated using theory to ensure an accurate and ethical research project. The following chapter will show the results and analysis of the primary data; it will then include a detailed discussion that will highlight key themes.
Chapter 4

Results and Discussion
4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will analyse the primary data collected through the methods discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter will determine whether the results achieved the research aims and objectives.

The questionnaire was distributed online (see appendix C) and aimed to identify millennials use of social media and the influence it has when looking to travel abroad. The researcher gathered the responses from 75 millennials into pie charts to present the findings. The first question asked the participants to consent before filling out the questionnaire, question two asked the participants to confirm they were a millennial (aged between 22 and 40) to ensure the study was valid and the results could be generalised to the millennial generation.

The results will be presented alongside the findings from three semi-structured interviews with travel agents (see appendix G for interview topic list) as the researcher wanted to explore the use of social media by travel agents to see how they have responded to the development of social media and how this has affected their marketing methods. The first questions in the semi-structured interview asked the participant to disclose their position within the company and the length of time they have worked with the company. For the purpose of the research project the travel agents have been ammonised and will be referred to as interview A, interview B and interview C (see appendix H, I and J for full interviews). The researcher will use thematic analysis to identify trends and patterns and compare with the secondary data mentioned in the literature review.
4.2 Themes

The researcher identified nine themes: holiday typologies, clientele, marketing strategies, successful marketing tools, ineffective marketing tools, word of mouth, maintaining loyalty, booking methods and influences of reviews.

4.2.1 Holiday Typologies

This theme was identified as each interview talked about the holidays they offer. The researcher wanted to know what types of holidays were available to reveal if the travel agents offered what the millennials want based on the results from the online questionnaire. This would help give the researcher a deeper understanding as to why millennials prefer not to use a travel agent when choosing to travel abroad.

Question 18 – What is your main reason for travelling abroad?

![Figure 4.1 - What is your main reason for travelling abroad?](image)

The online questionnaire revealed 81% of millennials travel for leisure and 13% chose to travel for family reasons. This links with Christensen (2016) who suggest millennials are travelling abroad to exotic locations to take part in activities such as trekking and snorkeling.
Interview A and B revealed they offer a variety of holidays, to cover all requirements, this included budget, family, luxury, active and adventure holidays. Interview C explained:

“we would love to build the customers perfect holiday and build our customers numbers up year on year by offering differentiated products, this will help determine which holiday our customers want to choose” (Interview C).

The findings from each interview showed travel agents offer tailor made travel to suit the customer, therefore millennials failing to use travel agents does not stem from what they have to offer.

4.2.2 Clientele

The researcher asked questions regarding the target audience and demographic of each travel agent to understand who the organisation aimed their service at, so the researcher could justify the marketing methods being used, for example, Saga targets the over fifties market, they therefore use direct mail brochures as people in this cohort are the least active online therefore social media promotion would be ineffective. Interview A highlighted their target audience as, “anybody considering booking a holiday including short breaks in the UK right through to worldwide cruises”. Interview B targeted students, teachers and travellers under 30; they mentioned they offered exclusive rates for students. Interview C targeted families, adult only holidays, solo travellers and cruisers, “the market is very wide and vast” (Interview C). The researcher then introduced questions on the travel agents demographic, interview’s A and C shared similar results, they both explained their customers come from “many walks of life and occupations” (interview C), to ensure everyone has the opportunity to travel they offer payment plans, particularly popular with people who book 4 to 5 times a year. Interview B showed the demographic to be much more directed at students and youths, particularly people between the age of 20 and 30. This fits directly with the millennial generation. This information helped the researcher build a persona of the travel agents customers. The organisations were asked about the behaviour of their customers and their use
of social media. All three interviews revealed most customers have a presence on social media although interview B suggests that, on average customers over the age of 50 do not use social media. This supports Statista (2017) findings that the smallest proportion of people who used online services were aged 55 and above.

Question 3 - What is your gender?

Question 4 - What is your age?

The questionnaire included a variety of questions around participants’ age, gender, occupation and life stage. Figure 4.2 demonstrates 61% were female as opposed to 39% who were males. Question four asked the participant their age to investigate whether a particular age within the generation was influenced more by social media, figure 4.3 shows participants in their 20’s are significantly higher than other age categories, this correlates with the statistics presented in chapter 2 where the highest users on Facebook were aged between 18 and 24. This could be considered a limitation as the questionnaire was shared through the researcher’s Facebook account. Although this does not affect the study findings immensely having an unbalanced sample could be considered as a limitation in the discussion of the results.
The questionnaire revealed 54% of respondents were students, 32% were employed full time. Figure 4.5 shows 97% of respondents did not have children, the researcher asked these questions to determine what life stage they were in as Horner and Swarbrooke (2016) suggest tourism marketing relies heavily on segmentation as the needs of students will be different to those of families, this links with Abeyratne (2016) who suggests students main focus is on price whilst families prefer holidays that offer child friendly facilities.
The following results relate to millennial’s travel patterns and behaviour online, the researcher wanted to get a broad understanding as to how recently the respondents had been abroad, figure 4.6 shows 60% of participants had been abroad in the past 4 months, this shows the millennial generation have a keen interest and motivation to travel abroad.

Question 7 – Have you been abroad in the past 4 months?

Question 8 – Do you post on social media whilst you are abroad?

![Figure 4.6 - Have you been abroad in the past 4 months?](image1)

![Figure 4.7 - Do you post on social media whilst you are abroad?](image2)

Question 17 – How many times a year do you usually go abroad?

![Figure 4.8 - How many times a year do you usually go abroad?](image3)
Question eight asked the participants whether they posted on social media whilst abroad and to what extent, the majority vote said 34% always post on social media, only 11% said they never posted online whilst abroad. This supports Abeyratne (2017) findings that 97% of millennial travellers will post their travel experiences whilst they are travelling and 75% will post daily. The findings showed 37% travelled abroad twice a year, 29% said they travelled once a year and 6% said they don’t usually go abroad.

Question 20 – Do your interests and hobbies influence your decision to travel abroad?

*Figure 4.9 - Do your interests and hobbies influence your decision to travel abroad?*

The participants in the questionnaire were asked if their interests and hobbies influenced their decision to travel abroad, the figure shows 29% travel abroad due to activities, there was an equal response claiming they were not influenced by hobbies or interests (comments are detailed in Table 7).
Comments from Question 20

| “Yes, for example I booked a skiing holiday for my love of sport” |
| “Yes, I like cycling so have gone to places which are good for it such as the Alps and Holland” |
| “I guess so sometimes... like if I were to go on a skiing or on a water sports holiday” |
| “Yes. Running takes me to different countries to compete in races” |

Table 7 - Comments from Question 20

This also links with Christensen (2016) that millennials travel for activities. The clientele revealed from the interviews also fit with the participants in the questionnaire, hence why this theme was identified.

4.2.3 Marketing Strategy

The researcher wanted to understand the marketing strategy’s being used by each travel agent. All three interviews displayed comparable responses when asked about their current strategies, interview A said they have introduced apps and individual email addresses over time to fit in with the millennial generation.

“Absolutely. Our marketing strategy is multifaceted – we have printed brochures, but these can also be accessed online. You can book any products in person, over the phone, through our website or app, or even through a chat platform” (interview B).

The participant in interview B said they still used traditional methods along with modern marketing to suit all. Interview C said, “we have adapted to our mixed generations, but as time goes by technology changes and the older generation struggle to keep up with mobile phones, computers and Apple products etc.”, they highlighted how introducing promotional marketing online is not beneficial to all, particularly the older generation, this supported the findings of Jackson (2013) who suggest social media would not produce any significant effect for a business with a
target market which are living without certain technologies, often older generations are reluctant to learn to use these tools (Jackson, 2013).

4.2.4 Successful Marketing Tools
Successful marketing tools were identified from both the interviews and questionnaires. The travel agents shared similar marketing methods and opinions on what they felt were more successful than others. The researcher asked the organisation about traditional methods of marketing, brochures, leaflets, posters etc., and whether they believed this method was successful. Interview A stated they used some forms of traditional marketing but admitted that this method was “not as successful as there is so much junk mail sent most people immediately dispose of it” (interview A), interview C agreed and identified the most successful and easiest way of advertising was through emails offering customers special offers with extra savings.

“I personally believe advertisement via TV seems to work as well as they advise customers to look online or visit your local travel agent” (Interview C).

Travel agents shared similar patterns on social media (see table 8), each had, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with alike posts.

Travel Agents Social Media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview A</th>
<th>Interview B</th>
<th>Interview C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Instagram – 83,000 followers, 670.4 average likes per post.</td>
<td>• Instagram – 87,000 followers, 1,807 average likes per post.</td>
<td>• Instagram – 28,000 followers, 380.6 average likes per post.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Facebook – 5.3 million followers.</td>
<td>• Facebook – 1.4 million followers.</td>
<td>• Facebook – 610,000 followers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8 - Travel Agents Social Media
Question 10 – Do you have/follow social media accounts?

Figure 4.10 - Do you have/follow social media accounts?

Question 11 – How many social media accounts do you have?

Figure 4.11 - How many social media accounts do you have?
The findings from figures 4.10 showed 94% of participants had or followed social media accounts and figure 4.11 showed 55% were active on at least 4 different social media platforms and 35% used 3 different platforms. These questions were asked to confirm that the millennial generation are active on a variety of platforms as opposed to just one.

Question 12 – Whilst abroad do you do any of the following?

![Figure 4.12 - Whilst abroad do you do any of the following?](image)

Question 13 – What social media platforms do you use?

![Figure 4.13 - What social media platforms do you use?](image)
Figure 4.12 shows 31% of respondents from the questionnaire uploaded photos followed by 25% tagging their location whilst they are abroad, 14% said they used hashtags, this links with the findings from interview C who adopted the hash tag “#starttheadventure” to encourage engagement, this links with Majeed (2016) who suggests hashtags help extract information as well as showing a post belongs or identifies with a certain group or topic.

The researcher wanted to know what the most popular platform was among the millennial generation, figure 4.13 highlights the most popular platform as Facebook used by 26%, this correlates with Statista (2017), who identify Facebook as the most used social media platform, Snapchat and Instagram were also popular platforms, this links with the results from the previous question as they are both photo sharing platforms. This also links with the findings from the interviews, as Interview A said Facebook was used the most on a daily basis on the desktops in-store similarly Interview B highlights Facebook as a successful tool as it has 1.4 million followers, this supports Blakeman (2014) who suggests Facebook is considered the most successful marketing tool as this platform has the highest following for each travel agent.

Question 14 – Did many people like/comment on your content?

![Figure 4.14 - Did many people like/comment on your content?](image-url)
Question 14 relates to social media recognition, the researcher wanted to know if their content was being recognised, as highlighted in the literature review Luttrell and McGrath (2016) explained millennials like their posts to be received with likes, comments and shares to validate their posts have been acknowledged (Luttrell and McGrath, 2016).

Interview B, who’s main demographic lie within the millennial age range, said social media was their main form of advertising, this supports the findings of Moos, Pfeiffer and Vinodrai (2017) who suggest the millennial generation travel differently to other generations, they use online travel planning tools to reduce the need for some trips, such as travelling into a city centre to visit a travel agent, as the internet and mobile communication technologies have reduced the need for face-to-face communication. The interviews revealed the development of social media had affected the travel agents traffic flow in a positive way, interview C believed it has enhanced the business by encouraging interactions online, making social media marketing a good communication tool;

“There are a few different platforms in terms of how and why social media is used. If a customer has a problem they can ask certain questions and then our social media team in head office is on hand to deal with queries. We also do advertise on our website and give the benefits on why people should book with us” (Interview C).

This supports the findings of Gretzel and Yoo (2008) who found that using social media helps shrink the gap between the travel agent and the client; the two-way communication network allows a fast response to mitigate bad reviews and solve any problems (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008).

The participant from interview B explained their motive for their increased online presence, “we’re trying to lower our carbon footprint so only use paper when necessary”, this can be positive promotion in itself as researchers argue that green supply chain solutions can help improve corporate image, product image, customer loyalty, satisfaction and reputation (Paul, Bhattacharyya and Anand, 2017).
Interview A and B favoured social media as the most successful marketing tool within their organisation, whereas interview C said emails were considered to be the most effective as many customers in-store asked about discount codes they had received. Traditional methods are still being used to target a mixed demographic, although they are less popular hence why they have all adapted to using online promotional marketing. These findings support those of Blythe and Martin (2016) in suggesting that a presence online increases organisations competitiveness and reminds the population of their existence as the information can be accessed by a large number of people as well as being shared instantly.

In the interviews smartphones were discussed, Interview’s A and C said smartphone apps have been very successful and effective for their customers. Interview C said, “the app gives you many functions, from seeing the weather forecasts for your destination to excursions (trips) what you can purchase” (Interview C). Through further research the author looked at each organisations smartphone app. The apps allowed customers to look at hotels, flights, activities and tours. The app also enabled customers to manage their itinerary and provide feedback directly. Interview C’s app featured an inspiration page featuring flash sales and special offers and a log in section, aiming at both current customers and people browsing. This links with Yoo and Gretzel (2008) who suggest the convenience of being able to make reservations and adjust itineraries after purchase encourage the millennial generation to engage with travel agents. This also supports Abeyratne (2016) who highlight that millennials are the generation that mostly use travel apps. The researcher discovered many of the travel agents customers used smartphones, interview C said they take advantage of this by getting their customers with smartphones to sign up to the organisations app, this supports Kohler et al (2011) theory that suggests travel agents are actively exploiting the intelligence and social influence of the different chains information travels through to reach the final consumer as it allows consumers to make reservations online and adjust itineraries after purchase, making the travel planning process easier.
These findings are significant as they link appropriately with the findings from the questionnaire. The researcher found 98% of the sample owned a smartphone; this links with Tuten and Solomon (2018) who explain of all Facebook users more than 1 billion access the site through their smartphone.

Question 15 – Do you own a smartphone?

![Figure 4.15 - Do you own a smartphone?](image)

Question 16 – What do you use your smartphone for mostly?

![Figure 4.16 - What do you use your smartphone for mostly?](image)

The researcher asked participants what they used their smartphone for predominately, the findings showed 40% used it to post on social media as opposed to only 6% making phone calls. The figure also highlights the second biggest use of
the smartphone as texting, only 2% of participants said they used their phone for taking pictures and videos. The findings showed 17% used their smartphone to browse the internet, this links with Abeyratne (2017) who found 46% of millennial travellers book through a smartphone or tablet, ABTA (2016) also found similar results.

4.2.5 Ineffective Marketing Tools
The only marketing tool identified as unsuccessful from the interviews was a leaflet. Interview’s A and C highlighted television and radio advertisements as effective tools, the travel agent which focused around students and youths, interview B, did not recognise these methods as useful for their target audience, suggesting modern marketing methods to be the most successful to the millennial generation as Assimakopoulous et al (2017) suggest they are very interactive on social media platforms, this once again supports Moos, Pfeiffer and Vinodrai (2017) who suggest the millennial generation prefer to use online travel planning tools to reduce the need for face-to-face communication.

Question 29 – To what extent does social media influence your decision to travel abroad?

![Figure 4.17 - To what extent does social media influence your decision to travel abroad?](image-url)
The questionnaire revealed 48% of respondents said social media sometimes has an impact and 18% said about half the time. The findings showed that the majority of respondents were influenced in some form by social media; many participants said they used Instagram to research restaurants and places to visit when they are abroad (comments are detailed in Table 9).

**Comments from Interviews A, B and C**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I’ve used travel agents before because it seemed easy at the time, now I prefer to look online and book everything separately it feels more personal I’m not a fan of a package holiday”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I’m a massive foodie I use Instagram mainly to find great places to eat, searching through hashtags and locations usually find the most authentic and less tourisy places”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I always post on social media whilst I’m abroad, I like to look back on my pictures and look at all the things I did and the places I visited”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I use social media especially Instagram, although I do sometimes question if everything that’s posted is legit, I use filters and I know a lot of people do they can really change the way something looks”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I search hashtags and locations on Instagram to find good restaurants and places to visit when I am abroad”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 9 - Comments from Interviews A, B and C*

### 4.2.6 Word of Mouth

Word of mouth was identified as a theme in both the interviews and questionnaires. The interviews revealed the average customer hears about the organisation through word of mouth; social media, websites and emails. The participants highlighted the main influences on customers decisions to travel to certain destinations as the culture, recommendations and travelling with friends, the findings correlate with Tuten and Solomon (2018) who found 71% said that friends and family recommendations had a substantial influence, the population is more trusting when information is obtained through people they know as opposed to from strangers,
reviews and recommendations were only considered credible if they came from mutual friends on social media networks (Tuten and Solomon, 2018), this also supports Tuten and Solomon (2018) who found the main objective for businesses using social media as a marketing tool was to increase brand awareness. Jackson (2013) highlights how social media marketing increases the likelihood of a message being recognised and remembered, also proving the success social media has on brand awareness.

Question 22 – How likely are you to book a holiday through a friend or family recommendation?

The questionnaire validates the success of word of mouth on the millennial generation as 26% said they would be extremely likely to book a holiday through a friend or family recommendation and 49% said they were somewhat likely, meaning 22% were unsure and 3% were extremely unlikely. When asked the motives for customers travel choices interview B said the most common response was “to experience a new culture and have an adventure, then the weather!” (Interview B). Interview C said, “it’s the cuisine people love and the standards of living”, these were not considered the top influences for millennials according to the results from the
online questionnaire, only 5% of millennials were influenced by food and 3% by the culture, however the main theme that appeared across all interviews in a variety of questions was the influence of friends and family recommendations to be very motivational when travel planning.

**Question 9 – How did you find out about that holiday?**

![Figure 4.19 - How did you find out about that holiday?](image)

This researcher asked the participants in the questionnaire to indicate how they found out about the last holiday they had been on to identify successful marketing tools. The findings showed 44% used friends and family recommendations and 39% used online search engines. The results showed only 4% used social media as a research tool; this underpins the findings from the interviews. This gave the researcher mixed perceptions as in the introduction Statista (2017) highlights UGC as the most popular travel planning method whereas DMO’s were unvalued, only 4% of respondents said they used travel agents. Figure 4.20 shows participants were unsure as to whether friends and family influence their travel choices as 51% said they were sometimes influenced and 34% agreed, this supports Mangold and Faulds (2009) who suggest the consumer relies on making decisions about a product or
service based on other people’s opinions and attitudes from individual experiences rather than their own personal thoughts.

Question 21 – Do your friends and family influence where you decide to travel?

![Pie Chart]

*Figure 4.20 - Do your friends and family influence where you decide to travel?*

### 4.2.7 Maintaining Loyalty

The researcher asked the participants how often the average customer books travel with the organisation, interview’s A and B showed customers booked 1 to 2 times a year, interview C said, “we have many loyal returning customers who book 4/5 times a year and loyal customers who book 1 or 2 holidays a year dependent on their finances” (interview C). The participant continued to explain “we find it hard converting non-previous customers a struggle as they have booked either separately or booked with other agents/websites”, as highlighted in the previous responses from the questions, interview C’s loyal customers receive the best deals, this links with Abeyratne (2017) who found that 68% of customers would remain loyal if an organisation offered rewards, upgrades and discounts (Abeyratne, 2017), whereas 85% of millennials are looking for the best price, they do this by checking multiple sites before booking travel plans to ensure they get the best deal possible. This links with the following question where the participants were asked about the amount of returning customers, each organisation said they had between 40 and 100 returning
customers year on year, they believed good customer service is key to maintaining loyal customers.

4.2.8 Booking Methods

The interviews and questionnaires highlighted a variety of booking methods, the common theme seemed most people enquired and booked online through the organisations websites. Interview A said customers enquired using their Facebook page, as well as over the phone and in-store visits. Interview B said the same results as well as enquiring through email.

“I find most people enquire online nowadays to see if they can get the best deal then they come in to book with us, but we do get many people come into store and enquire also. Alone last year we had 12,000 enquiries in our shop” (interview C).

This links appropriately with ABTA (2016) who found the majority of people, (75%), booked online followed by over the phone bookings, (21%) which was close with the percentage of in-store bookings (19%). The researcher asked the participants how many customers booked travel the same day they browsed in-store to determine the level of people choosing to look around and compare. All three interviews revealed 50% of customers would book on the same day. This behaviour is unusual for the millennial generation as they prefer to search a variety of platforms to find the lowest price (Abeyratne, 2017). The interviews revealed the development of social media had affected the travel agents traffic flow, interview B said, “its trending towards more customers booking online, but still the majority book in-store”, interview C believed it has enhanced the business.
Question 19 – How do you book your holidays?

Figure 4.21 - How do you book your holidays?

Question 23 – How likely are you to book a holiday through a travel agent?

Figure 4.22 - How likely are you to book a holiday through a travel agent?
The questionnaire produced similar findings, 53% booked travel online through search engines and 36% booked independently, sites such as Trivago, Booking.com and Sky scanner were highlighted. This correlates with ABTA (2016) who suggests the most popular booking method was online. One participant said, "I book independently, flights through easy jet, accommodation through Airbnb". Participants who booked their travel through travel agents used Audley and Alpine Elements, travel agents that specialise in authentic travel experiences and mountain holidays, this links with Christensen (2016) who suggests millennials travel to exotic locations for activities. The researcher began to investigate the likelihood of the millennial generation booking through travel agents. The results showed participants are uncertain, 32% said they were somewhat likely, 20% were neither likely nor unlikely. The percentage of people who said they were extremely unlikely to use a travel agent was higher than those who were extremely likely to book through a travel agent. This links with Edensor (2018) who suggests millennials are less likely to use travel agents as they view their products as ‘packages’ which are not tailored to their needs and do not offer the authentic travel experience, they believe using a travel agent will result in a ‘touristy trip’, millennials are worried they will not experience the local culture.

Question 27 – Have you ever booked a holiday through any of the following?

![Figure 4.23 - Have you ever booked through any of the following?](image)
Participants in the questionnaire were asked if they have ever booked through a travel agent, figure 4.23 shows 35% have used Thomas Cook, one participant commented “my family always book through Thomas Cook”, indicating families are more attracted to using travel agents.

4.2.9 Influence of Reviews

The findings from the online questionnaire and interviews highlight the importance of reviews on influencing the millennial generation; it has therefore been identified as a theme. All three interviews agreed they will always value feedback from their customers, interview A says this helps provide accurate information for future customers, so they receive the perfect experience, this links with Sigala (2011) who suggests this can help travel agents improve their products and advertising methods to design better support for future travellers. Interview A said they get feedback from their customers scoring them through an email not through TripAdvisor whereas interviews B and C both said they do take reviews online into account, as social media has become more popular, a bad review can damage an organisations image instantly. Interview C said their website was linked with TripAdvisor which the participant explained as “a good and a bad tool” this links with Gretzel and Yoo (2008) who suggest reviews and comments posted online may not necessarily be welcomed by a travel agent if they are negative (Gretzel and Yoo, 2008), Sernovitz (2015) also explains people are more likely to share a bad review than a good one unless they had an astoundingly good experience, therefore it is in the interest of the business to respond to negative responses rapidly to maintain a good reputation. Interview C continued to explain, “if a customer had a bad experience and explained why, it would deter me from selling a particular holiday in the best interest of others” (Interview C). When participants were asked if they felt comments posted online had affected the organisation they gave mixed response’s, many of the respondents seemed unsure, interview B replied, “to my knowledge not that I know off”. These findings support those of Boone and Kurtz (2015) who found 97% of the millenial generation post their experiences online, this has the power to influence millions of people. Travel agents may lose business if they are believed to be unsatisfactory or inauthentic.
Question 24 – Do you watch/subcribe to YouTube bloggers?

Figure 4.24 - Do you watch/subcribe to YouTube bloggers?

Question 26 – Do YouTube bloggers influence your decision to travel abroad?

Figure 4.25 - Do YouTube bloggers influence your decision to travel abroad?

The researcher is aware sites such as YouTube are being exploited to get an outside opinion, the researcher asked question 24 and 26 to see how influential the platform YouTube is for millennials, the results showed 75% do not make decisions based on
what they see on YouTube, although the proportions for yes and sometimes are small it still shows that YouTube is recognised by certain participants as a influence, figure 4.24 shows only 35% of the participants watch or subscribe to YouTube bloggers.

Question 25 – Have you heard of any of the following YouTube bloggers?

The researcher asked if the participants were aware of the above names, as Tuten and Solomon (2018) revealed over 70% of people who go online engage with YouTube (Tuten and Solomon, 2018). The researcher chose these particular content creators as combined they have a following of nearly 7 million people, they are all channels that were created by people who have a passion for travelling; all their experiences and adventures are shared through their social media platforms (Table 10 shows the bloggers channel descriptions).
YouTube Bloggers Channel Descriptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Jacks Gap is an online blog and video project that was born from a love of travelling and telling a good story. We share our experiences through digital content to inform and inspire others” (Jacks Gap, 2017).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“My name is Louis Cole. I enjoy travelling the world with friends, having fun and inspiring others!” (Live the adventure, 2017).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Hello world! We are the Gee family. Just your average young family exploring the planet” (The Bucket List Family, 2017).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“We’re Alex and Marko. We LIVE to TRAVEL. Our journey of CULTURAL and CULINARY DISCOVERY takes us to some of the MOST INTERESTING PLACES in the WORLD. Want to come with? Subscribe” (The Vaga Brothers, 2017).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 - YouTube Blogger Channel Descriptions

The researcher asked this question to determine how influential YouTube and content creators are, high profile bloggers are paid to travel to specific locations and hotels in exchange for publicity. The figure shows 60% were unaware of the bloggers mentioned above, however this was expected as the previous question highlighted less than half of the participants watched or subscribed to YouTube.
Question 28 – Do you use review websites such as TripAdvisor?

Figure 4.27 - Do you use review websites such as TripAdvisor?

Question 28 asked participants whether they look at websites that feature traveller reviews. The researcher wanted to investigate how influential consumer experiences that are posted on sites such as Trip Advisor were. From figure 4.27 it is clear review websites are very influential among the millennial generation when choosing to travel abroad as 71% agreed. This links with Constantinides and Stagno (2012) who suggest the millennial generation rely on social media to gather information, furthermore relating with Assimakopoulos et al (2017) who imply millennial’s get pleasure from sharing their opinions and experiences online. The buying decision process model (1910) demonstrates the importance of information searching, this links with Henri Assael’s (1987) classification of types of behaviour theory, suggesting that high cost products/services require high involvement, as the cost of a holiday is irreversible.
4.2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has discussed the findings from the online questionnaires and the semi-structured interviews, evidently both methods have produced similar themes that the millennial generation use social media; particularly Facebook when choosing to travel abroad, the main influence was identified as friends and family recommendations as they are considered the most trustworthy. The semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the promotional methods that the travel agents use and how they have been adapted to reach the millennial generation, throughout the results and discussion literature that supports the findings has been identified.
Chapter 5

Conclusion
5 Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the research project by reflecting on the research aims and objectives. The researcher will summarise the findings from chapter 4 as well as identifying limitations and making recommendations for the future.

5.2 Research Aims and Objectives

Aim

The intention of the study was to identify how successful social media is as a marketing tool and how this motivates millennials to travel abroad. The following objectives were set to ensure the research aim was achieved;

Objectives

1. To critically evaluate the literature on promotional social media marketing.
2. To explore and investigate the different social media platforms individuals use to research travel destinations through questionnaires and interviews.
3. To explore the use of social media by tour operators.
4. To identify what motivates millennials to travel broad
5. To make a conclusion and recommendations based on the data collected.

The first objective was achieved in chapter 2 where the researcher discovered relevant secondary data underpinned with theories and models.

The second objective was met through research in the literature review as well as from the primary data collected through 75 online questionnaires and three interviews with travel agents, this revealed the most successful social media platforms used by organisations as and millennials.
The third objective was attained through conducting semi-structured interviews; the results showed what marketing tools are considered most influential for millennials and the travel agents.

The fourth objective was reached through analysing the responses from the questionnaires along with research presented in the literature review, which supports the primary data.

The final objective was accomplished by comparing the primary and secondary data. The researcher identified the most effective marketing tools used by travel agents and which platforms the millennial generation responded to the most.

### 5.3 Summary of Findings

The researcher identified nine themes in the results section from both research methods, these included; holiday typologies, clientele, marketing strategies, successful marketing tools, ineffective marketing tools, word of mouth, maintaining loyalty, booking methods and the influence of reviews. The researcher will now highlight the main themes.

#### 5.3.1 Marketing Strategy

One of the main findings from the results is that social media has been adopted by many travel agents as it offers many benefits and opportunities that can help improve the accessibility of their products and services. However, the interviews revealed social media is not the only marketing method used by travel agents as they recognise it is not beneficial to all generations, both traditional and modern marketing methods were used to “suit all” (interview B), likewise interview C said they have adapted to “mixed generations” (interview C). All travel agents acknowledged adopting social media marketing was important to maintain a competitive position.
5.3.2 Successful Marketing Tools

The most successful marketing method was evident to be social media, each travel agent had profiles across a variety of social networks each with large followings. Each travel agent mentioned traditional marketing methods that were being used but also explained traditional methods included “visit our website” or “follow us on Facebook” to guide consumers to social media. The findings revealed hashtags as successful tools in terms of social media marketing, as they help extract information quickly, travel agents created their own hashtags and encouraged their followers to use it as this also helps monitor what is being posted. The ability to respond to marketing material on social media has shrunk the gap between the organisation and the consumer, consumers looking for information can receive a speedy reply when asking questions.

5.3.3 Word of Mouth

The interviews and questionnaires discovered individual’s decision to travel abroad stemmed mainly from word of mouth recommendations. Information obtained on social media also proved influential if it came from a mutual friend, information posted on social media also worked as a successful tool of increasing brand awareness.

5.3.4 Influence of Reviews

This theme helped discover the gap in the literature, the findings revealed travel agents believed UGC had either caused no effect or it had enhanced their business. Travel agents used TripAdvisor to engage and respond to consumers particularly when a bad review appeared, they believed reviews have helped them to improve the products and services they offer for future customers. The findings showed the millennial generation enjoy posting on social media whilst abroad but do not rely on social networks when planning travel abroad. The main influence for travelling abroad was identified as friends and family recommendations along with activities on offer, this correlates strongly with Tuten and Solomon (2018) who suggest friends and family recommendations are the most authentic and trustworthy sources of
information and Christensen (2016) who suggest millennials travel to places with lots of activities.

5.4 Limitations

This section will explore the limitations of the research project as well as discussing what could have been done to overcome the limitations suggested.

The researcher used their personal Facebook account to recruit participants, the results showed that the majority of respondents were in their 20’s, this correlates with the statistics presented in chapter 2 that the highest users of Facebook were between 18 and 24, as the questionnaire was shared on a platform that is dominated by a specific age cohort the findings are deemed less valid as the data was not gathered from an extensive age range within in the millennial generation. Along with this imbalance the sample from the questionnaire consisted mainly of females, in future the researcher would conduct the questionnaire face-to-face to ensure an even sample of males and females, this could help determine travel choices between males and females.

To add to this the researcher limited the questionnaire participants to millennials only (people aged between 22 and 40), however this does not account for behavioural differences between generations as the behaviour of other generations has not been accounted for, this makes it difficult for the researcher to generalise the findings to a particular generation.

The researcher aimed to conduct five interviews with travel agents, however many travel agents were unauthorised to disclose information or unable to participate due to business demand. Consequently, only three interviews were conducted making it difficult to generalise from a small sample therefore affecting the reliability and validity of the study.
5.5 Recommendations for the Future

The researcher recommends travel agents continue to use social media within their marketing strategies, both the primary and secondary data have demonstrated an increase in the number of people active online, not just the millennial cohort, they have the power and knowledge to influence a wider audience by sharing their experiences on a variety of platforms, this could help businesses achieve brand awareness, which was highlighted as the top priority among businesses for using social media. The interviews revealed each travel agent has established Facebook and Instagram accounts each with large followings, continuing to post regularly could increase the followers and encourage a variety of ages to engage with the content by liking, commenting, sharing and using hashtags. Travel agents could offer incentives to encourage the millennial generation to use their service as the findings showed millennials are influenced by deals and low prices. Further researching in this field would explore the use of social media as an influence on travelling abroad on all ages, as its possible social media has different effects on a variety of ages. In doing so findings can be generalised to a larger population and the motives for older generations to travel can be determined, for instance, are the marketing tools identified to be successful on the millennial generation effective on older generations?

5.6 Summary

The findings underpin the research from the literature and relate to the researchers aims and objectives. The research project has identified the uses of social media among the millennial generation and both the positive and negative effects that it can have on organisations and travel planning. The overall conclusion of the study suggests the millennial generation are highly motivated by social media although there is no strong correlation that they rely on social media for making travel decisions, it is evident that without social media information searching becomes lengthy and less interactive as it is harder to find relevant information. The main motivator for travelling abroad was identified as friends and family recommendations. Travel agents believed UGC and reviews had enhanced their
business despite the unmanageable nature of individual’s comments, they believed reviews helped to improve the products and services they offer to perfect future customers experiences.

The background research from the literature review helped produce a methodological structure to conduct the primary research achieved appropriately through a mixed method approach. The primary research was conducted over 2 months, this allowed time to recruit respondents and analyse the data. Each of the five objectives set for the research project have been achieved through research and analysis. If more time could be allocated to the project the sample size would be larger for both the questionnaire and the interviews, this would have given more depth and insight into the research topic.
Chapter 6

Appendices
Appendix A
6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix A – Ethics Approval from Cardiff Metropolitan University

---

**DEVELOPED ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION SUMMARY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Name:</th>
<th>Lucy Snake</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module Name:</td>
<td>Event Mgt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Name:</td>
<td>Sara Jenkins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To be completed by student and supervisor before submission to Ethics Approval Panel</th>
<th>Student Signature:</th>
<th>Supervisor Signature:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application for ethics approval</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant information sheet</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant consent form</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot interview/s</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot questionnaire/s</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter/s to participating organization/s</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmation of interviewee participation</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Submission: [ ] Resubmission: [ ]

Date: ____________________________

---

**Panel Members**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module leader, Chair:</td>
<td>Phoebe White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor:</td>
<td>[signature]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSM Ethics Committee Representative:</td>
<td>Nic Matthews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date: 12/12/17  Date of Reassessment: 12/12/17

---

**Outcome:**

Project Approved [ ] Reference number issued: 2016053381.

Chair’s Action [ ]

Application not Approved [ ]

---

Comments for projects not fully approved:

The focus of this research is unclear. The student needs to complete a non-technical summary of the research project. References are not required. Online state what questionnaire online will be used. If questions? Yes. Include in C + C2: provision for failure to recruit travel agents.

---

The original is retained by the supervisor and a copy given to the student and module leader. In the case of a resubmission being required this original form should be submitted with the resubmission not a new, blank, one.
# CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

When undertaking a research or enterprise project, Cardiff Met staff and students are obliged to complete this form in order that the ethics implications of that project may be considered.

If the project requires ethics approval from an external agency (e.g., NHS), you will not need to seek additional ethics approval from Cardiff Met. You should however complete Part One of this form and attach a copy of your ethics letter(s) of approval in order that your School has a record of the project.

The document *Ethics application guidance notes* will help you complete this form. It is available from the [Cardiff Met website](#). The School or Unit in which you are based may also have produced some guidance documents; please consult your supervisor or School Ethics Coordinator.

Once you have completed the form, sign the declaration and forward to the appropriate person(s) in your School or Unit.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

Participant recruitment or data collection MUST NOT commence until ethics approval has been obtained.

## PART ONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of applicant:</th>
<th>Lucy Snell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor (if student project):</td>
<td>Sara Johnson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School / Unit:</td>
<td>Cardiff Metropolitan University: School of Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student number (if applicable):</td>
<td>ST20058127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme enrolled on (if applicable):</td>
<td>Events Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Title:</td>
<td>To evaluate how social media influences millennials motivation to travel abroad?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected start date of data collection:</td>
<td>01/12/2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate duration of data collection:</td>
<td>2 Months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding Body (if applicable):</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other researcher(s) working on the project:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the study involve NHS patients or staff?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the study involve human samples and/or human cell lines?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Does your project fall entirely within one of the following categories:**

**Paper based, involving only documents in** No
## CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
### APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Domain</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laboratory based, not involving human participants or human samples</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice based not involving human participants (e.g., curatorial, practice audit)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory projects in professional practice (e.g., Initial Teacher Education)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A project for which external approval has been obtained (e.g., NHS)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have answered YES to any of these questions, expand on your answer in the non-technical summary. No further information regarding your project is required. If you have answered NO to all of these questions, you must complete Part 2 of this form.

### In no more than 150 words, give a non-technical summary of the project

The aim of the research project is to produce a dissertation about the success social media has as a marketing tool and how this motivates millennials to travel abroad, the findings can help assist travel agents in creating the most effective marketing strategies. Recent trends in social media have altered the traditional word of mouth, the consuming of information has evolved through the “digitization of word of mouth”. Sigala et al (2012) suggests relevant theories unpinning the behaviour of new generation travellers (Sigala et al., 2012). The appropriate literature has been found to assist the research of the proposed question. Minazzi (2014) highlights customers purchasing behaviour has changed due to the development in social media, the researcher will investigate the positives and negatives of social networking sites. The researcher will use primary and secondary data collection as well as providing relevant theories that support the findings. The researcher will evaluate the literature in order to make a conclusion of the research project.

### DECLARATION:

I confirm that this project conforms with the Cardiff Met Research Governance Framework

I confirm that I will abide by the Cardiff Met requirements regarding confidentiality and anonymity when conducting this project.

STUDENTS: I confirm that I will not disclose any information about this project without the prior approval of my supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature of the applicant:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Application for ethics approval v6 December 2017*
**CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**  
**APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR STUDENT PROJECTS ONLY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of supervisor: Sara Johnson</td>
<td>Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature of supervisor:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Ethics Committee use only**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision reached:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project approved</td>
<td>☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project approved in principle</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision deferred</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project not approved</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project rejected</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Project reference number: Click here to enter text.  
2016B053381

Name: Click here to enter text.  
Sheena Carlisle

Date: Click here to enter text.  
12/12/2017

Signature:  
[Signature]

Details of any conditions upon which approval is dependant:  
I interview reports from Millennials, Non Technical Summary needs

**PART TWO**

to explain what the research is about.

**A RESEARCH DESIGN**

A1 Will you be using an approved protocol in your project?  
No

A2 If yes, please state the name and code of the approved protocol to be used:  

A3 Describe the research design to be used in your project:

Mixed methods will be used to collect the data. The overall design of the project is to gather information from the public (students) and Tourism Operators to find out how influential social media is as a motivator for millennials to travel abroad. This will be done using questionnaires and interviews.

**Questionnaires:**

- The researcher has created a quantitative survey online.
- All participants will be given information about the study and its goals.
- The sample will be purposive (Millenials).
- Between 50+ questionnaires will be completed to ensure data collected is valid.
- The questionnaire will last between 5 and 10 minutes.
- The participant will remain anonymous and will be conducted through Qualtrics.

---

1 An Approved Protocol is one which has been approved by Cardiff Met to be used under supervision of designated members of staff; a list of approved protocols can be found on the Cardiff Met website here.

Application for ethics approved vs December 2017
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

- No personal details such as names and addresses will be collected and all answers will be confidential.
- The participants will be students in Cardiff; the questionnaire will be distributed through Facebook.
- The questionnaires will include Likert scales, multiple choice questions and ranking scales.
- The questionnaire will be posted on Qualtrics on 20/12/2018, it will be distributed on the Qualtrics site as well as on Facebook as the researcher has a lot of friends in the millennial generation. The questionnaire will be available for 2 weeks.
- The data collected will be converted into charts and graphs for analysing using the Qualtrics in-built data analysis tool.

Sample:
- The sample will be Purposive as the researcher has chosen to make the questionnaire available on social media platforms where the number of millennials is significant.
- Participants may also be found through the snowball technique, by encouraging participants to recommend someone else with the same characteristics will ensure my questionnaire reaches as many people as possible.

The project proposed will also investigate how social media has affected tourism operators, the researcher will interview staff working in tourism operators if possible, otherwise data will be collected from secondary research by investigating their website.

Semi-structured Interview
- Open ended questions that will collect qualitative data to gather opinions and thoughts of the participant.
- A face-to-face interview will be conducted with different tour Operators that the researcher will approach in advance in person, such as: Trail Finders, STA Travel, TUI (Thompson) and the Co-operative travel.
- The interview will be semi-structured and will last around 30 minutes.
- The data will be recorded using a Dictaphone and will later be transcript through Microsoft Word and the data will be stored on NVivo.
- The data collected from the interview will be qualitative and will be Purposive (Staff working for Tourism Operators in Cardiff).
- All data will be analysed using thematic analysis.

Sample:
- A sample of three travel agents will be used; TUI, STA Travel and Thomas Cook.

Participants:
- The sample chosen will guarantee there will be no discrimination against gender, race, age, ability, etc.
- All participants will be over the age of 18.

Application for ethics approval v6 December 2017
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL

- The participant will be reminded throughout the interview that all information gathered will remain anonymous and they have the right to withdraw at any time.
- The researcher will only record the participants age and gender.

Analysis
- The data collected from the quantitative questionnaires will be presented in graphs, charts and tables using Microsoft excel.
- The qualitative data from the interviews will be through observer impressions.
- Thematic analysis will be used.

Consent
- All participants will complete a consent form before beginning the questionnaire and interview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A4 Will the project involve deceptive or covert research?</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A5 If yes, give a rationale for the use of deceptive or covert research</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Will the project have security sensitive implications?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7 If yes, please explain what they are and the measures that are proposed to address them</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE

B1 What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project do you have?
I have previous experience in conducting face-to-face structured questionnaires from A level geography.

B2 Student project only
- What previous experience of research involving human participants relevant to this project does your supervisor have?
My supervisor Sara Johnson has previous experience with undergrad and postgrad research projects supervision and is currently under taking a PhD using qualitative and quantitative methods.

C POTENTIAL RISKS

C1 What potential risks do you foresee?

Questionnaires:
- Lack of response from the questionnaire and the interview, may be difficult to find 50 millennials willing to participate.
- Questions may offend or cause offence to participants.

Semi-Structured interview:
- Organising the interview with a tourism operator in Cardiff could be difficult or not possible.
- Publishing data that has been unapproved in the interview.
- Personal safety.
- Causing offence or asking misleading questions.
Not collecting relevant data.
Risk of not reaching the research deadlines.
Researcher will use secondary research through investigating organisations websites if Travel Agents do not consent to participate in the interview.

C2 How will you deal with the potential risks?

Questionnaires:
- Share questionnaire through the researchers own social media platforms.
- Ensuring consent forms are distributed and participants are fully aware of how the data will be used and where it will be published.
- Ensure participants know they have the right to withdraw their data at any time.

Semi-Structured Interview:
- Contact a variety of travel agents well in advanced and get an email confirming the interview; otherwise I will use secondary research to gather data on tourism operators by investigating their websites.
- Ensuring consent forms are distributed and participants are fully aware of how the data will be used and where it will be published.
- Email the participant the questions before the interview to enable them to prepare answers that are thorough and relevant.
- Conduct interviews in a public location at an agreed time and notify my supervisor.
- Conduct mock interview with my supervisor and peers to test the feasibility and clarity of the questions.
- Ensure questions are concise and relevant.
- A consent form will be given to the participant, they will be required to signed before the interview if they are still willing to participate. Ensure participants know they have the right to withdraw their data at any time without any penalty.

All participants will be informed that all data collected will be only accessible by the research and all data included in the written report will be anonymised and coded to protect their identification.

When submitting your application you **MUST** attach a copy of the following:
- All information sheets
- Consent/assent form(s)

An exemplar information sheet and participant consent form are available from the Research section of the Cardiff Met website.
Appendix B
6.2 Appendix B – Example of Questionnaire

This research project has received the approval of Cardiff Metropolitan University’s Ethics Committee.

---

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

*To evaluate how social media influences millennials to travel abroad?*

The purpose of this research project is to collect primary information from millennials (people born between 1977 and 1995) to see how much social media influences their decision to travel abroad.

If you would prefer not to take part in the project, then I thank you for your time and you need not complete the questionnaire. If you are happy to participate in this project, please can you complete the questionnaire. All information given will be treated confidentiality.

We are very grateful for your assistance.

---

1. Gender
   - [ ] Male
   - [ ] Female
   - [ ] Other

2. Age

3. In what year were you born?

4. What is your Occupation?

5. Do you have children?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

6. Have you been on holiday recently?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

7. If so where?

8. How did you find out about that holiday?

9. Did you post on social media whilst you were away?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

10. If so what platform did you use:
    - [ ] Facebook
11. Did you hash tag your location?

12. Did you get many likes?
   - 0-10
   - 11-40
   - 41-80
   - 81+

13. Did many people comment?

14. Do you promote places you’ve visited whilst abroad?

15. Do you own a smart phone?

16. When you take pictures where do you post them?

17. What do you use your smart phone for mostly?
   - Texting
   - Social media
   - Phone calls
   - Browsing the internet
   - Reading
   - Listening to music
   - Other

18. How many times a year do you travel abroad?

   0  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10+

19. Do you travel for:
   - Leisure
   - Business
   - Health
   - Family
   - Other

20. What country do you most want to visit?

21. How do you book your holidays?

22. Do your friends influence your travel decisions? If so please state why.

23. Do your interests/hobbies influence your decision to travel aboard? If so please state why.
24. How likely are you to book a holiday through a travel agent?
   - Very likely
   - Likely
   - Not Very Likely
   - Definitely would not

25. Why would you choose not to book through a travel agent?

26. How likely are you to book a holiday through a friend’s recommendation?
   - Very likely
   - Likely
   - Not Very Likely
   - Definitely would not

27. What do you consider a necessity when you travel?

28. Do you watch/subscribe to YouTube bloggers? If so please state who.

29. Have you heard of any of the following?
   - Fun for Louis
   - Ben Brown
   - The Bucket List Family
   - Vaga Brothers
   - Steve Booker
   - Jacks Gap
   - Other

30. Does your decision to travel depend on the time of the year?
   - Yes
   - No

31. When do you travel most?
   - English summer
   - English winter
   - English autumn
   - English spring

32. Do your parents influence your decision to travel?

33. How do your parents choose to travel?

34. What influences your parents to travel?

35. Have you ever booked a holiday through any of the following:
   - KUONI
   - Thomas Cook
   - TUI (Thompsons)
   - Trail Finders
   - The Co-operative travel
   - STA Travel
   - I would never book through a travel agent
   - I would consider it
☐ Other, please state...

36. Do you watch travel TV programs? If so which one(s)?

37. Does social media influence your decision to travel abroad?

38. Do you use review websites such as Trip Adviser?

39. Do reviews influence your decision to travel abroad or the places you visit?

40. Do you book a holiday package, or do you book separate?

Thank you for your participation.
Appendix C
6.3 Appendix C – Completed Questionnaire Results with Comments

1. What is your gender?

![Gender Distribution Chart]

2. What is your age?

![Age Distribution Bar Chart]
3. What is your occupation?

![Occupation Chart]

- Employed Full Time: 32.31%
- Employed Part Time: 53.05%
- Unemployed looking for work: 7.69%
- Unemployed not looking for work: 4.62%
- Retired: 1.54%

4. Do you have children?

![Children Chart]

- Yes: 3.08%
- No: 96.92%
5. Have you been abroad in the past 4 months?

6. Do you post on social media whilst abroad?
7. Do your interests and hobbies influence your decision to travel abroad?
8. Do you have/follow social Media accounts?

- Online advertisements
- Booked it myself
- Friends
- Online
- A company called YummyJobs
- Through a friend
- Through a friend

- Yes: 93.75%
- No: 6.25%
9. How many social media accounts do you have?

10. Whilst abroad do you do any of the following?
11. What social media platforms do you use?

12. Did many people like/comment on your content?
13. Do you own a smartphone?

14. What do you use your smartphone for mostly?
15. How often do you travel abroad?

16. What are your reasons for travelling abroad?
17. How do you book travel abroad?

- 36% use Online travel search engines
- 53% book independently
- 11% use a Travel agent

List of booking methods:
- Online
- I do it myself
- Travel agent
- Online
- Directly, audley travel
- Online, package Alpine elements
- Online
- Online
- Travel agent
- Online
- Through a travel agent
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Someone else does it just pay
- Online independently
- Independently, easy jet and air b&b
- Online or travel agent
- Online
- Independent
- Independently
- Independently
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Online
- Sky scanner, booking.com
- Independently
- Independently
- Independently and online travel agents
- Online
- Online

ST20058127
18. Do your interests and hobbies influence on choosing to travel abroad?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I enjoy culture and therefore like to visit different cities</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy spending time with my friends, therefore I want to travel in their company</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, running takes me to different countries to compete in races.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoy outdoor activities</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I like to go to countries where there are activities/ things to do that I would find fun</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like smoking weed and it's expensive where I live</td>
<td>Yes to keep busy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, different countries offer different things</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not really.</td>
<td>Yes, sunny and hot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, somewhere hot and sunny</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, for example I booked a skiing holiday for my love of sport</td>
<td>I'm currently travelling so I technically live abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, like minded people have previously enjoyed a destination it likely that I will too</td>
<td>Yes, football games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, wanted to snorkel</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I'll try accommodate around my hobbies</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, music</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, somewhere with good food and hot weather</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, football matches, shows</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I like to do a lot of sight seeing and outdoor activities</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I like cycling so have gone to places which are good for it such as the alps and Holland.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, prefer active holidays</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. Do your friends and family influence where you decide to travel?

20. How likely are you to book a holiday through a friend or family recommendation?
21. How likely are you to book a holiday through a travel agent?

22. Do you watch/subcribe to YouTube bloggers?
23. Have you heard of any of the following YouTube bloggers?

24. Do YouTube bloggers influence your decision to travel abroad?
25. Have you ever booked a holiday through any of the following?

My family always book holidays through Thomas Cook

26. Do you use review websites such as TripAdvisor?
27. To what extent does social media influence your decision to travel abroad?

- Always: 47.69%
- Most of the time: 18.46%
- About half the time: 12.31%
- Sometimes: 7.69%
- Never: 13.85%

I've used travel agents before because it seemed easy at the time, now I prefer to look online and book everything separately as it feels more personal. I'm not a fan of a package holiday.

I'm a massive foodie! I use Instagram mainly to find great places to eat. Searching through hashtags and locations usually find the most authentic and less touristy places.

I always post on social media whilst abroad. I like to look back on my pictures and look at all the things I did and the places I visited.

I use social media, especially Instagram, although I sometimes question if everything that's posted is legit. I use filters and I know a lot of people do. They can really change the way something looks.

I search hashtags and locations on Instagram to find good restaurants and places to visit when I am abroad.
Appendix D
PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Social Media as a Marketing Tool for Tourism: Millennial Travellers.

Cardiff Metropolitan University Protocol Number:

Project summary
The purpose of this research project is to evaluate how social media influences millennials to travel abroad. Your participation will enable the collection of data, which will form part of a study being undertaken at Cardiff Metropolitan University.

Why have you been asked to participate?
You have been asked to participate because your organisation specialise in travel, the researcher wants to establish the demographic of your customers, and how many members of the millennial generation use a travel agency as opposed to older generations. During the interview, you will be asked about the average customers age and their location as well as the types of holiday you offer. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time.

Project risks
The research involves the completion of an interview, which will be recorded for later analysis. We are not seeking to collect any sensitive data on you; this study is only concerned with the behaviour of your customers and what influences their decision to travel abroad. We do not think that there are any significant risks associated with this study. However, if you do feel that any of the questions are inappropriate then you can stop at any time. Furthermore, you can change your mind and withdraw from the study at any time – we will completely respect your decision.

How we protect your privacy
All the information you provide will be held in confidence. We have taken careful steps to make sure that you cannot be directly identified from the information given by you. Your personal details (e.g. signature on the consent form) will be kept in a secure location by the research team. When we have finished the study and analysed all the information, the documentation used to gather the raw data will be destroyed except your signed consent form which will be held securely for 5 years. The recordings of the interview will also be held in a secure and confidential environment during the study and destroyed after 5 years.

 YOU WILL BE OFFERED A COPY OF THIS INFORMATION SHEET TO KEEP

If you require any further information about this project, then please contact:
Lucy Snell, Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff Metropolitan University email: st20058127@cardiffmet.ac.uk
Appendix E
6.5 Appendix E – Example of Participant Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:
Participant name or Study ID Number:
Title of Project: To evaluate how social media influences millennials to travel abroad.
Name of Researcher: Lucy Snell

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. [ ]

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. [ ]

3. I agree to take part in the above study. [ ]

4. I agree to the interview being recorded [ ]

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications [ ] [ ]

6. I would like my organisations’ name to be anonymised in all publications [ ] [ ]

Signature of Participant ________________________________ Date ______________
Lucy Snell ________________________________
Name of person taking consent ________________________________ Date ______________
Signature of person taking consent ________________________________
Appendix F
6.6 Appendix F – Completed Interview Consent Forms

6.6.1 Interview A Consent Form

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
ETHICS APPROVAL

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:

Participant name: Katie O’Connell

Title of Project: To evaluate how social media influences millennials to travel abroad.

Name of Researcher: Lucy Snell

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

3. I agree to take part in the above study.

4. I agree to the interview being recorded [ ] Yes No

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications [ ]

6. I would like my organisations’ name to be anonymised in all publications [ ]

______________________________
Signature of Participant

______________________________
Date

______________________________
Name of person taking consent

______________________________
Date

______________________________
Signature of person taking consent
6.6.2 Interview B Consent Form

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY 
ETHICS APPROVAL

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:
Participant name: Lee Canning
Title of Project: To evaluate how social media influences millennials to travel abroad.
Name of Researcher: Lucy Snell

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.
1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. [X]

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. [X]

3. I agree to take part in the above study. [X]

4. I agree to the interview being recorded [ ]

   Yes    No

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications [X] [ ]

6. I would like my organisations' name to be anonymised in all publications [X] [ ]

Signature of Participant  Date

[Signature]

14th Feb 115

Name of person taking consent  Date

[Signature]

Signature of person taking consent

[Signature]
6.6.3 Interview C Consent Form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Cardiff Metropolitan University Ethics Reference Number:
Participant name: Adam Lane
Title of Project: To evaluate how social media influences millennials to travel abroad.
Name of Researcher: Lucy Snell

Participant to complete this section: Please initial each box.

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily. [x]

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. [x]

3. I agree to take part in the above study. [x]

4. I agree to the interview being recorded [x]

5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications
   Yes [x] No [ ]

6. I would like my organisations’ name to be anonymised in all publications
   TUI [x] [ ]

Signature of Participant
Adam Lane
Date 20/01/2018

Name of person taking consent
______________________________
Date 20/01/2018

Signature of person taking consent
Appendix G
6.7 Appendix G – Interview Topic List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order of semi structured interview</th>
<th>Discussed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1) Ask respondent approval to use recording systems  
   Ask respondent to sign and acknowledge consent form |           |
| 2) Ask Background questions  
   Confirm information about;  
   - Name of the organisation  
   - Respondent's position  
   - Years working for the organisation  
   - Level of study |           |
| 3) Discuss what the organisations aim is  
   Probes  
   - What does the organisation want to achieve? (types of holidays on offer, luxury, affordable, family, relaxation, adventure etc.)  
   - Who is your target audience?  
   - What is the demographic of your customers?  
   - Are you aware of the millennial generation?  
   - Do you feel the organisation has adapted their strategy to reach variety of generations? |           |
| 4) Discuss how the organisation advertise  
   Probes  
   - Do you use social media?  
   - Do you use traditional methods to advertise, such as direct mail, leaflets, posters?  
   - Do you feel this method is successful?  
   - How do your customers hear about your organisation?  
     - Word of mouth  
     - Social media  
     - Websites  
     - Leaflets  
     - TV/Radio  
     - Newspaper/magazine  
     - Emails  
     - Other (please state)  
   - Do you get many returning customers? If so how often do they book a holiday?  
   - Do many of your customers come back to use your service?  
   - How do most customers inquire about holidays?  
   - Do many customers browse or book on the same day?  
   - How do most customers book travel?  
     - On the phone  
     - Online  
     - In store |           |
<p>| 5) Discuss the importance (if any) of social media on reaching the target audience, e.g. Millennials (people aged between 22-40) |           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is social media used a lot within your organisation to advertise?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Application for ethics approval v6 December 2017*
Appendix H
6.8 Appendix H – Interview A

CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY ETHICS APPROVAL

1. Name of the organisation

[Redacted]

2. Participant position within the organisation

Sales Consultant (dual skilled)

3. Years working for the organisation

14 years

4. What does the organisation want to achieve? (Types of holidays on offer – luxury, budget, family, relaxation, adventure etc.)

Holidays to cover all requirements i.e. budget, family, luxury, active, adventure etc...

5. Who is the organisation's target audience?

Anyone considering booking a holiday incl. short breaks in the UK right through to worldwide cruises.
6. What is the demographic of the organisations customers? (age, gender, occupation - employed full time, part time, retired, students etc.)

all types


Yes, people grew up in a time where everyone had internet access, a computer and use of digital technologies.

8. Do you feel the organisation has adapted their strategy to reach a variety of generations?

Yes, introduced apps, individual email addresses etc...

9. Do you use traditional methods to advertise, such as direct mail, leaflets, posters? If yes do you feel this method is successful?

Yes, not as successful any more as there is so much junk mail sent most people immediately dispose of it.
CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY
ETHICS APPROVAL

10. How does the average customer hear about the organisation? (highlight the answer/s that apply)

a. Word of mouth
b. Social media
c. Websites
d. Leaflets
e. TV/radio
f. Other
g. Newspaper/magazine
h. Emails

11. How often does the average customer book a holiday/travel with you?

1-2 times a year

12. Do you get many returning customers? If yes how often do they book a holiday?

Good customer service is key to retaining customers I have. I have approximately 100 customers who return to me yearly or year.

13. How do most customers enquire about holidays?

In person,
Via Facebook page,
Over phone.
14. Do many customers book on the same day they browse in-store?

Approximately half.

15. How do most customers book travel? (highlight the most appropriate answer)

a. On the phone
b. Online
c. In-store

16. Does the organisation use social media?

Yes.

17. To what extent is social media used within your organisation to advertise and how is it used? (If yes please specify what platforms)

Apps,

Facebook on a daily basis on the deskt ops in store.
18. Do many of your customers have social media accounts?

Yes, 90% approx.

19. Do many of your customers tell you why they want to travel to a certain destination?

Yes, if they have a specific destination in mind. Cute, recommended, traveling with friends.

If yes what are their reasons?

Aware, saw it online/TV, through a friend recommendation, food scenario.

20. Do you take reviews from previous customers on board?

Yes and I value feedback to ensure that my advice is accurate for giving future customers their perfect experience.

21. Do many of your customers own a smartphone? (A phone that functions a lot like a computer e.g. Internet access, takes photos, videos, apps etc.).

Yes.
22. Does the organisation have a smartphone app available? If yes has this proved to be effective for customers?

Yes, and it's very effective.

23. Do you get reviews and feedback from online sites such as TripAdvisor?

We get scored by customer feedback completed on an email but not on TripAdvisor.

24. Have comments that have been posted on social media affected your organisation or customers perceptions of travel agents?

No, not at a store level.

25. What is your most effective marketing tool?

Social media, Facebook, brochures.

26. Has the development of social media affected the businesses traffic flow?

Yes.
Appendix I
6.9 Appendix I – Interview B

1. Name of the organisation

2. Participant position within the organisation

Assistant Manager

3. Years working for the organisation

8

4. What does the organisation want to achieve? (Types of holidays on offer – luxury, budget, family, relaxation, adventure etc.)

All of the aforementioned, but a focus on round the world itineraries and adventure tours.

5. Who is the organisation’s target audience?

We have exclusive rates for students, teachers and travellers under 30

6. What is the demographic of the organisation’s customers? (age, gender, occupation - employed full time, part time, retired, students etc.)

Students / youths, employed, aged between 20 – 30, but anyone can use our services.

I am indeed.

8. Do you feel the organisation has adapted their strategy to reach a variety of generations?

Absolutely. Our marketing strategy is multifaceted – we have printed brochures but these can also be accessed online. You can book any of our products in person, over the phone, through our website or app, or even through a chat platform.

9. Do you use traditional methods to advertise, such as direct mail, leaflets, posters? If yes do you feel this method is successful?

Not any more. We're trying to lower our carbon footprint so only use paper when necessary. Marketing is mainly done via email and online advertising.

10. How does the average customer hear about the organisation? (highlight the answer/s that apply)

a. Word of mouth
b. Social media
c. Websites
d. Leaflets
e. TV/radio
f. Other
g. Newspaper/magazine
h. Emails

11. How often does the average customer book a holiday/travel with you?

Once a year on average.
12. Do you get many returning customers? If yes how often do they book a holiday?

We have many. Again, on average it would be once a year.

13. How do most customers enquire about holidays?

In person, over the phone or through email.

14. Do many customers book on the same day they browse in-store?

Yes, roughly 50% of them.

15. How do most customers book travel? (highlight the most appropriate answer)

a. On the phone
b. Online
c. In-store

16. Does the organisation use social media?

We are active on Facebook, twitter, and Instagram.

17. To what extent is social media used within your organisation to advertise and how is it used? (If yes please specify what platforms)

It's our main form of advertising.
18. Do many of your customers have social media accounts?

The majority do. It's only those that are (on average) 50+ that tend not to.

19. Do many of your customers tell you why they want to travel to a certain destination?

It's one of the first questions we ask them. The main reasons are to experience a new culture and have an adventure, then the weather!

If yes what are their reasons?

20. Do you take reviews from previous customers on board?

Absolutely. Particularly now that customers use social media to review us.

21. Do many of your customers own a smartphone? (A phone that functions a lot like a computer e.g. Internet access, takes photos, videos, apps etc.).

I'd say the majority do.

22. Does the organisation have a smartphone app available? If yes has this proved to be effective for customers?

Yes.
23. Do you get reviews and feedback from online sites such as TripAdvisor?

Yes we do.

24. Have comments that have been posted on social media affected your organisation or customers perceptions of travel agents?

Not that I am aware of.

25. What is your most effective marketing tool?

Probably Instagram.

26. Has the development of social media affected the businesses traffic flow?

It's trending towards more customers booking online, but still the majority book instore.
Appendix J
6.10 Appendix J – Interview C

1. Name of the organisation
   I currently work for [redacted]

2. Participant position within the organisation
   I am the Deputy Manager

3. Years working for the organisation
   I have worked for the company for 10 years.

4. What does the organisation want to achieve? (Types of holidays on offer – luxury, budget, family, relaxation, adventure etc.)
   We would love to achieve to build the customers perfect holiday and build our customers numbers up year on year by offering differentiated products, this will help determine which holiday our customers want to choose. Also our promise is for customers to discover their smile.

5. Who is the organisation’s target audience?
   Our holidays aim to everyone from Families to Adult only holidays. We also aim to the solo travellers and cruisers. The market is very wide and vast so we currently sell to all walks of life.

6. What is the demographic of the organisation’s customers? (Age, gender, occupation – employed full time, part time, retired, students etc.)
   We have may walks of life and occupations, for those who can’t afford to pay up front; organise payment plans to the also retired who book 4/5 times a year. As TUI we see many ages walk through our doors from young to old a like.

Plenty of people we book and deal with are customers who are born between the millennial generation. I wasn’t actually aware myself of the millennial generation.

8. Do you feel the organisation has adapted their strategy to reach a variety of generations?

We have adapted to our mixed generations, but as time goes by technology changes and the older generation struggles to keep up with mobile phones, computers, apple products etc.

9. Do you use traditional methods to advertise, such as direct mail, leaflets, posters? If yes do you feel this method is successful?

Yes we do. Our way of advertising is via email with offers (extra savings), we also have instore posters and Point of sale in our windows, radio and TV advertisements. The easiest methods I would say is via email and is the most successful. Also I believe personally the advertisement via TV seems to work as well as they advise customer to look online or visit your local Travel agent.

10. How does the average customer hear about the organisation? (highlight the answer/s that apply)

a. Word of mouth
b. Social media
c. Websites
d. Leaflets
e. TV/radio
f. Other
g. Newspaper/magazine
h. Emails
11. How often does the average customer book a holiday/travel with you?

This is a pretty difficult question as we have many loyal customers who book 4/5 holidays a year and loyal customers who book 1 or maybe 2 holidays a year dependent on their finances. But we find converting non-previous customers a struggle as they have books either separately or booked with other agents/websites.

12. Do you get many returning customers? If yes how often do they book a holiday?

In my store alone we have around 40-50 sets of customers who are returning customers on a year on year basis. They book between 1 and up to 5 holidays in one whole calendar year.

13. How do most customers enquire about holidays?

I find that most people enquire online nowadays to see if the can get the best deal then come in to book with us. But we do get many people coming in to stores and inquire also. Alone last year we seen over 1200 enquiries in our shop.

14. Do many customers book on the same day they browse in-store?

At we look to achieve at 65% conversion on our enquiries, I would say its varied on a day to day basis but I would say around 50% of customers book on the same days as they would enquire.

15. How do most customers book travel? (highlight the most appropriate answer)

a. On the phone
b. Online
c. In-store
16. Does the organisation use social media?

Uses social media to connect with our customers. (i.e. Facebook, twitter)

17. To what extent is social media used within your organisation to advertise and how is it used? (If yes please specify what platforms)

There are a few different platforms in terms of how and why social media is used. If a customer has a problem they can ask certain questions and then our social media team in head office is on hand to deal with any queries. We also do advertise on our tour holidays pages and give the benefits on why people should book with us.

18. Do many of your customers have social media accounts?

My understanding they may have but I don’t befriend any of my customers on social media as I keep my business professional.

19. Do many of your customers tell you why they want to travel to a certain destination? If yes what are their reasons?

I have many customers who tell me about their holiday experience and why they love to travel to certain destinations. Mainly I believe it’s the people they meet either in hotels, apartments, restaurants and it’s all to do with Friendliness of locals. Also the cuisine people love and the standards of living.

20. Do you take reviews from previous customers on board?

Yes, I do indeed, if a customer has had a bad experience and explained why, it can deter me from selling a particular holiday in the best interest of others.
21. Do many of your customers own a smartphone? (A phone that functions a lot like a computer e.g. Internet access, takes photos, videos, apps etc.).

Many of our customers own a smartphone and we have a lot of success in getting our customers signed up to a My [ ] app which can only be downloaded on an iPhone or Android phone.

22. Does the organisation have a smartphone app available? If yes has this proved to be effective for customers?

Yes we do, it’s called My [ ] which gives you many functions, from seeing the weather forecast for your destination to excursions (trips) what you can purchase.

23. Do you get reviews and feedback from online sites such as TripAdvisor?

Yes, our website is linked with Trip Advisor which I think can be a good and a bad tool.

24. Have comments that have been posted on social media affected your organisation or customers perceptions of travel agents?

To my knowledge not that I know of.

25. What is your most effective marketing tool?

Our best and most effective marketing tool is emails in my own opinion as we have a lot of people coming in to store asking about certain codes (offers).

26. Has the development of social media affected the businesses traffic flow?

I don’t think it has, I feel it has enhanced our business.
6.11 Turn it in Receipt
Chapter 7

References
7 References


