The Influence of Sharing User-Generated Content on Tourism Experience Adoption: How Trust in Friends and Family Drives Similar Booking Behavior

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Abstract

This study tests a model of influence using the VisCAP framework (visibility, credibility, attractiveness, and power) to examine how user-generated content (UGC) from friends and family on Facebook affects Thai tourists' destination choices. Quantitative data were collected from 289 Thai tourists who booked their trips after viewing Facebook posts shared by friends or relatives. The research employed a structured questionnaire that underwent IOC and ethical review verification. The analysis showed that visibility, attractiveness, and power directly influenced booking intentions, while credibility was not a significant factor. This finding differs from previous studies conducted in other cultural contexts and highlights the influence of Thailand's high-context and collectivist culture, where emotional and visual appeal outweigh source credibility. The study provides practical implications for tourism marketers, suggesting that strategies should emphasize visually engaging and highly visible social media content rather than focusing solely on credibility-building. The results contribute to a deeper understanding of cultural influences on social media-based travel decision-making in Thailand.

Keywords: User-generated Content; VisCAP Model; Influencer Attributes; Facebook; Tourism in Thailand; Source Credibility; Booking Intention; Cultural Context

Introduction

Social media, alongside digital marketing, has revolutionized tourism by making user-generated content (UGC) the primary influence on travel choices, according to Bharti et al. (2024) and Khan et al. (2022). People base their travel bookings on personal recommendations and shared social experiences since they view this type of content as authentic and trustworthy (Matook et al., 2015; Chakuthip et al., 2009). However, while previous studies have recognized the role of trust in shaping consumer behavior, there remains limited understanding of which specific attributes of the person sharing the content drive these effects. This study therefore evaluates the impact of close social ties sharing tourism experience content on user travel decision-making processes through the lens of the VisCAP

model, which includes visibility, credibility, attractiveness and power as key influencer attributes.

Digital platforms now steer marketing away from traditional methods because they enable instant peer-based communication that boosts customer engagement, according to Bharti et al. (2024) and Khan et al. (2022). The trust that develops from established relationships serves as a vital factor to shape consumer perceptions and intentions (Matook et al., 2015; Chakuthip et al., 2009). Tourists assess UGC content shared by people they know personally as trustworthy, which results in stronger chances of them making identical booking choices. The trust established between people leads to reduced travel risks when friends and family provide recommendations (Matook et al., 2015; Chakuthip et al., 2009; Chari et al., 2016). Despite this, few studies have examined how the VisCAP factors of those trusted sources, such as their attractiveness, visibility or power, specifically influence booking behavior among Thai tourists. This research addresses this gap by focusing on the psychological and cultural dimensions of trust within Thailand's collectivist and high-context society.

The scholarly literature about digital marketing and social media impacts on tourism does not adequately investigate the direct effects of trusting interpersonal networks when users share content (Bharti et al., 2024; Khan et al., 2022). The current literature explores UGC's general impact on decision-making, yet it lacks specific analysis of trust dynamics between family members and friends and their resulting influence on tourism decisions (Matook et al., 2015; Chakuthip et al., 2009). The present study investigates the process by which trusted UGC sharing between close friends generates matching booking behaviors in situations where personal travel stories and referrals drive tourist decisions (Matook et al., 2015; Chakuthip et al., 2009; Chari et al., 2016). The research combines digital marketing knowledge with consumer trust research to enhance understanding of psychological and social factors that drive this phenomenon and to develop practical recommendations for academic professionals and industry practitioners. By applying the VisCAP model, this research seeks to determine which influencer attributes most strongly shape Thai tourists' booking intentions and how these findings can guide effective digital marketing strategies. Understanding these factors is important for Thailand's tourism industry, as it enables marketers to design campaigns that align with local trust-based decision-making and enhance the effectiveness of social media promotion.

Research Objectives

1. To determine the influence of visibility, credibility, attractiveness, and power on the intention of Thai tourists to book the same destination after viewing user-generated content (UGC) shared by friends or family on Facebook.

2. To identify which VisCAP factor, including visibility, credibility, attractiveness and power, most strongly predicts booking intention within this context of trust-based UGC among Thai travelers.

Literature Review

The Role of User-Generated Content in Tourism

The research examined user-generated content (UGC) and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in tourism behavior through a literature review. The study based its analysis on Khan and Khan (2015) to understand how trust combined with convenience and social reassurance influences content sharing and travel decision-making among inbound Muslim travelers. The research highlighted two essential findings regarding internet connectivity and how users use UGC both for information retrieval and social validation purposes. The research by Nur'afifah and Prihantoro (2021) revealed that Southeast Asian millennials use Instagram and other peer-generated content platforms to make travel decisions. The review demonstrated that younger travelers choose their destinations based on credibility factors alongside social influence and visual engagement. These studies consistently emphasize that credibility and social reassurance play crucial roles in shaping travel intention. However, few studies explore how these trust factors operate in close interpersonal networks, particularly when the content originates from friends or family rather than professional influences. This limitation provides the basis for extending the application of the VisCAP model to personal UGC contexts. The research findings developed a conceptual framework to study how visibility, credibility, attractiveness, and power affect Thai tourists' decision to book travel through social media content from friends or influencers.

Social Media Platforms and Information Diffusion

The study by Ukpabi & Karjaluoto (2018) examines the elements that drive travelers to use user-generated content (UGC) for planning their trips as it directly relates to the research on UGC in tourism. The study evaluates existing research to determine what factors lead users to adopt UGC by analyzing their evaluation of travel products through user reviews and shared experiences. The authors use theoretical models and empirical evidence from previous studies to explain why UGC has become popular among tourists who use social media and peer reviews for making informed choices. The review results demonstrate how social influences, together with trust and perceived usefulness of UGC, drive adoption while providing deeper insights into consumer behavior in tourism. Similarly, Ukpabi and Karjaluoto (2018) confirm that combining firm-generated and user-generated content enhances engagement, suggesting that peer communication creates a sense of authenticity that strengthens perceived reliability. When compared, these studies indicate that UGC functions as both an informational and emotional tool in tourism marketing. However, they do not differentiate how trust from known peers may produce distinct effects from general online reviews or influencer posts, which this research addresses within the Thai cultural context. The reference provides essential understanding about how UGC influences tourism consumer behavior by revealing multiple elements that make social media useful for better travel planning. The research findings from this review establish essential groundwork for additional studies that explore how peer influence and trust in shared content affect travel booking choices.

Trust and Peer Influence in Decision Making

The article examines essential research about user-generated content (UGC) which affects tourism marketing strategies and consumer conduct through two essential viewpoints. According to Santos (2023) UGC improves both the credibility and visibility of tourism destinations. Users prefer UGC over firm-generated content (FGC). Research shows that combining UGC with FGC on Facebook social media platforms leads to better user engagement. Moscardo (2020) demonstrates in his research how users of mobile platforms create personal travel stories through UGC which develops emotional bonds with destinations. The research demonstrates that UGC serves dual purposes as a marketing instrument while simultaneously influencing how people experience travel. These findings underline that emotional connection and trust are central to travelers' decisions, yet they do not explain which characteristics of the message source generate this trust. The present study builds on this gap by analyzing how visibility, attractiveness, power and credibility interact in shaping booking behavior when information is shared by trusted peers. The research foundation of this study emerges from these reviews because they demonstrate how UGC affects travel intention through trust mechanisms and emotional engagement and social interaction.

Related Studied

Research in tourism marketing now measures the relationship between four influencer attributes (VisCAP model: visibility, credibility, attractiveness, and power) and their impact on consumers choosing the same travel destinations promoted by these influencers. The visibility of an influencer equals their level of fame and reach through metrics like follower counts, yet credibility represents their trustworthy expert status, and attractiveness measures their appeal, including likability and physical appearance, and power demonstrates their ability to influence audiences. Research demonstrates that these three characteristics determine how audiences react to recommendations about travel destinations.

The formation of travel intentions depends heavily on the element of credibility. According to Malathy and Vishnu Kumar (2025) travel influencers' credibility directly affects their followers' decisions to visit destinations through relatable content which drives both engagement and visitation. Yılmazdoğan et al. (2021) demonstrated that travel decisions heavily rely on influencer credibility factors including trustworthiness and expertise. The absence of credibility acts as a barrier to persuasion which subsequently decreases the chances of action.

Travel decisions made by followers depend more on an influencer's credibility than their attractiveness. The research conducted by Yılmazdoğan et al. (2021) demonstrated that trustworthiness and expertise had positive effects on travel intention but attractiveness did not show any significant impact. The baseline appeal of most influencers makes attractiveness serve as a supporting factor rather than a main factor that drives booking choices. However, studies such as Pasaribu et al. (2021) highlight that attractiveness can still enhance engagement when combined with other persuasive traits, implying that the relative importance of each VisCAP dimension may vary across contexts.

The visibility of influencers serves as a fundamental factor for destination awareness because it enables the attraction of potential travelers. Pasaribu et al. (2021) established that visibility stands as an essential factor for effective travel promotion. Influencers who possess high visibility together with strong audience engagement help increase both destination recognition and travel choice influence. The combination of trust and visibility works together to drive actual decisions although visibility on its own does not lead to bookings. In contrast, Malathy and Vishnu Kumar (2025) emphasized that high visibility without sufficient trust reduces credibility, suggesting that both dimensions must operate simultaneously to impact behavioral intention. Research indicates that macro-influencers provide extensive reach yet micro-influencers establish stronger trust relationships which tourism marketers can strategically unite in their promotional strategies.

The term "power" in this context describes an influencer's capacity to influence their audience members into changing their behavior. The sources of power include expertise (expert power), admiration (referent power) and exclusive reward offerings. The tourism research field has not studied power independently but its effects become visible through destination image variables. Celebrity endorsers' power according to Pasaribu et al. (2021) significantly enhanced consumers' destination image which led to increased booking intentions. The combination of strong personal brands and recognized authority in influencers makes destinations more credible and memorable according to classic persuasion theory which shows consumers value recommendations from powerful opinion leaders such as well-known travel experts. The intangible "power" of an influencer directly influences consumer attitudes and leads to more bookings by improving destination image (Pasaribu et al., 2021). Despite this, few studies have applied these four VisCAP attributes to user-generated content from non-commercial sources such as friends or family. This research therefore extends existing models to examine how the same dimensions function in a trust-based and collectivist cultural setting, providing new insights into Thai tourists' booking behaviors.
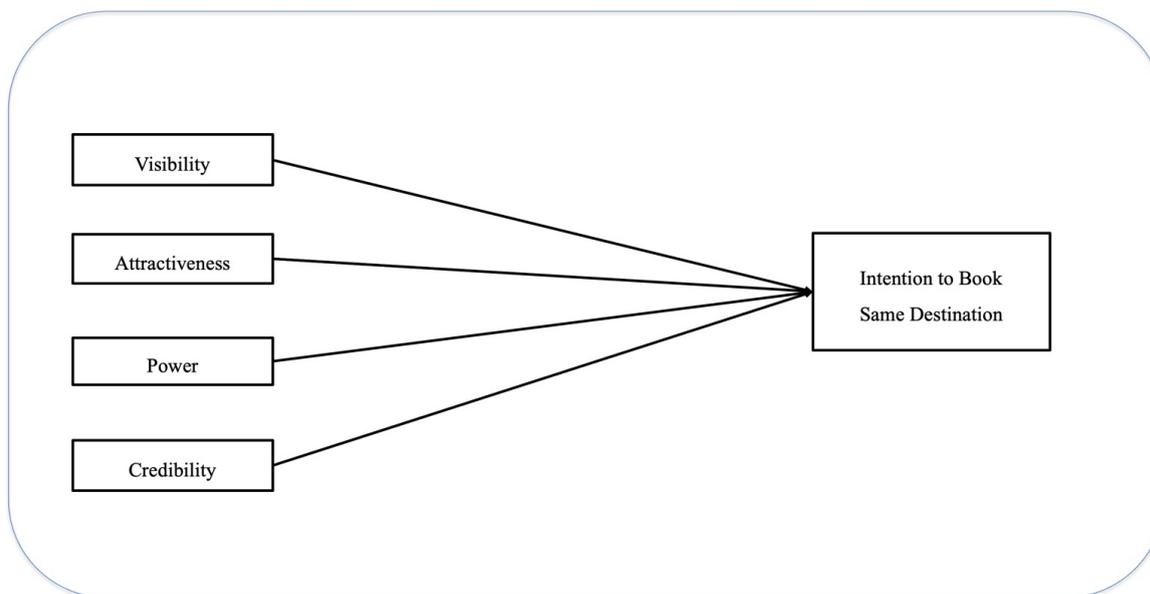
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Type of Research

This research employs a quantitative survey design informed by a review of existing literature and theoretical frameworks. This approach allows hypotheses developed from prior studies to be tested empirically using numerical data collected from participants. The study investigates how Thai tourists behave when Facebook friends share user-generated content (UGC) related to tourism experiences.

Population and Sample

The research focuses on Thai tourists who select travel destinations through Facebook posts from their friends. The research used purposive sampling to select participants who fulfilled the research requirements. The research collected **289** valid responses from people who confirmed they booked trips after seeing social media content. Although purposive sampling is suitable for reaching a specific target group, it has limitations because it does not represent the wider population of Thai tourists. The findings therefore may not be fully generalizable. Future studies could apply random or stratified sampling to validate and extend these results.

Research Instruments

The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire which was developed from previous literature and theoretical constructs related to user-generated content, credibility and tourism behavior. The questionnaire was assessed for content validity through Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) and all items were reviewed and approved by subject matter experts. The study received ethical approval from the appropriate institutional review board before data collection.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection method used an online survey. A pre-screening process was integrated at the start of the questionnaire to guarantee both relevance and data quality. The survey asked two screening questions to participants (1) "Are you between the ages of 20 and 59?" and (2)"Have you ever made a travel decision based on a Facebook post shared by a friend?" The survey allowed participants to advance to the full questionnaire only after they answered "Yes" to both screening questions.

Data Analysis

The research data underwent multiple regression analysis to evaluate how trust in user-generated content and influencer attributes affected the dependent variable which measured the intention to adopt similar tourism experiences. The analysis included descriptive statistics to present demographic and behavioral information. All analyses were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

Research Results

1. Respondents

Demographics are in the table below. Of the 289 respondends, 23.5% are male, 66.1% are female, and 10.4% identify as LGBTQ. This gender distribution reflects the growing participation of female and LGBTQ travelers in online tourism communities, where social media plays a major role in shaping travel choices. Approximately 40.5% of respondents belong to Generation Z, while only 4.8% are from the Boomer II generation. Generation Z represents the group. most familiar with social media platforms, making them more likely to rely on user-generated content (UGC) from friends when planning trips. Moreover, over 37% of respondents have a monthly income below 15,000 baht. This relatively low-income level suggests that many participants may depend on peer-shared content to find affordable travel options and trustworthy recommendations, highlighting the practical role of UGC in influencing budget-conscious travel decisions.

Table 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total Sample (n)
Gender			
Male	68	23.5	289
Female	191	66.1	289
LGBTQ	30	10.4	289
Age Categories			
Generation Z (20-26)	117	40.5	289
Generation Y (27-42)	112	38.8	289
Generation X (43-58)	46	15.9	289
Boomer II (59)	14	4.8	289
Education			
Below Secondary School	2	0.7	289

	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total Sample (n)
Secondary School	9	3.1	289
Diploma	24	8.3	289
Bachelor's degree	189	65.4	289
Master's degree	47	16.3	289
Doctoral Degree	18	6.2	289
Income			
Below 15,000 baht	107	37	289
15,001 – 20,000 baht	39	13.5	289
20,001 – 25,000 baht	28	9.7	289
25,001 – 30,000 baht	30	10.4	289
30,001 – 35,000 baht	16	5.5	289
35,001 – 40,000 baht	11	3.8	289
40,001 – 45,000 baht	12	4.2	289
Above 45,001	46	15.9	289
Job			
Officialdom	48	16.6	289
Business Owner	26	9	289
Employee	77	26.6	289
Freelance	39	13.5	289
Students	63	21.8	289
Unemployed	36	12.5	289

2. Descriptive and Correlational Analysis

The Pearson correlation analysis (Table 2) was used to examine the relationships between visibility, credibility, attractiveness, power and intention to book the same destination. All variables were significantly positively correlated at the $p < .01$ level. Visibility was strongly positively correlated with attractiveness ($r = .700$), power ($r = .721$) and intention to book the same destination ($r = .694$). Credibility was also positively correlated with the other variables, including attractiveness ($r = .744$), power ($r = .751$) and intention to book ($r = .604$).

The strongest correlation was found between attractiveness and power ($r = .805$), indicating that participants' perceptions of these influencer attributes are highly related. This high correlation suggests that these constructs may share overlapping dimensions in participants' evaluations of social media content, which could indicate potential multicollinearity in subsequent regression analysis. Importantly, intention to book the same destination was positively and significantly associated with all independent variables: visibility ($r = .694$), credibility ($r = .604$), attractiveness ($r = .714$), and power ($r = .708$), indicating that these factors may influence travel intentions. Although these relationships are strong, further regression analysis is necessary to determine which variables exert the most direct influence when all predictors are analyzed together.

Table 2 Correlations

		VISIBILITY	CREDIBILITY	ATTRAC-TIVENESS	POWER	INTENTION TO BOOK
VISIBILITY	Pearson Correlation	1				
	N	289				
CREDIBILITY	Pearson Correlation	.687**	1			
	N	289	289			
ATTRACTIVE NESS	Pearson Correlation	.700**	.744**	1		
	N	289	289	289		
POWER	Pearson Correlation	.721**	.751**	.805**	1	
	N	289	289	289	289	
INTENTION TO BOOK SAME DESTINATION	Pearson Correlation	.694**	.604**	.714**	.708**	1
	N	289	289	289	289	289

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

3. Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was used to study how influencer characteristics affect tourists' decisions to book the same destination. The variables used as predictors were visibility, attractiveness, and power, and the variable used as the outcome was intention to book the same destination. The credibility variable was initially included in the analysis but was excluded from the final model due to multicollinearity issues identified through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) diagnostics, where the VIF value for credibility exceeded the acceptable threshold of 5. This indicates that credibility was highly correlated with other independent variables, particularly attractiveness and power, and therefore reduced the model's statistical reliability.

The overall regression model was statistically significant, R^2 =.602, p <.001, indicating that approximately 60.2% of the variance in the intention to book the same destination can

be explained by the combined effects of visibility, attractiveness, and power. The result confirms that these three VisCAP dimensions play the most influential role in predicting booking intention among Thai tourists, while credibility does not independently contribute once other factors are controlled for.

Table 3 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
3	.776	.602	.598	.53833

Predictors: (Constant), ATTRACTIVENESS, VISIBILITY, POWER

Table 4 ANOVA

	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
3	Regression	124.918	3	41.639	143.684	.000
	Residual	82.592	285	.290		
	Total	207.510	288			

Predictors: (Constant), ATTRACTIVENESS, VISIBILITY, POWER

The three predictor variables demonstrated positive effects on booking intention separately. The standardized beta coefficient of β =.307 (p <.001) shows that higher influencer visibility leads to increased intentions to book the same destination. The analysis revealed that Attractiveness strongly influences booking intentions through its β =.304 (p <.001) effect. The perceived authority of the influencer (Power) proved to be a significant predictor with a smaller effect size of β =.242 (p <.001) that positively affects booking intention. The credibility variable was excluded from the final regression model after diagnostic testing showed that its Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) exceeded acceptable limits, confirming multicollinearity with attractiveness and power. Although credibility displayed a moderate positive correlation with booking intention, its effect was not statistically significant when controlling for other predictors. This finding aligns with cultural explanations discussed in the literature review, where Thai tourists rely more on visually engaging and socially influential content rather than source credibility when making travel decisions. The study demonstrates that visibility, attractiveness, and power serve as essential drivers influencing behavioral intentions in tourism marketing situations involving social media content. These results provide strong empirical support for the adapted VisCAP model and highlight the need for future research to examine credibility within culturally specific contexts.

Table 5 Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
3	(Constant)	.390	.180		2.161	.032
	ATTRACTIVENESS	.308	.067	.304	4.618	.000
	VISIBILITY	.342	.063	.307	5.441	.000
	POWER	.224	.063	.242	3.570	.000

Dependent Variable: Intention to Book Same Destination
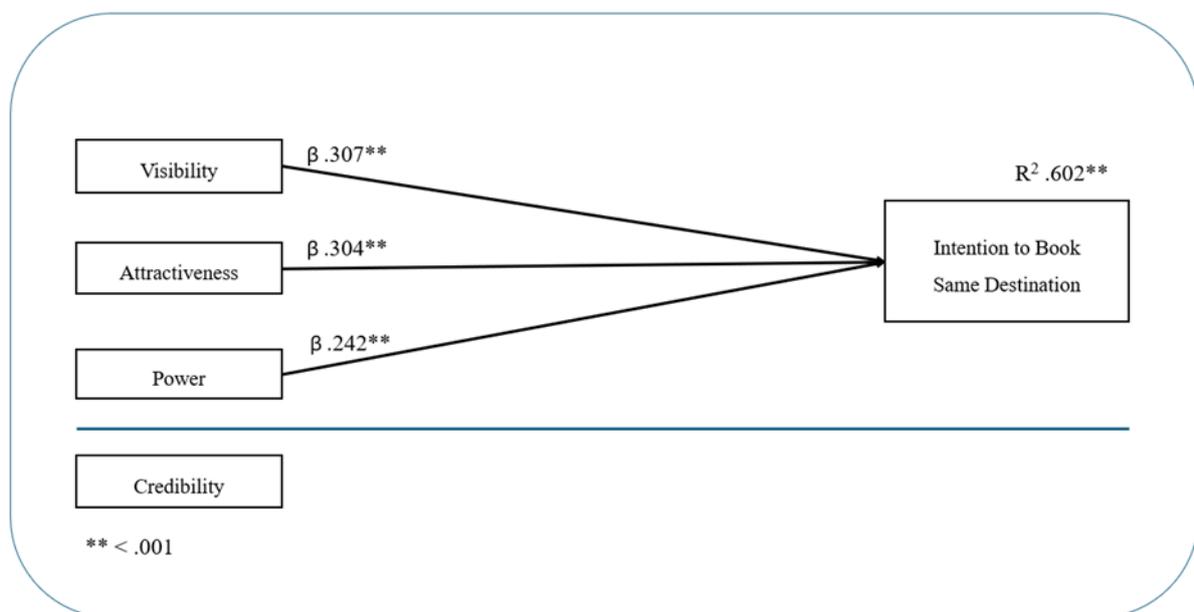
Figure 2 Results

Discussion

The research aimed to understand how visibility, attractiveness , power and credibility impact Thai tourists' decisions to select destinations shown in user-generated content (UGC) shared by friends through social media. The research findings showed that visibility (β =.307, p <.001) along with attractiveness (β =.304, p <.001) and power (β =.242, p <.001) produced statistically significant positive effects on destination booking intentions. The model showed credibility failed to serve as a significant predictor in this research despite previous research demonstrating its importance in other cultural settings. This contrast suggests that cultural communication patterns may play a central role in influencing how Thai tourists interpret social media content. According to Hall's (1976) theory of high-context cultures, individuals in such societies rely more on shared experiences and implicit understanding within trusted relationships than on overt cues of expertise or authority. Therefore, when UGC is shared by

friends or family, credibility is assumed through the relationship itself, reducing the need for explicit evaluation of trustworthiness in a post.

This research discovery expands the existing body of studies about social media impact on consumers' travel decisions specifically within the Thai cultural environment. Research conducted in Western and Middle Eastern and neighboring Southeast Asian countries including Malaysia and Indonesia demonstrated that trustworthiness and source expertise (credibility) strongly impact tourist attitudes and intentions (Ayeh et al., 2013; Ghaly, 2023; Song et al., 2021). For example, Ayeh et al. (2013) examined traveler reviews on TripAdvisor, while Ghaly (2023) analyzed influencer-generated travel posts on Instagram and YouTube, both contexts where audiences evaluate content from unfamiliar sources. In these studies, credibility served as a primary cue for trust because the users lacked personal connections with the content creators. The present study found no direct effect of credibility on Thai traveler attitudes and intentions, indicating that when social media posts originate from personal friends on Facebook, trust is derived from existing social relationships rather than explicit credibility cues. This highlights a culturally specific pattern where relational familiarity substitutes for formal indicators of trustworthiness

The study provides multiple possible reasons for this contradiction which stem from cultural and behavioral perspectives. The high-context nature of Thai culture along with its collectivist characteristics enables people to detect implicit messages which exist beneath the surface. As proposed by Hall (1976), high-context communication depends on shared understanding, background, and social ties rather than on explicit verbal cues. This means Thai users interpret meaning from the relationship and context surrounding a post rather than from direct statements or claims of expertise. Users in such settings develop distinct recognition abilities for authentic versus promotional content. When a post appears overly persuasive or commercial, even if it comes from a credible source, Thai users may question its authenticity. On the other hand, they tend to accept information from friends as trustworthy because the relationship itself implies credibility. As a result, the perceived credibility effect is weakened, and travelers rely more on emotional or visual cues when forming their travel intentions.

Thai tourists base their decisions through personal experiences and emotional responses rather than depending solely on source credibility during their decision-making process. Thai tourists tend to choose between content based on visual appeal of destinations and perceived value rather than solely trusting the person who posted the content. According to Gursoy and McCleary's (2004) model of travel decision-making, the early "dreaming" stage is often influenced by emotional stimulation and imagery rather than analytical evaluation. This helps explain why visibility and attractiveness performed better as predictors than credibility, as these dimensions appeal directly to imagination and desire. The results demonstrated that visibility and attractiveness performed better as predictors than credibility did because they relate to inspiration and emotional impact. Visually engaging content shared by friends can therefore serve as a source of inspiration that shapes the intention to visit specific destinations.

Methodological elements could explain why credibility failed to demonstrate significance in the results. The impact of credibility on decision-making might occur indirectly through factors including content attitude and parasocial interaction and destination image. These variables often serve as mediators that transmit the effect of credibility to behavioral intentions, as supported by prior tourism communication studies. The absence of mediating variables from the regression model prevents researchers from detecting credibility's isolated effect. In the current study, credibility may have contributed indirectly by shaping participants' perceptions of authenticity or destination image, but these effects were not captured because the model only tested direct paths. Ayeh et al. (2013) and Cheunkamon et al. (2020) reached similar findings by demonstrating that trust in travel content affects intention through the influence of mediating variables. Further studies could incorporate these intermediary constructs to better capture the complex pathways through which credibility shapes tourist behavior.

The findings of this research demonstrate that Thai consumers base their booking choices primarily on visibility and emotional appeal and persuasive influence rather than trust in a single factor. In this context, power among friends and family might be defined as referent power, the influence that stems from admiration, respect, or a shared desire to engage in comparable activities. When a trustworthy friend tweets about a trip, their experience has more persuasive power since it represents social belonging rather than authority. The findings have significant implications for both theoretical research and practical implementations. In theory, the findings broaden the VisCAP model by demonstrating how its constructs function in peer-based networks rather than influencer-follower connections. Tourism marketers in Thailand can use these data to drive real peer sharing and visually appealing content that is consistent with collective social objectives.

New Knowledge

Thai tourists represent a special case because their booking intentions do not depend on source credibility in the same way international research shows. According to Cheunkamon et al. (2020) Thai domestic tourists base their decisions on past experiences and perceived information usefulness and social media attitudes and social expectations instead of trust or credibility. The influence of credibility on intentions occurs through positive attitudes so skipping attitudinal stages reduces the impact of credibility.

The cultural characteristics of Thailand as a collectivist and high-context society explain why this difference exists. Thai consumers base their trust on personal relationships because they differentiate between authentic family recommendations and influencer marketing promotions. The social harmony concerns of Thai travelers lead them to dismiss promotional content which prevents influencers from establishing the necessary trust level that would influence their intentions.

Thai tourists base their decisions on hands-on experiences and functional aspects instead of abstract credibility assessments. The decision-making process for Thai tourists

depends mainly on their personal experiences together with family agreement and budget limitations instead of social media inspiration. The booking decisions of Thai tourists depend on various inputs which reduces the direct impact of source credibility on their final choices.

Conclusion

The research demonstrates that Thai travelers base their social media travel choices on emotional and visual elements instead of conventional credibility evaluations. The study differs from previous international research because it shows that Thai tourists do not let credibility influence their booking intentions. The research shows that booking behaviors among Thai tourists depend most heavily on influencer visibility and attractiveness and perceived power. The research findings demonstrate how cultural context, specifically Thailand's collectivist and high-context nature influences how people make travel choices. The research extends existing academic knowledge by showing how influencer credibility shapes Thai decisions through emotional responses instead of direct trust which provides valuable insights for culturally tailored marketing approaches.

Recommendations

According to the research findings, the researcher offers the following suggestions:

1. Suggestions for Recommendations for Practical Application

Future research should investigate beyond Facebook and TripAdvisor to include Instagram, TikTok, and regional apps like Xiaohongshu (Red). Each platform has a different impact on travel behavior, and their formats shape user perceptions in various ways. The visual element of Instagram and TikTok short films inspires through emotion and aesthetics, whereas text-based platforms rely more on debate and information sharing. Comparative research across multiple formats may indicate how visual engagement influences spontaneous travel decisions, particularly among younger users. Yang et al. (2025) underline the importance of studying cross-platform behaviors across Weibo, WeChat, Instagram, and Facebook to gain a better understanding of how visual versus textual content influences tourist decision-making in various cultural situations.

Future research should directly address the study's result that credibility was not a major predictor of booking intention among Thai tourists. This contrast with earlier research implies that trustworthiness may work indirectly via mediating variables such as attitude toward content, destination image, or emotional attachment. Identifying these indirect paths would increase theoretical clarity and explain why trustworthiness is still crucial in specific settings but not in collectivist societies. Researchers could create models that incorporate these mediators into the VisCAP framework to determine if credibility affects behavior via emotional or cognitive channels. Such research might help us better understand the psychological mechanisms that drive internet travel decisions.

Furthermore, future research should examine if the VisCAP model is fully applicable to high-context and collectivist countries such as Thailand. While visibility, attractiveness, and

power were significant predictors in this study, credibility may function differently in civilizations where trust is built on relationships rather than explicit expertise. Scholars could consider altering the VisCAP model to include relational or cultural variables that represent peer influence and group belonging. Comparative study in other Asian contexts, such as Japan, Korea, and Malaysia, could help confirm if these cultural elements consistently influence the model's predictive value. Longitudinal and experimental studies should look at actual travel behaviors rather than just intentions, determining if peer-generated material leads to genuine bookings over time.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

Future research explores social media platforms other than Facebook and TripAdvisor, including Instagram, TikTok, and emerging regional applications like Xiaohongshu (Red). Each platform has a unique influence on travel behavior due to its communication format and user engagement style. Visual-based platforms like Instagram and TikTok prioritize visuals, storytelling, and short videos to foster emotional relationships and aspirational travel objectives, whereas text-based conversation platforms focus on cognitive evaluation and information exchange. Comparative research across these platforms could reveal how content design influences the decision-making process of passengers from various cultural backgrounds. Yang et al. (2025) suggest testing findings from Chinese social media (Weibo and WeChat) on Western and worldwide platforms to see how cultural communication methods and platform formats influence tourism behavior.

Future studies could expand this research by focusing on actual booking habits and long-term consequences, rather than only self-reported intentions. Longitudinal research on users who store or share travel content could reveal if social media inspiration translates into real-world journeys or fades with time. Experiments comparing postings from friends to influencers or brand accounts would also shed light on how source familiarity affects legitimacy and behavioral intention. These approaches would improve causal understanding of how user-generated content influences travel behavior and provide more insight into content effectiveness. Researchers could also investigate future trends such as AI-curated material, deepfake graphics, and algorithmic recommendation systems to determine how these technologies affect user trust and destination preferences.

Furthermore, future research could build directly on the findings of this study by investigating why believability was not a significant predictor among Thai tourists. Previous research suggests that credibility may exert an indirect influence through mediating variables such as content attitude, destination image, or emotional resonance. Researchers could create extended models that include these mediating channels to investigate whether credibility affects behavior indirectly rather than directly. Additional research could determine whether the VisCAP model requires adaptation for high-context and collectivist societies. Visibility, attractiveness, and power were significant predictors in our study, although credibility may function differently in societies where relationship trust is already expected. Creating a culturally sensitive framework would help to develop the VisCAP model while also

contributing to broader theories of social influence and online consumer behavior in Asian tourist research.

Acknowledgement

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