



IMPACT OF DIGITAL MARKETING ON CONSUMER BEHAVIOR AT PILGRIMAGE VILLAGE BOUTIQUE RESORT & SPA – AN AISAS MODEL APPROACH

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Abstract. Based on theoretical and practical issues of the AISAS model, the study measures the influence of Digital Marketing on consumer behavior at Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa. The study surveyed 160 consumers who stayed at the resort and processed the data using the SEM model. The results have shown the influence of Digital Marketing on each stage of consumer behavior as the AISAS model: Attention, Interest, Search, Action, and Share. This study shows non-sequential relationships between the steps in the process. The action and the information sharing are influenced by the previous stages, in which the action is strongly influenced by the information searching behavior (standardized coefficient 0.39), and the information sharing behavior is strongly influenced by action (standardized coefficient 0.76). The study has proposed some implications to improve the effectiveness of Digital Marketing activities based on non-sequential relationships in the AISAS model in the case of Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, AISAS model, consumer behavior

1 Introduction

According to the most recent data from We Are Social, there are presently 5.16 billion Internet users worldwide, making up 64.4% of the global population, including 4.79 billion people using social networks. These figures in Vietnam are 77.93 and 70 million people, respectively. Along with the rapid increase in Internet users, consumer behavior has changed significantly. Through popular user actions in the digital marketing environment, two significant behaviors are searching for information and researching products and brands [1]. These changes require businesses, especially those in the hotel and accommodation industry, to shift in thinking, transforming from traditional marketing to digital marketing for better consumer compatibility and approach [2].

Digital marketing in the hotel industry has progressed beyond straightforward one-way communication to starting and maintaining interactive conversations with new and current consumers, addressing consumer demands through an increasingly rich brand experience [3]. Digital Marketing focuses on databases and an optimal combination of media to implement, measure, monitor, and propose well-timed adjustment solutions to achieve the company's

business goals [4]. Many hotels take the necessary steps to customize their approach to interacting with consumers to develop their marketing capabilities and the ability to communicate in new ways, such as website optimization, using Video applications, social networks, travel agents, etc. [5].

There are many opinions and approaches to measure the influence of Digital Marketing on consumer behavior: The qualitative approach uses indicators such as brand health, brand image, etc.; the Quantitative measurement approach can use sales indicators, increase or decrease in revenue, etc.; Interim Metrics and Final Metrics. [6]; The approach follows behavioral processes such as the AIDA and AISAS models, etc... [7]. Dave Chaffey and Fiona Ellis-Chadwick argued that measuring digital marketing activity is the process of quantifying the efficiency and effectiveness of past actions through acquisition, collation, sorting, analysis, interpretation and dissemination of appropriate data [8]. Therefore, the measurement method through the AISAS model, developed by Dentsu, is a suitable approach for measuring consumer behavior in the digital environment under the influence of Digital Marketing activities [6]. Real-time continuous analysis indicators from the AISAS model help firms promptly develop adjustment tactics, ensuring the initial marketing goals.

In Thua Thien Hue province, the data shows that the number of active accommodation establishments is about 853 (March, 2023) [9]. The number of tourists to Hue in 2022 was 2.05 million (equivalent to 42.7% compared to 2019), of which the proportion of foreign tourists decreased significantly, with 260,000 visitors, accounting for 12.68% [10, 11]. Although there have been more improvements compared to previous years in the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism industry in Thua Thien Hue province has not fully recovered. Tourism and accommodation businesses in the area are still facing many difficulties. This reality requires firms to change their operations and marketing strategies to attract potential consumers.

This study uses the case of Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa, one of the seven 5-star hotels and resorts in Thua Thien Hue Province, to examine the effect of digital marketing activities on consumer behavior at the resort. The resort has a well-invested and professional digital marketing activities system. In addition to analyzing the influence of Digital Marketing on consumer behavior by the AISAS model, the study proposes some implications to improve search efficiency, attract and retain consumers at the resort.

2 Literature Review and Methodology

2.1 Digital Marketing

“Digital marketing” is often used interchangeably with e-marketing, Internet marketing, and online marketing. According to American Marketing Association (AMA), Digital marketing refers to any marketing methods conducted through electronic devices that utilize some form of

a computer, including online marketing efforts conducted on the Internet. In digital marketing, a business might leverage websites, search engines, blogs, social media, video, email and similar channels to reach consumers [12]. According to Hubspot, Digital Marketing is defined as using numerous digital tactics and channels to connect with consumers where they spend much of their time: online environment [13]. Shaik Javed Parvez et al. supposed that Digital marketing is the promotion of products or brands through online channels [5].

Regarding Dave Chaffey and Fiona Ellis-Chadwick, Digital marketing is the application of the Internet and related digital technologies in conjunction with traditional communications to achieve marketing objectives [8]. Vaibhava Desai argued that Digital marketing encompasses all marketing efforts that use an electronic device or the Internet. Businesses leverage digital channels such as search engines, social media, email and websites to connect with current and prospective consumers [6]. Cihan Cobanoglu et al. assumed that digital marketing is an umbrella term including the internet and online marketing. It is a broad term that uses a bundle of marketing strategies implemented through digital channels for marketing and promotion. Digital marketing also uses media such as TV ads, digital billboards, radio, SMS texts and internet marketing strategies such as search engine optimization (SEO), pay-per-click, social media marketing, content marketing and others [14].

Therefore, Digital Marketing generally achieves marketing objectives by applying digital technologies and media.

Numerous empirical studies in tourism, particularly in the hotel industry, demonstrate that digital marketing in tourism is the application of suitable technical tools to approach and enhance the consumer experience. Social networking, SEO, video marketing, and property management systems are among the digital marketing strategies Shaik Javed Parvez et al. declared are beneficial in hotels [5]. The digital marketing toolbox of tourism businesses comprises display advertising, search engine marketing, social media marketing, email marketing, mobile marketing, and online public relations [15]. Obviously, each digital marketing option has advantages and disadvantages, making it necessary to mix and match to achieve the set goals. Thus, every tourism business or organization must decide which set and combination of marketing activities fits achieving their goals.

2.2 Consumer behavior

There are several theories on consumer behavior at this point. Philip Kotler et al. described consumer behavior as reflecting the behavior of ultimate consumers - buying by individuals and families of goods and services for their use. [16]. Solomon similarly defined consumer behavior as a process involving an individual or a group of people choosing, purchasing, using, or disposing of a product, service, idea, or experience to satisfy their needs or wants [17]. Schiffman & Wisenblit defined consumer behavior as the study of consumers' actions in the process of

searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs [18]. Neal et al. argued that consumer behavior explains how and why consumers choose to buy a good or service [19]. American Marketing Association supposed that consumer behavior refers to the study of how consumers, both individuals and organizations, satisfy their needs and wants by choosing, purchasing, using and disposing of goods, ideas and services [20].

It is clear from the definitions mentioned above that "consumer behavior" refers to the human behavior process through which a person formulates responses to their needs. This process includes the consumer perception phase and action phase.

2.3 The AISAS model for consumer behavior in Digital Marketing

The AISAS Model characterizes consumer behavior in the Internet era created by Dentsu, an advertising agency in Japan, in 2005 [7]. According to the theory, consumers go through five stages: A (Attention), I (Interest), S (Search), A (Action), and S (Share). Wei & Lu verified that the AISAS model had been created to meet the current needs of the digital era, and due to its interactive nature, it will better elucidate the behavior and activity of consumers on the Internet [21].

In general, "Attention" was defined as consumer behavior when viewing and paying attention to products or services affected by digital marketing. At the same time, "Interest" shows an interest in products or services advertised online [22].

Regarding searching, because information is readily available, consumers choose to learn more when they see a product, service, or marketing. Using a personal computer (PC), mobile phone, or other comparable devices, one may now instantaneously search for almost any information, anytime, from anywhere, thanks to advancements in internet technology [7]. They were no longer passively receiving information but actively seeking it, Lin-Lin Xue et al. confirmed [23]. Search engine marketing activities such as paid and search engine optimization (SEO) support users to perform these behaviors. Consumers research products online (blogs, Twitter, Facebook, official websites, etc.) or by speaking with friends or family who have used the product [24].

In the next stage, Sasmita & Achmadi defined "Action" as the behavior of consumers who make purchases of products or services advertised online. The consumer subsequently assesses the information. A decision to buy will be made following a favorable appraisal. Then, consumers share the intriguing information they have obtained with others [22]. In other words, after purchasing, the consumer spreads information through word-of-mouth by conversing with others or posting reviews and comments online [24]. "Share" in the AISAS model describes the act of acknowledging the experience of using a product, service, or knowledge acquired and sharing it with those around them [22].

As the Internet gains prominence, it becomes integral to consumers' daily lives. They are no longer restricted to using only television, broadcasting, newspapers, and magazines; everything needed is now available in the digital environment.

Instead of unilaterally transmitting information and inputting ideas to consumers, the AISAS Model highlights the importance of search and share behaviors of consumers that appeared by the impact of Digital Marketing in the Internet era. This model emphasizes the influence of the Internet on people's lifestyles and purchasing behavior [25].

2.4 Research Framework

Some prior researchers applied the AISAS model to analyze the influence of digital marketing on the action and sharing behavior by linear and sequential relationships among steps, such as Nguyen Thi My Thanh and Nguyen Thi Thuy Trang [26], Vu Thu Ha [27] Tuan V.K. [28], Janah et al [29].

However, nowadays, the rapid development of digital marketing with numerous creative activities has increasingly affected every phase of consumer behavior. Based on the original AISAS model suggested by Dentsu [7], this study examines the non-sequential relationships among stages in the process.

Hence, the study proposes the research hypotheses in Figure 1 below:

H_{1a}: The consumer's attention to information about Pilgrimage Village from Digital Marketing positively affects their interest.

H_{1b}: The consumer's attention to information about Pilgrimage Village from Digital Marketing positively affects their action.

H_{1c}: The consumer's attention to information about Pilgrimage Village from Digital Marketing positively affects their information sharing.

H_{2a}: The consumer's interest in Pilgrimage Village positively affects their information searching

H_{2b}: The consumer's interest in Pilgrimage Village positively affects their action

H_{2c}: The consumer's interest in Pilgrimage Village positively affects their information sharing

H_{3a}: The consumer's information searching positively affects their action

H_{3b}: The consumer's information searching positively affects their information sharing

H₄: The consumer's action positively affects their information sharing

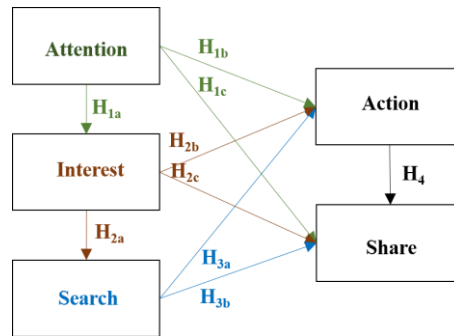


Figure 1. Research model

Source: Author's suggestion

2.5 Methodology

The research is based on secondary and primary data to analyze the influence of Digital Marketing activities on consumer behavior at Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa. The primary data were collected using questionnaires and direct interviews with tourists staying at Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa. Hair et al. recommend a minimum sample size of 100 elements for a model with 5 constructs, which has more than 3 items for each and a commonality coefficient above 0.5 [30]. The study uses SEM model analysis to estimate and evaluate the impact of Digital Marketing on the phases in consumer behavior using the AISAS model on a sample size of 160.

Measurements of Study Constructs are as Table 1:

Table 1. Measurements of Study Constructs

Construct	Descriptions	Measurement Item	Source
Attention	Approach and pay attention to information by digital marketing	ATT1. I received advertising information about the Pilgrimage Village from mass media or personal media.	Lin-Lin Xue & et al. [23];
		ATT2. I paid attention to the information about the Pilgrimage Village from the interaction and sharing of my friends on social networks.	Hendriyani et al. [24];
		ATT3. Digital Marketing helped me remember information related to Pilgrimage Village, such as location, space, etc.	Muhamad Syahid
		ATT4. Media information motivated me to make a reservation.	Abdurrahim et al. [31];
Interest	Interested in advertised information	INT1. I was interested because the information provided was of good quality	Putri Utami Ruswandi et al. [32]
		INT2. I was interested because of the beauty of Pilgrimage Village	Lin-Lin Xue & et al. [23];

Construct	Descriptions	Measurement Item	Source
		INT3. I was interested because of positive reviews about Pilgrimage Village	et al. [24]; Muhamad Syahid
		INT4. I was interested because of the high rating for Pilgrimage Village	Abdurrahim et al. [31]; Putri Utami Ruswandi et al. [32]
		SRC1. I did a further search	Lin-Lin Xue & et al. [23]; Hendriyani et al. [24]; Muhamad Syahid
		SRC2. I searched for information by sending messages and comments	Abdurrahim et al. [31]; Putri Utami Ruswandi et al. [32]
Search	Search information to discover more.	SRC3. I performed an information search by asking directly to friends, family members and other people who have traveled to Pilgrimage Village	Putri Utami Ruswandi et al. [32]
Action	Do activities	ACT1. I made a reservation after seeing the advertised information	Lin-Lin Xue & et al. [23]; Hendriyani et al. [24]; Muhamad Syahid
		ACT2. I made a reservation because of interest in the information about the Pilgrimage Village	Abdurrahim et al. [31]; Putri Utami Ruswandi et al. [32]
		ACT3. I made a reservation after further searching for information about the Pilgrimage Village	
		ACT4. I made a reservation after considering the hotels and resorts	
Share	Share information about firm through social media.	SHR1. I will do reviews on social networking platforms about Pilgrimage Village	Lin-Lin Xue & et al. [23]; Hendriyani et al. [24]; Muhamad Syahid
		SHR2. I will share my experience at the Pilgrimage Village on the platforms	Abdurrahim et al. [31]; Putri Utami Ruswandi et al. [32]
		SHR3. I will confirm the quality of the service at the Pilgrimage Village on the platforms	
		SHR4. I will recommend people about the Pilgrimage Village	

Source: Author's summary

3 Results

3.1 Descriptions of research sample

During the survey period, consumers coming to the Pilgrimage Village were 118 Vietnamese visitors, accounting for 73.75%. Meanwhile, foreign tourists, who began to return after the pandemic, only accounted for 26.25%, with 42 guests. This figure corresponds to the general tourist attraction context of Thua Thien Hue Province, where domestic travelers are popular. Regarding gender, the ratio of male and female guests is quite balanced. There are 86 male guests, accounting for 53.75%. In addition, the most significant purpose of consumers when coming to Pilgrimage Village is for rest, with 96 people (accounting for 60.00%). Regarding the number of staying days, more than 70% of visitors have a stay of 2 days or more. The figures are as Table 2.

Concerning the information sources that consumers know about the Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa, the data shows in Figure 2.

Table 2. Descriptions of research sample

Characteristic	Valid	Frequency	Percent
Nationality	Foreign tourists	42	26.25
	Vietnamese tourists	118	73.75
Gender	Male	86	53.75
	Female	74	46.25
Purpose	Rest	96	60.00
	Travel	38	23.75
	Others	26	16.25
Number of staying days	1 day	46	28.75
	2 days	85	53.13
	More than 2 days	29	18.13
Total		160	100.00

Source: Survey results in 2023

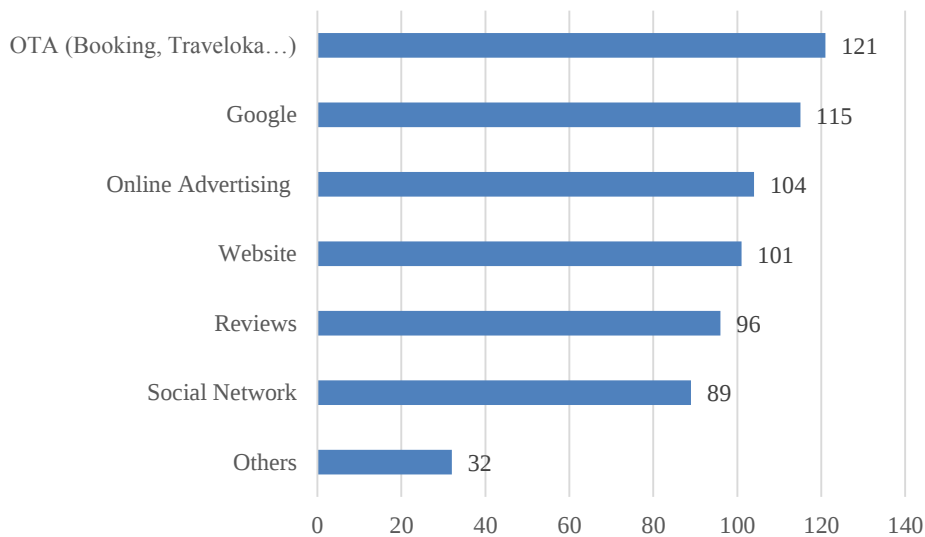


Figure 2. Information sources that consumers know about Pilgrimage Village

Source: Survey results in 2023

The popular source that consumers can approach for information about the Pilgrimage Village is OTA channels such as Booking, Traveloka, and Agoda... with 121 over 160 consumers (accounting for 75.63%). The following sources have significant rates of over 50%, which are Google (115 responses, making up 71.88%), online advertising (104 answers, accounting for 65%), and website (101 responses, taking 61.13%). The remaining sources are Reviews, Social networks, and other information sources such as newspapers and magazines, which take 96, 89, and 32 responses, corresponding to 60%, 55.63%, and 20%, respectively.

3.2 Measuring the impact of Digital Marketing on consumer behavior using the AIAS model

Fit Indexes of Confirmatory Factor Analysis show that a CMIN/df coefficient is 1.309 (which less than 3 is good); The Goodness-of-fit Index (GFI) obtained is 0.987. This indicator shows a good level when it is higher than 0.95; Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) of 0.948 is higher than 0.9, reflecting a good model fit. The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) of 0.957 is more significant than 0.95, indicating a good performance; The Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is obtained at 0.044 (≤ 0.06 is good); A PCLOSE value is 0.715 (more significant than 0.05) is very good [30].

Regarding the observed variable importance and Confirmatory Factor Analysis, the results show that with the 95% confidence interval, the estimated relationships are significant in the model. The standardized values of the coefficients are above 0.5, so all variables are accepted [30]. Regression and standardized regression coefficient in CFA are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Regression and standardized regression coefficient in CFA

			Regression Weights		S.E.	C.R.	P
			Estimate	Standardized			
ATT4	<---	Attention	1	0.811			
ATT3	<---	Attention	0.819	0.777	0.074	11.058	***
ATT2	<---	Attention	1.016	0.943	0.074	13.759	***
ATT1	<---	Attention	0.703	0.717	0.071	9.943	***
INT4	<---	Interest	1	0.702			
INT3	<---	Interest	0.717	0.524	0.133	5.402	***
INT2	<---	Interest	0.959	0.717	0.143	6.695	***
INT1	<---	Interest	0.854	0.618	0.139	6.161	***
SRC4	<---	Search	1	0.75			
SRC3	<---	Search	0.966	0.683	0.132	7.322	***
SRC2	<---	Search	0.648	0.521	0.113	5.756	***
SRC1	<---	Search	1.14	0.761	0.147	7.753	***
ACT4	<---	Action	1	0.688			
ACT3	<---	Action	0.975	0.649	0.131	7.424	***
ACT2	<---	Action	1.544	0.772	0.178	8.675	***
ACT1	<---	Action	1.928	0.908	0.206	9.379	***
SHR4	<---	Share	1	0.725			
SHR3	<---	Share	0.701	0.592	0.117	6.002	***
SHR2	<---	Share	0.986	0.685	0.149	6.598	***
SHR1	<---	Share	0.886	0.632	0.141	6.299	***

Source: Survey results in 2023

Regarding reliability, convergent, discriminant validity, Composite Reliability (CR) is more significant than 0.7; Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is more significant than 0.5; Maximum Shared Variance (MSV) is lower than Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Therefore, the scale ensures reliability, convergence and discriminant [30]. The figures are shown in Table 4.

According to the reference scale system by Hair et al., the results of SEM model estimation show that the indices to evaluate the model fit are high. The value of CMIN/df lower than 3 indicates that the model's overall fit is at a good level, with 1,336. The value of GFI, a measure of the Goodness-of-fit Index, with 0.983 (>0.95), reflects a good level. The figure TLI at 0.944 (higher than 0.9) is at a good level; The CFI value obtained is 0.952 (higher than 0.95), and the RMSEA value is 0.046 (lower than 0.06), showing that the fit of the model is good [30].

Table 4. Indicators of Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted and Maximum Shared Variance

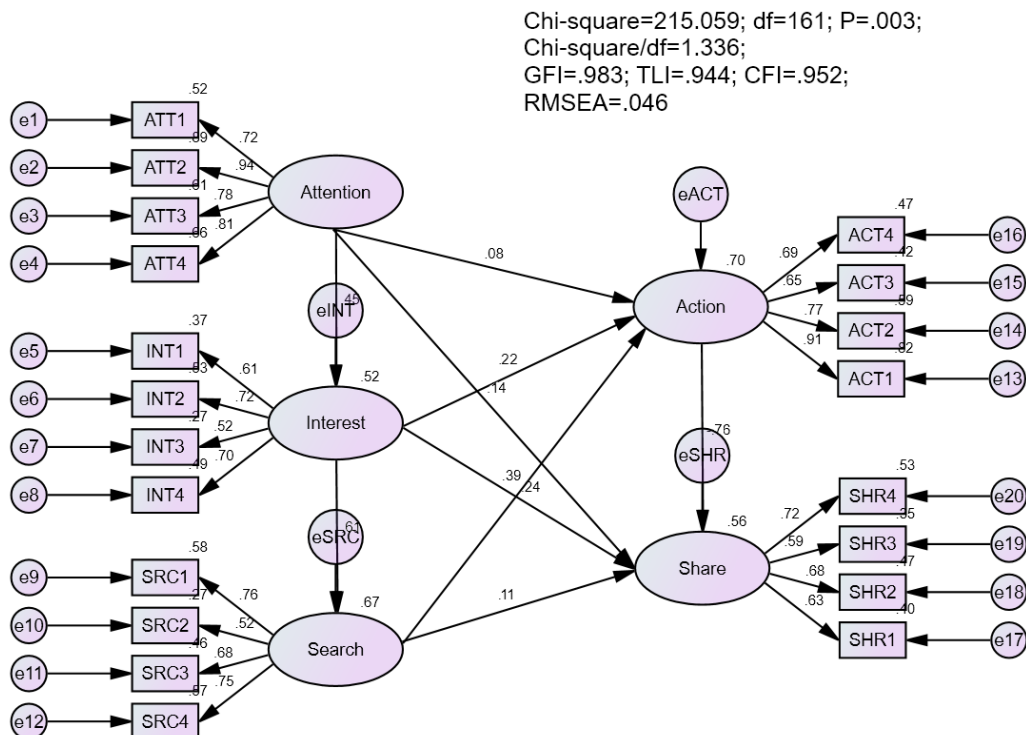
	CR	AVE	MSV
Action	0.844	0.579	0.095
Attention	0.857	0.669	0.095
Interest	0.737	0.516	0.061
Search	0.777	0.570	0.064
Share	0.755	0.536	0.061

Source: Survey results in 2023

Squared Multiple Correlations coefficients are higher than 0.5, that is, the proportion of the total variation explained by the model at the level of more than 50%.

The results of the model estimation are obtained as Figure 3 follows:

As the figure mentioned above, the relationships in the regressions model are as Table 5 follows.

**Figure 3.** Summary of the SEM Results

Source: Survey results in 2023

Table 5. Squared Multiple Correlations in SEM Results

Regression	Squared Multiple Correlations
Interest = 0.45 * Attention	0.52
Search = 0.61 * Interest	0.67
Action = 0.08 * Attention + 0.22 * Interest + 0.39 * Search	0.70
Share= 0.22 * Attention + 0.24 * Interest + 0.11 * Search +0.76 * Action	0.56

Source: Survey results in 2023

Digital Marketing affects consumers and leads consumers from awareness to action. When consumers have received and paid attention to the information from Digital Marketing activities, their interest will likely be affected. The survey results proved that the explanation proportion is 52% with a regression standardized coefficient of 0.45.

Consumers will search for information about the Pilgrimage Village resort based on their interest in increasing awareness. The model estimation results show that consumers' interest can explain 67% of the variation in their information searching. In this regression, the beta coefficient is 0.61.

The reservation action at the Pilgrimage Village is influenced by attention, interest, and searching behavior. These three variables explain up to 70% of the variation in the data of action behavior. The searching variable has the most significant influence on the action with beta coefficients of 0.39, followed by the interest of 0.22 and the attention of 0.08.

Information sharing behavior of consumers about the Pilgrimage Village resort is proven to be affected by all 4 factors, in which the action is the most significant effect with a beta coefficient of 0.76. These figures for interest, attention, and searching are 0.24; 0.22, and 0.11, respectively.

3.3 Discussion

The research results confirm and extend the relationships in the AISAS model proposed by Dentsu in Digital Marketing activities. Consumer behavior under the influence of Digital Marketing will follow non-sequential relationships among stages in the AISAS process.

The results show that successive variables have a substantial direct influence on each other. The impact of non-sequential variables in the five stages of the AISAS model is usually low. For example, attention slowly influences action and sharing. This result is also similar to some prior researchers, such as Lin-Lin Xue et al. [26] and Hendriyani et al. [24].

The research finding is that the action's impact on consumers' sharing decisions is high. It shows the dynamism of Vietnamese visitors (who account for a relatively high proportion of the sample) on social networking platforms. This feature suggests that businesses, especially the

Pilgrimage Village Hotel, can increase the brand's reputation on social networking platforms if they make good use of the sharing behavior of consumers.

4 Implications for Pilgrimage Village Boutique Resort & Spa in Digital Marketing

At attention phase: This phase is the beginning of the consumer behavior process in the AISAS model. Therefore, Pilgrimage Village Resort needs to focus on advertising channels to reach out, especially to follow consumers to make a strong impression and create awareness for consumers. The channels that can perform well at this stage are targeted and paid forms of Digital Marketing, such as advertising via social media platforms, contextual display advertising, and encouraging old consumers to review and rate.

At interest phase: The images on media and experiences of consumers who have used the service should be adequately built, creating sympathy for new consumers after their awareness. Through digital marketing, Pilgrimage Village images and communication messages should be truthful, consistent, and clear to develop interest and maintain reasonable expectations of the resort's ability.

At searching phase: Website and social network optimization should be focused on. Optimizing on-site and external platforms (off-site) increases sensitivity to search engines like Google. Organic search results are better than sponsored, advertised ones. For foreign tourists, it is necessary to consider the consumers' demographics in which area to develop social networking platforms and update the appropriate SEO algorithm in that market. This stage closes the decision-making process and strongly influences the action decision. Hence, the information mentioned and asked by consumers needs to be answered quickly with evidence to increase persuasion, encourage consumers to believe in service quality, and make decision-making easier.

At action phase: Consumer reservations, online booking, and payment processes should ensure high reliability. During the guest's stay at the resort, offline marketing forms can supplement with online marketing activities such as customer service and taking care of customer experience.

At sharing phase: This stage helps the firm build its brand reputation and influence potential consumers through prior consumer testimonials. Therefore, Pilgrimage Village should propose solutions to encourage consumers to perform positive reviews and ratings about the resort. Direct marketing and consumer services create high value and emotions for consumers, which enhance the motivation and desire to share information on platforms.

5 Conclusion

This study analyzes the impact of Digital Marketing on consumer behavior by the approach of the AISAS model. The results have shown non-sequential relationships from perception to decision-making. Accordingly, to strongly impact consumer actions, Pilgrimage Village needs to understand the effects on their attention and interest, especially in information searching. Buying action in the present is the decisive factor in the immediate sales of the business. However, information sharing contributes to helping Pilgrimage Village develop market size and achieve sustainable business results. Therefore, besides focusing on Digital Marketing activities to increase purchasing decisions, Pilgrimage Village needs to encourage guests to perform sharing behavior.

Due to the post-COVID impact, Pilgrimage Village's current popular guests are still Vietnamese people, not in line with the actual consumer structure determined by the resort. Hence, the AISAS model research results will have a descriptive and explanatory meaning for Vietnamese tourists. This result is also a suggestion for researchers to implement in future studies.

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