Recent Digital and Social Media Trends in The Indian Hospitality Industry

An Internship Report for

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of Master's Degree

MBA in MARKETING

by

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GOA UNIVERSITY

Date: May 2024

Examined by:

Seal of the School

DECLARATION BY STUDENT

I hereby declare that the data presented in this Internship report entitled, "Recent Digital and Social Media Trends in The Indian Hospitality Industry" is based on the results of investigations carried out by me in the Discipline of Management Studies at the Goa Business School, Goa University, under the mentorship of Dr. Pournima Dhume and the same has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of a degree or diploma by me. Further, I understand that Goa University or its authorities will not be responsible for the correctness of observations / experimental or other findings given the internship report/work.

I hereby authorize the University authorities to upload this dissertation on the dissertation repository or anywhere else as the UGC regulations demand and make it available to any one as needed.

Ashwini Ashok Pednekar

Seat no: 22PO280047

Discipline of Management Studies

Goa Business School

Date: 6th May 2024

Place: Goa University

COMPLETION CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the internship report **"Recent Digital and Social Media Trends in The Indian Hospitality Industry"** is a bonifide work carried out by **Ms. Ashwini Ashok Pednekar** under my mentorship in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **Masters of Business Administration** in the Discipline of Management studies at the Goa Business School, Goa University.

Date: 6th May 2024

Dr. Pournima Dhume

Prof. Jyoti Pawar
Dean,
Goa Business School

School Stamp

Date: 6th May 2024
Place: Goa University

Hilton
GOA RESORT

Date: May 04, 2024

To Whom It May Concern

This is to certify that **Ms. Ashwini Ashok Pednekar** had been a part of **Hilton Goa Resort** as **Trainee** in **Marketing** Department, from **16th January, 2024** to **04th May, 2024**. During this tenure she has shown commendable learning abilities & completed her assigned duties.

Her work performance was found to be good. We wish her all the best for her future endeavours towards professional goals.

Regards,

For and on behalf of Soham Leisure Ventures Pvt. Ltd.
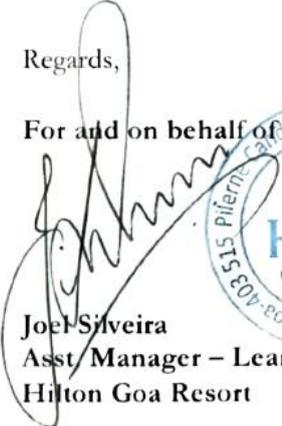
Joel Silveira
Asst. Manager – Learning & Development
Hilton Goa Resort

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my gratitude to each and every one from Hilton Goa Resort who helped and supported me throughout this endeavor. I am sincerely thankful to all of them for their valuable guidance. Yet it has been an enriching and rewarding experience for me, both professionally as well as personally.

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to Mr. Joel Silveira (Asst. L&D Manager) for accepting my request to carry out my internship in the hotel and also thankful for his valuable guidance throughout my internship. Also, my hearty thanks to Mr. Abishek Chandran (Cluster Director of Marketing and Communications) for always helping me to carry out my work and provide me with the exposure and understanding of marketing. I would also like to thank all the employees who helped me in my study with their valuable responses.

I am overwhelmed with the knowledge and guidance I received from Hilton Goa Resort and the commercials team. Thank you to my mentor Dr. Pournima Dhume for guiding me in my internship report.

Yours sincerely,
ASHWINI ASHOK PEDNEKAR
MBA Part II,
Goa Business School - Goa University

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study is based on the Internship training programme which was based in Hilton Goa Resort, Candolim - Goa, during the period of 16th January 2024 to 04th May 2024. The internship played a very important role in my MBA final year.

This report presents an evaluation of the recent digital and social media trends in the Indian hospitality industry. The main motive behind this study was to help Hilton Goa Resort to develop a roadmap for the understanding of the various ongoing ad upcoming digital and social media trends that will help to enhance the resort's guest experiences. The digital landscape in India's hospitality sector is rapidly evolving, determined by changing consumer behavior and technological advancements. Social media platforms play a vital role in shaping consumer preferences and influencing travel decisions of the travelers. The report identifies emerging trends such as influencer marketing, personalized customer experiences, the user-generated content and the growing importance of sustainability.

Through this study it was found that the technological advancements and social media trends are reshaping the way hospitality businesses operate in 2024. By embracing these trends and strategies, Indian hospitality businesses can strengthen their brand presence, engage with their target audience effectively, and initiate business growth in this digital era.

This report provides an analysis comprehensive analysis presented in the report, offering a concise overview of the digital and social media landscape within India's hospitality industry and outlining strategies for future success of the business.

PROFILE OF THE COMPANY

Hilton Goa Resort is a part of the **Hilton Hotels & Resorts** brand, which is Hilton's flagship brand.

The resort is a tranquil retreat settled on the terraced slopes of Saipem Hills in Candolim. It offers stunning panoramic views of the Nerul River, especially at the time of sunset. It is conveniently located just four kilometers away from the Candolim beach.

The resort's design draws inspiration from Goa's majestic forts namely Aguad, Corjeum, Cabo de Rama and Rachol, with a total of 104 spacious rooms and suites, each with private balconies, this resort is known to have the most spacious rooms in North Goa.

The property has four outdoor pools, a fitness center, and a kids' club called the Fun & Frolic. The resort also offers three dining outlets:

❖ @Saipe - This restaurant is an all-day dining restaurant that serves multi-cuisine specialties in a relaxed ambience with breathtaking landscape views.

❖ Doce - Doce is a charming café serving a variety of artisanal teas and single estate coffees with food to-go, light bites and sweet treats.

❖ Coco - Coco, their glamorous, high-octane lounge bar offers an extensive beverage menu served alongside a Mediterranean menu.

The resort has received a significant number of positive reviews for its location, cleanliness, service, and value. The restaurant @Saipe won the Best Brunch in Goa – Casual Dining at the Times Food & Nightlife Awards 2024 in February this year.

VISION

"At Hilton, we are inspired by our founding vision to fill the earth with the light and warmth of hospitality."

MISSION

"To be the most hospitable company in the world by creating heartfelt experiences for guests, meaningful opportunities for Team Members, high value for Owners and a positive impact in our Communities."

MANAGEMENT AND DEPARTMENTS

- ❖ General Manager – Mr. Amandeep Singh Grover
- ❖ Commercials Department (Sales and Marketing)
- ❖ HR Department
- ❖ Finance Department
- ❖ IT Department
- ❖ Security Department
- ❖ Kitchen Department
- ❖ F&B Department
- ❖ Front Office Department

PHOTOS OF THE RESORT AND THEIR AMENITIES

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

The hospitality industry in India is undergoing rapid evolution, deeply tangled with the country's socio-economic progress. Recent years have witnessed a significant transformation within the sector, primarily influenced by digital and social media trends. Hotels across India are proactively adapting to cater to shifting consumer preferences and technological advancements. This adaptability is evident in the industry's embrace of new concepts like wellness and staycations, aligning with emerging business opportunities.

As the digital wave ushered in, it brought a new era of convenience and personalization in the hospitality industry. The integration of technology into various aspects of hotel operations, from the reservations and check-ins to the in-room services and feedback management, has enhanced the guest experience significantly. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and data analytics help the hotels to offer personalized services and to improve their resource management, thus improving efficiency and customer satisfaction. Also, the pandemic has enhanced the adoption of digital menus, online reservations, and contactless payments.

Furthermore, Social media's rapid growth emphasizes its key role in modern business strategies. In 2023, 4.9 billion individuals were active on social platforms. Among these users, the 18-29 age bracket stands out, with 84% engaging on at least one platform, making them the most vibrant demographic in this space. This trend is expected to continue in 2024, with nearly 68.8% of this group actively using social media. India was home to 462.0 million social media users in January 2024, which accounts for 32.2% of the total population.

Understanding the evolving landscape of social media is paramount for businesses, particularly in the hospitality sector. Leveraging these platforms intelligently can significantly boost engagement, enhance brand visibility, and drive customer acquisition. Social media serves as

a powerful tool to attract, engage, and retain customers, while also showcasing the distinctive features and experiences of various destinations.

Particularly, user-generated content, influencer marketing, and online reviews hold considerable influence over consumer choices. Businesses that harness these elements effectively can create compelling narratives, build trust, and foster strong connections with their target audience, ultimately driving growth and success in the competitive hospitality industry.

Recent digital and social media trends in the Indian hospitality industry include:

Personalized Guest Experiences: Hotels are leveraging technology to provide personalized services and tailored experiences to guests, enhancing customer satisfaction. Personalized guest experiences in the Indian hospitality industry are driven by a combination of data-driven insights, innovative technologies, and a customer-centric approach to create memorable and customized stays for guests.

i. Hotels are utilizing data analytics to understand guest preferences, behaviour, and demographics. By creating detailed guest profiles, hotels can anticipate needs and personalize services. For example, if a guest prefers a certain type of cuisine or has specific room preferences, the hotel can proactively offer personalized recommendations.

ii. Many hotels offer mobile apps that allow guests to customize their stay experience. Guests can use these apps to request services, make reservations, order room service, and explore local attractions. Digital concierge services powered by artificial intelligence (AI) or chatbots provide instant assistance and recommendations tailored to individual preferences.

iii. Hotels are incorporating smart room technology, including IoT devices and voice assistants, to enhance guest comfort and convenience. Guests can control room settings such as lighting, temperature, and entertainment systems through voice commands or mobile apps. Personalized welcome messages and customized room settings based on guest preferences create a memorable experience.

iv. Some hotels are using VR and AR technologies to provide immersive experiences to guests. For example, virtual tours of hotel facilities, AR-guided city exploration, or interactive experiences showcasing hotel amenities and services.

v. Hotels actively seek guest feedback through digital channels and use this data to improve service delivery. In cases where guests experience issues or dissatisfaction, hotels can offer personalized service recovery measures, such as complimentary amenities or discounts on future stays, based on individual feedback.

Contactless Solutions: The adoption of contactless technologies for services like reservations, check-ins, payments, and room controls has increased to ensure safety and convenience for guests. Contactless Solutions: With the emphasis on health and safety post-pandemic, hotels are adopting contactless solutions such as mobile check-in/check-out, digital key access, and contactless payments. These solutions not only enhance convenience but also contribute to a personalized and seamless guest experience.

Social Media Marketing: Hotels are utilizing social media platforms to engage with customers, showcase unique offerings, and drive brand awareness.

i. Encouraging guests to share their experiences on social media platforms using branded hashtags or location tags has become a popular strategy. Hotels are leveraging UGC to showcase real guest experiences, build trust, and attract potential customers through authentic storytelling.

ii. The popularity of video content continues to grow, with hotels creating engaging videos showcasing their properties, amenities, and local attractions. Live streaming events, virtual tours, and behind-the-scenes glimpses provide an interactive and immersive experience for audiences.

iii. Hotels/Resorts are investing in targeted social media advertising campaigns to reach specific demographics and promote offers, packages, and events. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn offer advanced targeting options to reach potential guests based on interests, demographics, and behaviours.

iv. Integrating chatbots and social messaging platforms like WhatsApp Business for customer inquiries, reservations, and support has become essential. Hotels use AI-powered chatbots to provide instant responses, personalized recommendations, and streamline communication with guests.

v. Some hotels are exploring social commerce by allowing direct bookings and transactions through social media platforms. Integrating booking widgets, special offers, and promotions on social media channels simplifies the booking process and drives conversions.

vi. Interactive content such as polls, quizzes, and interactive stories on platforms like Instagram and Facebook encourage audience engagement and feedback. Hotels use these features to gather insights, crowdsource ideas, and tailor offerings based on customer preferences.

Online Reputation Management: Managing online reviews and feedback on platforms like TripAdvisor and Google Reviews is crucial for maintaining a positive reputation and attracting new guests.

i. Hotels are actively monitoring online review platforms such as TripAdvisor, Google Reviews, and OTAs (Online Travel Agencies) to stay updated on guest feedback. Automated tools and alerts help hotels in promptly addressing both positive and negative reviews.

ii. Personalizing responses to guest reviews is a trend that emphasizes empathy, gratitude for positive feedback, and hands-on resolution for negative comments. Hotels acknowledge guest feedback publicly and offer solutions or apologies where necessary, representing a commitment to guest satisfaction.

iii. Visual content in reviews like photos and videos uploaded by guests, has gained importance. Hotels encourage guests to share visual experiences, which add authenticity and depth to online reviews and contribute to a better online reputation.

Influencer Collaborations: Partnering with influencers and content creators to promote hotels, resorts, and experiences is a growing trend to reach a wider audience and drive bookings.

i. Hotels and resorts purposefully partner with influencers whose audience aligns with their target demographic. This helps the hotel's content to reach the potential guests who are more likely to be interested in the offerings.

ii. Influencers create authentic and engaging content showcasing their experiences at the hotel/resort. This includes content like stunning visuals, personalized stories, and firsthand impressions, which resonate with their followers and help build interest in the property.

iii. Leveraging the influencer's existing audience allows hotels to tap into a wider reach and increase engagement. Influencers often have dedicated followers who trust their

recommendations, making them valuable advocates for promoting hospitality experiences.

Sustainability Practices: Communicating eco-friendly practices and sustainability efforts through digital channels is becoming more prominent, resonating with environmentally conscious travellers. Hotels highlight their eco-friendly initiatives such as energy conservation, waste reduction, water conservation, recycling programs, and use of renewable resources. Digital platforms are utilized to showcase specific initiatives, achievements, and progress in sustainability goals.

Travelers are adopting more sustainability conscious practices in their lifestyle and therefore the hotels are implementing sustainable practices to align with the values of their guests. some examples of this are the practices implemented by:

i. Fort Barwara - they have stopped the single use and virgin plastic from the bathroom amenities, room amenities and retail spaces and have adopted to the reusable glass bottles. They have also started cultivating local, fresh, and seasonal delights in their organic gardens or sourced from neighbouring farms.

ii. Raffles Udaipur - the hotel's food and beverage program incorporates responsible and sustainable practices, such as having a closed loop that generates as little waste as possible, using a large quantity of local and seasonal produce, and abstaining from offering buffets to avoid food wastage.

iii. Alila Diwa Goa - In order to reduce food waste, the property launched a Zero Food Waste program wherein all dry and wet food waste is collected and recycled to create fruit candy, poultry, and fish feed, or organic fertilizer that is used in the Sky Garden.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Indian hotel industry is playing a pivotal role in driving the growth of the services sector and, consequently, contributing significantly to the Indian economy. Currently, India holds the 7th position globally in terms of GDP, with a growth rate of 6.8% in the financial year 2019. As per the data from IBEF and Hotelivate, the hotel and tourism sector contributes about 10% to the country's GDP and supports employment for approximately 43 million individuals, both directly and indirectly. This accounts for up to 8.2% of the total employment in India. (Kumbhar, 2020)

The hospitality industry has become a pivotal force that boosts the growth of Indian economy in the service sector. This industry embraces the technology extensively to reduce costs, improve operational efficiency and notably elevate service quality and enhance the guest experiences. (SK., 2018)

Hospitality 5.0 represents a forward-looking approach where technology is seamlessly integrated into every aspect of the hospitality sector, from marketing services to managing human resources and optimizing hotel operations. This integration aims to create a seamless and valuable experience for visitors. Key technologies driving Hospitality 5.0 include artificial intelligence, the internet of things, blockchain, collaborative robots, chatbots, sensors, contactless automation, mobile tech, augmented reality, virtual reality, big data, cloud computing, 6G and beyond, and machine-to-machine communication. (Gangwar, 2023)

In today's interconnected world, customers are akin to global citizens, transcending borders and reaching out to businesses from any corner of the globe, thanks to technology. Within the travel sector, these global customers are adventurous souls seeking to explore and savor life to the fullest, making them a valuable market for the hospitality industry. To tap into this opportunity, businesses must adeptly cater to the diverse needs of these tech-savvy individuals

who value both quality and luxury. The hospitality industry is witnessing continuous growth, driven by these evolving customer demands and technological advancements. Staying relevant in this fast-changing landscape necessitates embracing the latest technologies to enhance the customer experience and meet their expectations for modern comforts and conveniences. Customers today are well-informed, seeking out the latest trends and accommodations at their fingertips, demanding a seamless blend of luxury and technology. By leveraging technological innovations, the industry not only elevates the guest experience but also addresses operational costs, driving profitability and sustainability in a fiercely competitive market. Adapting to the changing preferences of customers, who are constantly seeking out novel experiences and modern conveniences, is crucial for businesses to thrive and retain their market share in the dynamic realm of hospitality. (Santhosh, 2013)

The rapid advancements of digital technology have significantly impacted the hospitality industry offering guests a more convenient and seamless experience. As our reliance on digital solutions grows, so does our desire for a tech – driven lifestyle. This shift is particularly noticeable in hospitality where the processes like check in and in room amenities are evolving rapidly influencing guest behaviour. With automation and digitization on the rise and guests becoming more tech – savvy touchpoints within the hospitality sector are adapting by embracing new digital trends and smart technologies to enhance the overall customer journey. (Dimitrov, 2019)

The digital transformation in the hospitality industry and states that we find ourselves amidst the fourth industrial revolution, characterized by the emergence of cutting – edge technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), the internet of things and fifth generation wireless technology. These advancements have profoundly impacted the hospitality sector and are poised to further revolutionize it. The COVID – 19 pandemic has expedited this digital

shift, leading to an expanded focus on technology driven customer experiences. (Jingie Zhu, 2021)

In the contemporary digital era, social media serves as a powerful tool for businesses to connect with their customers effectively. The evolving media landscape has opened up new avenues for consumer engagement, fundamentally changing how individuals seek information and make decisions. The focus lies on highlighting the significance of social media platforms and guiding businesses on how to actively interact, engage, and participate in online conversations with users. It explores strategies to improve customer acquisition, foster customer development, and enhance retention rates. Moreover, the chapter emphasizes the value of utilizing customer feedback and evaluations to collaborate and co-create products and services, thereby enhancing overall customer satisfaction and loyalty. (Navdeep, 2017)

The social media marketing as a promotional tool. This industry has changed its operations after the digitalization. The increase in the number of internet users and the usage of internet has advanced this industry in changing its processes from the bookings to in house services to the feedback of the services to grievance and redressal. (Hiren N. Gandecha, 2020)

A study reveals that social media plays a significant role in affecting the way consumers search, decide and book hotels. It also suggests that social media helps consumers in collecting information about products and services, evaluating alternatives and making their choices. It confirms that while negative sides exist, the positive benefits offset the negative aspects of using social media when selecting a hotel. The impact of indirect influence related to social media on hotel selection, on the basis of content source and the level of trust and accuracy in the content. (Gupta, 2019)

Businesses are increasingly leveraging social media analytics (SMA) to gain valuable insights that can enhance their performance and productivity across various operational areas. The field of SMA is evolving rapidly, encompassing a diverse range of knowledge and approaches. There is a growing need to comprehensively understand these trends and methodologies to effectively harness the power of social media data for informed decision-making and strategic planning. (Rathore, 2017)

The intense competition in the hospitality sector is crucial for hoteliers to stay abreast of these shifts and emerging trends. One key strategy for ensuring industry success is anticipating the needs of new generations of guests and travelers. The future of the hospitality industry undeniably rests with millennials and Gen Z, as they are poised to become its primary customer base. Understanding their preferences, likes, and dislikes is essential, as these generations wield considerable influence and will shape the industry's trajectory. (A Ramgade, 2021)

The impact of social media technology on the F&B industry in Bangalore. Social media has undeniably prompted a revolution in modern communication and information sharing, surpassing the traditional boundaries and gaining incomparable acceptance across a wide range of sectors. From connecting individuals to influencing global events, the influence of social media is unquestionable. But it is in the F&B industry that the transformative potential and the related challenges of social media technology are mainly noticeable. (Supriya, 2023)

The numerous social media platforms serve as essential tools for the hospitality sector, enabling hotels and restaurants to highlight their offerings, strengthen their brand image, and expand their reach. Among these platforms, Facebook stands out as a primary channel utilized by the majority of hospitality properties to establish their presence and gain recognition in the market. The creative teams behind social media endeavours leverage a variety of content formats including images of interior and exterior décor, live videos, regular posts, vlogs, and more to

engage their target audience. They encourage guests to tag their location or the property in their own photos and videos, fostering increased interaction and engagement. Second one is Instagram, which stands as one of the most popular platforms. Through Instagram, the social media marketing teams of hotels cultivate guest loyalty and facilitate easy sharing of guest experiences and views about the property in a virtual manner, all without incurring additional expenses. (Dani, 2022)

RESEARCH GAPS

While India is making significant progress in adopting digital technologies, there should be more studies to understand changing consumer behavior patterns that are influenced by digital and social media trends, including preferences for personalized experiences, confidence in user-generated content, trust in online reviews. And, to explore the challenges and opportunities related to integrating emerging technologies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How are the technological advancements reshaping the way hospitality businesses operate in 2024?
2. How do the consumer's behavior and preferences influence the selection and utilization of digital tools and social media platforms by Indian hospitality and F&B industry?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1. To identify the emerging trends that are likely to shape the future of the Indian hospitality.
2. To identify the key social media platforms that are most effective for Indian hospitality businesses.
3. To explore the challenges faced by the Indian hospitality businesses in adopting digital and social media trends.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The focus of this research is to explore the emerging trends in the Indian hospitality industry in order to help Hilton Goa Resort to develop a roadmap for the understanding of the various digital and social media trends that will help to enhance the hotel's guest experiences.

To collect the primary data: A questionnaire survey was conducted, which consisted 18 questions, including the demographic questions inquiring the participants' gender, age group and location. The questionnaire was circulated to the staff members from the various departments at Hilton Goa Resort. The Five-point Likert scale was used to design the questionnaire. A group of 54 individuals participated to fill out the questionnaire, sharing their thoughts and experiences.

To collect the secondary data: Interacting with the Head of Departments of Hilton Goa Resort, reviewing academic and industry research papers related to hospitality management, customer service and employee engagement, analyzing the official website of Hilton Goa Resort and conducting on-site observations and informal interactions with team members, and other staff members.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	24	44.4	44.4	44.4
	Female	30	55.6	55.6	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	
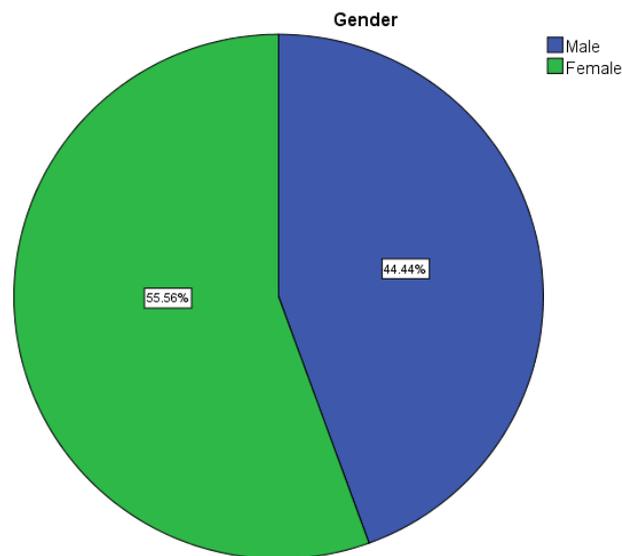
The above table shows the gender of respondents, where 44.4% of respondents are male,

55.6% are female respondents and other are 0% out of 54 respondents.

Age Group

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15 - 24	22	40.7	40.7	40.7
	25 - 34	15	27.8	27.8	68.5
	35 - 44	17	31.5	31.5	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	
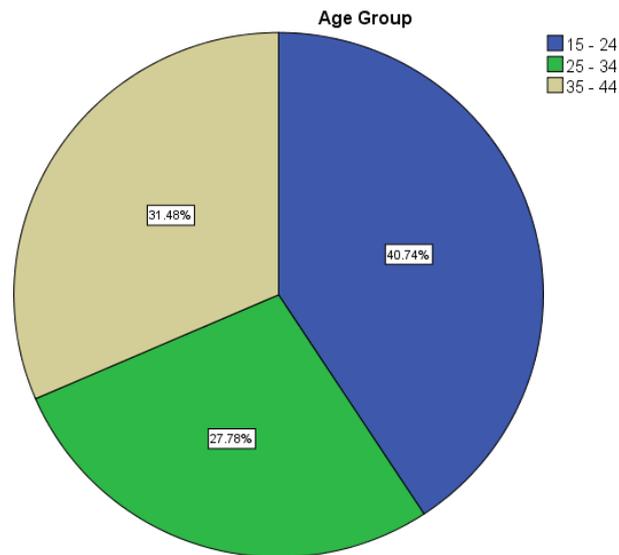
Age Group

The above table depicts the distribution of age groups. Out of the 54 respondents, 40% of the respondents belong to 15 - 24 years age Group, 27.8% of the respondents belong to the age group of 25 -34 years old and 31.5% of the respondents belong to the age group of 35-44 years old. Thus, the majority of respondents are aged 15 - 24 Years old.

Location

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	North Goa	46	85.2	85.2	85.2
Valid	South Goa	8	14.8	14.8	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	
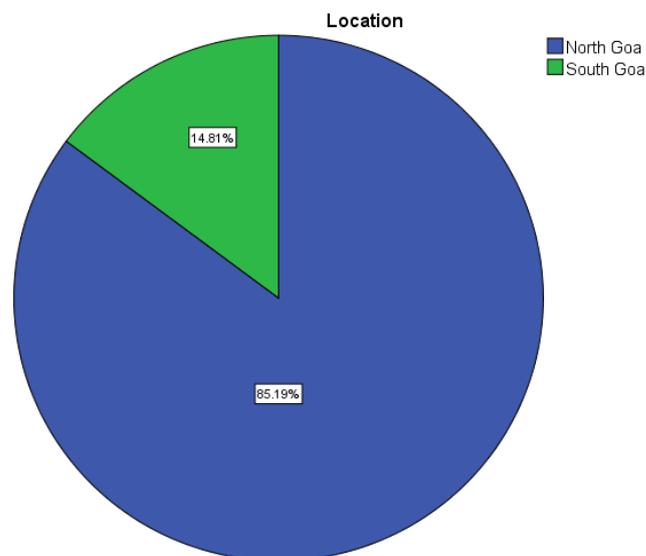
The above table displays Data collection pattern took place based on location. majority of data was collected from North Goa.

**Which social media platform do you use the most?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Facebook	10	18.5	18.5	18.5
	Instagram	44	81.5	81.5	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

Which social media platform do you use the most?
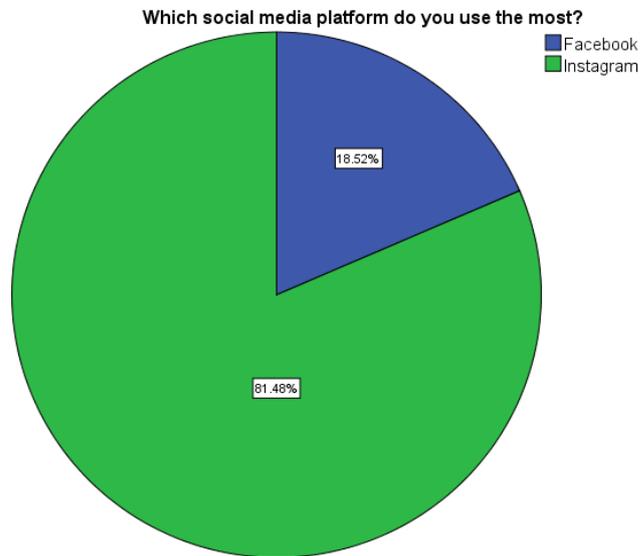
The table shows the frequency and percentage of respondents who indicated their most used social media platform. A 18.5% of respondents use Facebook the most and 81.5% of respondents use Instagram the most. It is clearly seen that Instagram is the dominant social media platform among the respondents, with a significantly high percentage of users compared to Facebook. This depicts the popularity of Instagram, especially among younger demographics and those interested in visual content sharing.

I am most likely to choose a hospitality service based on its social media presence.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	20.4	20.4	20.4
	Disagree	13	24.1	24.1	44.4
	Neutral	9	16.7	16.7	61.1
	Agree	13	24.1	24.1	85.2
	Strongly Agree	8	14.8	14.8	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I am most likely to choose a hospitality service based on its social media presence.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

14.81% 20.37% 24.07% 24.07% 16.67%
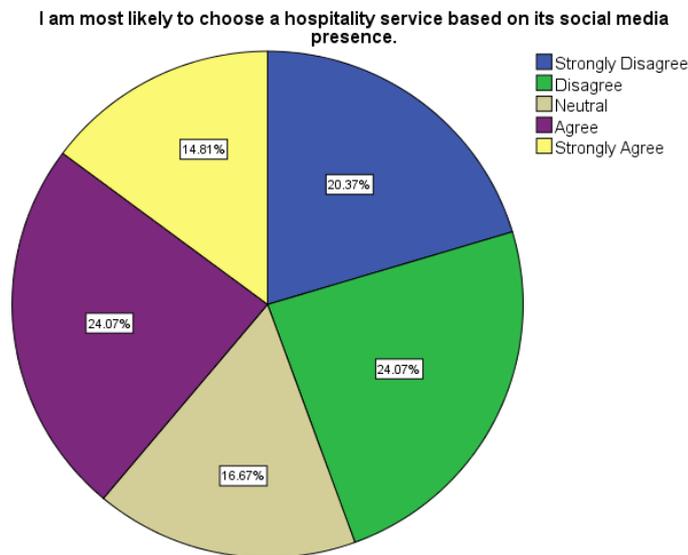
The above table shows responses to the statement about choosing a hospitality service based on its social media presence. 20.4% of respondents strongly disagree to the statement, 24.1% of respondents disagree, 16.7% of respondents are neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, 24.1% of respondents agree that they are likely to choose a hospitality service based on its social media presence and 14.8% of respondents strongly agree with the statement. This suggests that while some people consider social media presence when choosing a hospitality service, others may not prioritize it much.

I use social media platforms to share my dining experiences or food photos with my network.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Disagree	12	22.2	22.2	38.9
	Neutral	11	20.4	20.4	59.3
	Agree	10	18.5	18.5	77.8
	Strongly Agree	12	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I use social media platforms to share my dining experiences or food photos with my network.
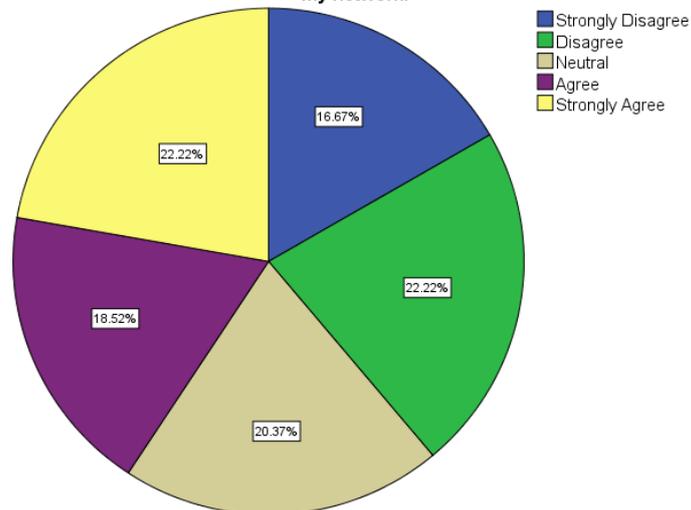
The table shows that 16.7% of respondents strongly disagree that they use social media platforms for sharing dining experiences or food photos, 22.2% of respondents disagree with the statement, 20.4% of respondents are neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, 18.5% of respondents agree that they use social media platforms for sharing dining experiences or food photos and 22.2% of respondents strongly agree with the statement. This clearly shows that the opinions are somewhat evenly distributed across the categories. However, the significant positive responses are either agree or strongly agree the statement, indicating that sharing food-related content is a common practice among the group.

I follow some food influencers or bloggers on social media for restaurant recommendations.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	8	14.8	14.8	14.8
	Disagree	10	18.5	18.5	33.3
	Neutral	13	24.1	24.1	57.4
Valid	Agree	6	11.1	11.1	68.5
	Strongly Agree	17	31.5	31.5	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I follow some food influencers or bloggers on social media for restaurant recommendations.
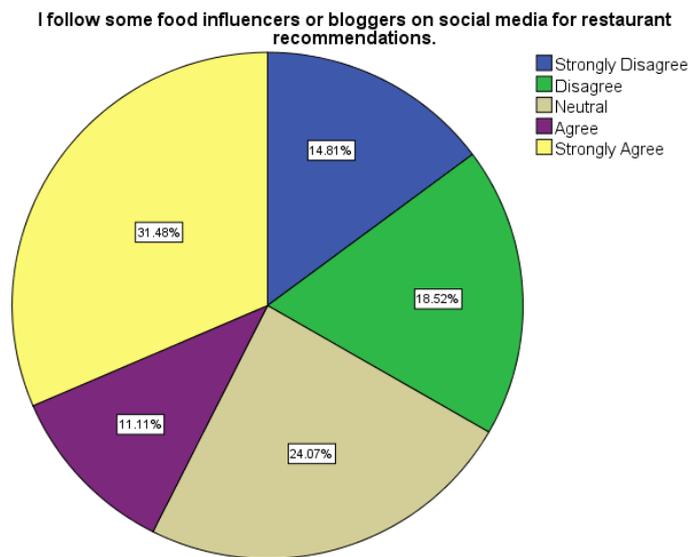
The above table shows that 14.8% of respondents strongly disagree that they follow food influencers or bloggers for restaurant recommendations, 18.5% of respondents disagree with the statement, 24.1% of respondents are neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, 11.1% of respondents agree and 31.5% of respondents strongly agree with the statement. From this data, it is understood that a significant percentage of respondents strongly agree that they follow food influencers or bloggers on social media for restaurant recommendations. This highlights the influence of food influencers and bloggers in determining dining choices and preferences among social media users.

<u>I think social media influencers play an important role in shaping food trends and restaurant choices.</u>

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	2	3.7	3.7	3.7
	Disagree	7	13.0	13.0	16.7
Valid	Neutral	6	11.1	11.1	27.8
	Agree	21	38.9	38.9	66.7
	Strongly Agree	18	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I think social media influencers play an important role in shaping food trends and restaurant choices.
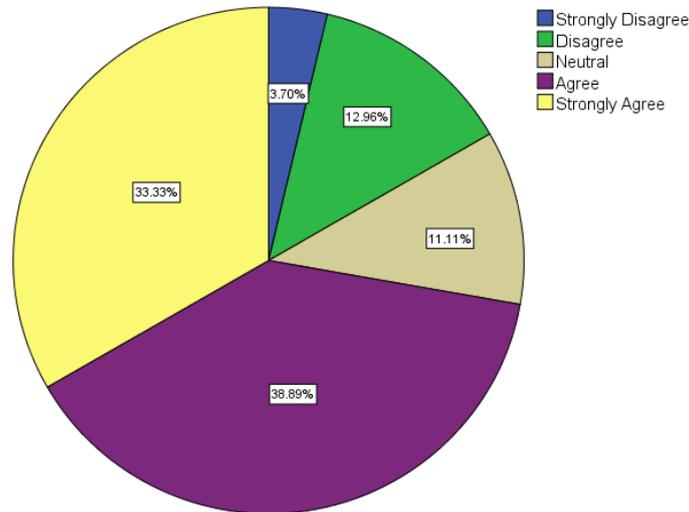
This table shows that 3.7% of respondents strongly disagree that social media influencers play an important role in shaping food trends and restaurant choices, 13.0% of respondents disagree with the statement, 11.1% of respondents are neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, 38.9% of respondents agree and 33.3% of respondents strongly agree with the statement.

This clearly shows that a majority of respondents either agree or strongly agree that social media influencers play a significant role in shaping food trends and influencing restaurant choices.

I think social media plays an important role in shaping customer perceptions of hospitality brands.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Disagree	7	13.0	13.0	24.1
	Neutral	6	11.1	11.1	35.2
	Agree	11	20.4	20.4	55.6
	Strongly Agree	24	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I think social media plays an important role in shaping customer perceptions of hospitality brands.
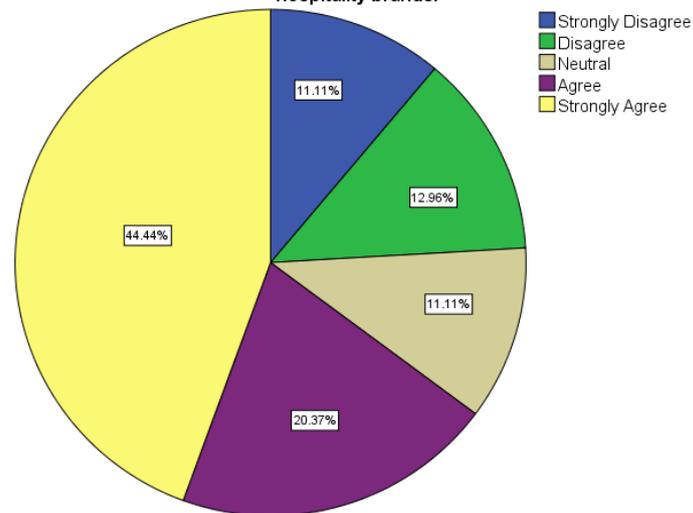
The data in this table represents that 11.1% of respondents strongly disagree that social media plays an important role in shaping customer perceptions of hospitality brands, 13.0% of respondents disagree with the statement, 11.1% of respondents are neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing, 20.4% of respondents agree and 44.4% of respondents strongly agree with the statement.

It is evident that a majority of respondents strongly agree that social media plays an important role in shaping customer perceptions of hospitality brands.

I find interactive content (e.g., polls, quizzes, AR filters) on social media from hotels/restaurants engaging.

|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	13.0	13.0	13.0
	Disagree	5	9.3	9.3	22.2
	Neutral	4	7.4	7.4	29.6
	Agree	25	46.3	46.3	75.9
	Strongly Agree	13	24.1	24.1	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I find interactive content (e.g., polls, quizzes, AR filters) on social media from hotels/restaurants engaging.
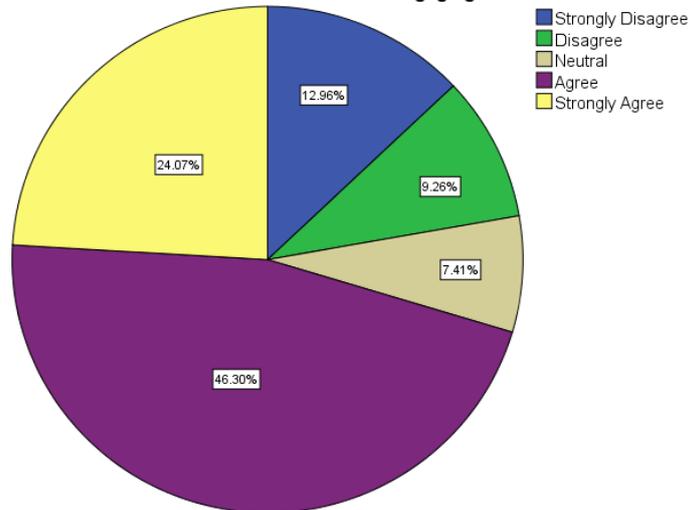
This data represents that a 13.0% of respondents strongly disagree that interactive content on social media from hotels/restaurants is engaging, 9.3% of respondents disagree with the statement, 7.4% of respondents are neutral, indicating a lack of strong opinion regarding the engagement level of interactive content, the majority of respondents (46.3%) agree with the statement, and 24.1% of respondents strongly agree that interactive content is engaging.

The data suggests that majority of respondents find interactive content on social media from hotels/restaurants to be engaging. This indicates the effectiveness of interactive content strategies in capturing audience attention and fostering engagement on social media platforms.

I use the hotel/restaurant's website to make reservations or order food online.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	13	24.1	24.1	24.1
	Disagree	11	20.4	20.4	44.4
	Neutral	7	13.0	13.0	57.4
	Agree	14	25.9	25.9	83.3
	Strongly Agree	9	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I use the hotel/restaurant's website to make reservations or order food online.
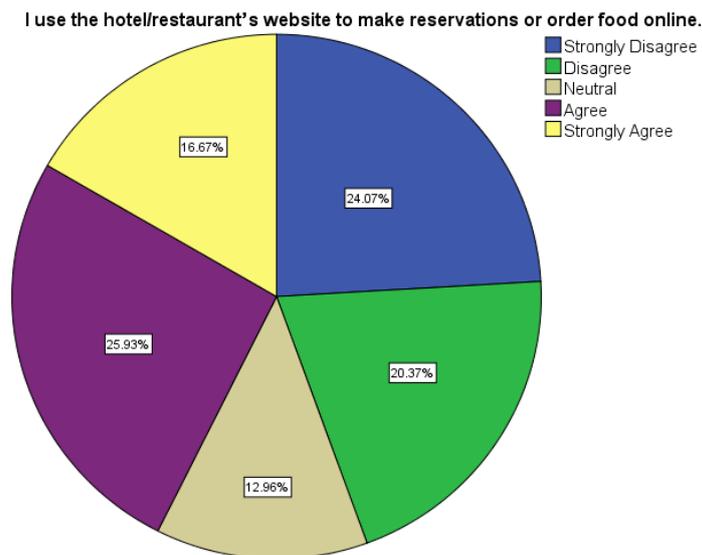
The table above represents that 24.1% of respondents strongly disagree that they use hotel/restaurant websites for reservations or online food orders, 20.4% of respondents disagree with the statement, 13.0% of respondents are neutral, 25.9% of respondents agree with the statement and 16.7% of respondents strongly agree that they use hotel/restaurant websites for reservations or online food orders, showing a positive perception and strong preference for using websites for these purposes.

From this data, it is seen that while there is a significant portion of respondents who do not prefer using hotel/restaurant websites for reservations or online food orders, there is also a large group that finds this method convenient and prefers it. This highlights the importance of offering user-friendly and efficient online reservation and ordering systems on hotel/restaurant websites to cater to varying customer preferences.

I have noticed some innovative uses of technology in the dining experience, such as digital menus or ordering systems.

|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	13.0	13.0	13.0
	Disagree	5	9.3	9.3	22.2
	Neutral	8	14.8	14.8	37.0
	Agree	20	37.0	37.0	74.1
	Strongly Agree	14	25.9	25.9	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I have noticed some innovative uses of technology in the dining experience, such as digital menus or ordering systems.
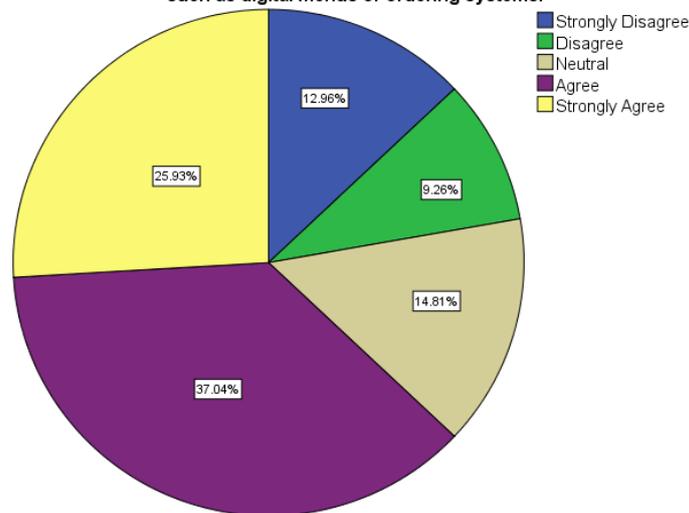
This table indicates that 13.0% of respondents strongly disagree that they have noticed innovative uses of technology in the dining experience, indicating a lack of awareness or interest in such technological advancements, 9.3% of respondents disagree with the statement, 14.8% of respondents are neutral, 37.0% of respondents agree that they have noticed innovative uses of technology in the dining experience, and 25.9% of respondents strongly agree with the statement, showing a positive perception

This data suggests that a majority of respondents have noticed innovative uses of technology in the dining experience, such as digital menus or ordering systems. This indicates a growing trend and appreciation for technological advancements that enhance the dining experience, improve efficiency, and provide convenience for customers.

**<u>I find personalized service and tailored experiences important when choosing
a hotel or resort.</u>**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Strongly Disagree	8	14.8	14.8	14.8
	Disagree	5	9.3	9.3	24.1
Valid	Neutral	10	18.5	18.5	42.6
	Agree	17	31.5	31.5	74.1
	Strongly Agree	14	25.9	25.9	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I find personalized service and tailored experiences important when choosing a
hotel or resort.
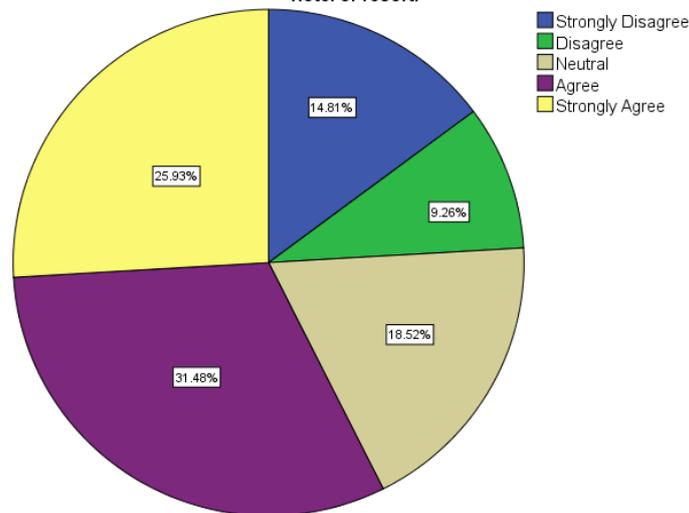
The table above shows that 14.8% of respondents strongly disagree that they find personalized service and tailored experiences important when choosing a hotel or resort, 9.3% of respondents disagree with the statement, 18.5% of respondents are neutral, 31.5% of respondents agree with the statement and 25.9% of respondents strongly agree that they consider personalized service and tailored experiences important when selecting a hotel or resort, showing a strong preference for personalized experiences in their decision-making process.

This data indicates that majority of respondents place importance on personalized service and tailored experiences when choosing a hotel or resort. This highlights the significance of ffering

personalized services and customized experiences to meet customer preferences and enhance guest satisfaction in the hospitality industry.

I have noticed an increase in contactless solutions such as digital check-ins and mobile payments during my recent hotel stay.

|		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	13	24.1	24.1	24.1
	Disagree	11	20.4	20.4	44.4
	Neutral	13	24.1	24.1	68.5
	Agree	7	13.0	13.0	81.5
	Strongly Agree	10	18.5	18.5	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I have noticed an increase in contactless solutions such as digital check-ins and mobile payments during my recent hotel stay.
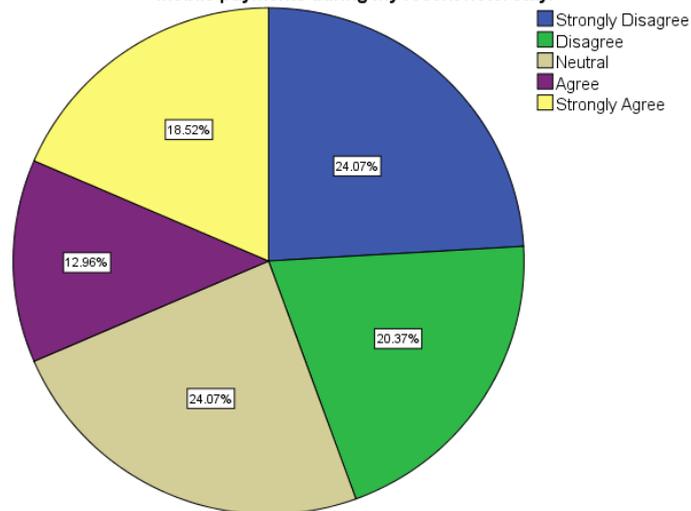
This table shows that 24.1% of respondents strongly disagree that they have noticed an increase in contactless solutions during their recent hotel stay, 20.4% of respondents disagree with the statement, 24.1% of respondents are neutral, 13.0% of respondents agree with the statement and 18.5% of respondents strongly agree, showing a positive perception and strong observation of contactless solutions.

This indicates that there is a prominent group that has observed and appreciated the adoption of contactless technologies such as digital check-ins and mobile payments, indicates a growing

trend and adoption of contactless solutions in the hospitality industry, catering to changing

guest preferences and enhancing convenience and safety during hotel stays.

I find social media platforms influential in my decision-making process when choosing accommodation for my travels.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	9.3	9.3	9.3
	Disagree	9	16.7	16.7	25.9
	Neutral	9	16.7	16.7	42.6
	Agree	15	27.8	27.8	70.4
	Strongly Agree	16	29.6	29.6	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I find social media platforms influential in my decision-making process when choosing accommodation for my travels.
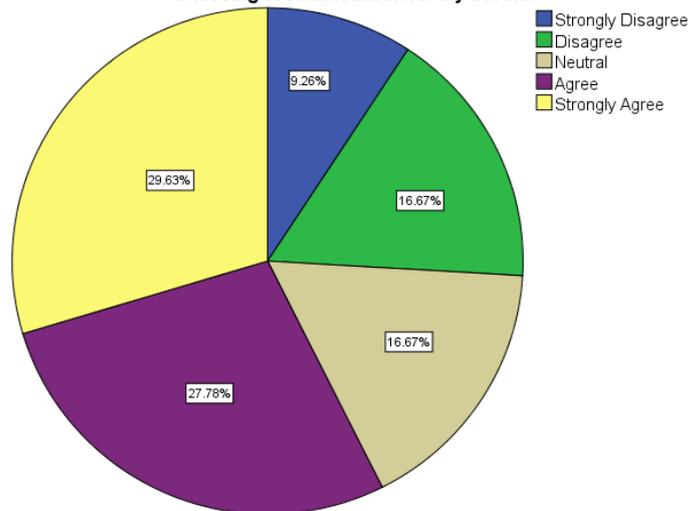
The data indicate that 9.3% of respondents strongly disagree that they find social media

platforms influential in their decision-making process when choosing accommodation, 16.7%

of respondents disagree with the statement, 16.7% of respondents are neutral, 27.8% of

respondents agree with the statement and 29.6% of respondents strongly agree that they find

social media platforms influential in their decision-making process when choosing

accommodation, which shows a strong influence and reliance on social media in their travel

decisions.

From this data it is seen that a significant portion of respondents find social media platforms influential in their decision-making process when choosing accommodation for travels. This highlights the importance of social media presence, engagement, and reputation management for hotels and accommodations to attract and influence potential guests.

I often rely on online reviews and ratings when researching hotels or resorts, they significantly impact my final choice.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	13.0	13.0	13.0
	Disagree	11	20.4	20.4	33.3
	Neutral	2	3.7	3.7	37.0
	Agree	5	9.3	9.3	46.3
	Strongly Agree	29	53.7	53.7	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I often rely on online reviews and ratings when researching hotels or resorts, they significantly impact my final choice.
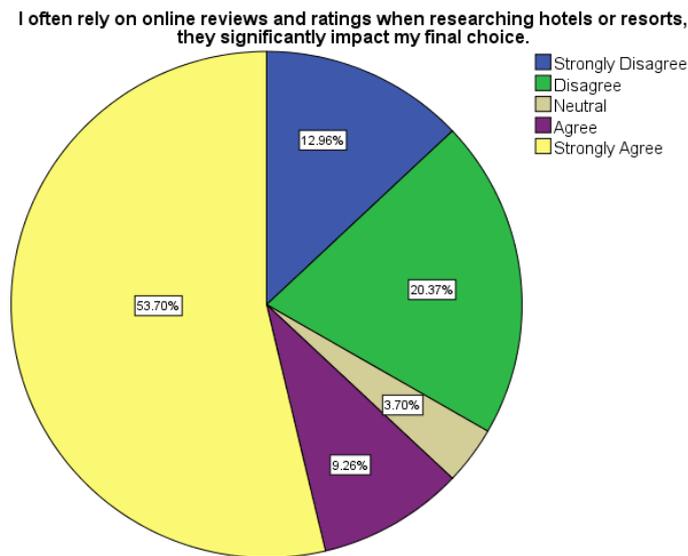
The data in this table represents that 13.0% of respondents strongly disagree that they often rely on online reviews and ratings when researching hotels or resorts, 20.4% of respondents disagree with the statement, 3.7% of respondents are neutral, indicating a lack of strong opinion or reliance on online reviews and ratings, 9.3% of respondents agree with the statement and 53.7% of respondents strongly agree that they do rely on online reviews and ratings and they

significantly impact their final choice, showing a strong reliance and influence of online reviews in their decision-making process.

This data suggests that a majority of respondents heavily rely on online reviews and ratings when researching hotels or resorts, and they significantly impact their final choice. This highlights the importance of managing online reputation, gathering positive reviews, and responding effectively to feedback for hotels and resorts to attract and retain guests.

I have been influenced by influencer collaborations or digital content while planning your trips or choosing a place to stay.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Disagree	10	18.5	18.5	35.2
	Neutral	2	3.7	3.7	38.9
	Agree	8	14.8	14.8	53.7
	Strongly Agree	25	46.3	46.3	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I have been influenced by influencer collaborations or digital content while planning your trips or choosing a place to stay.
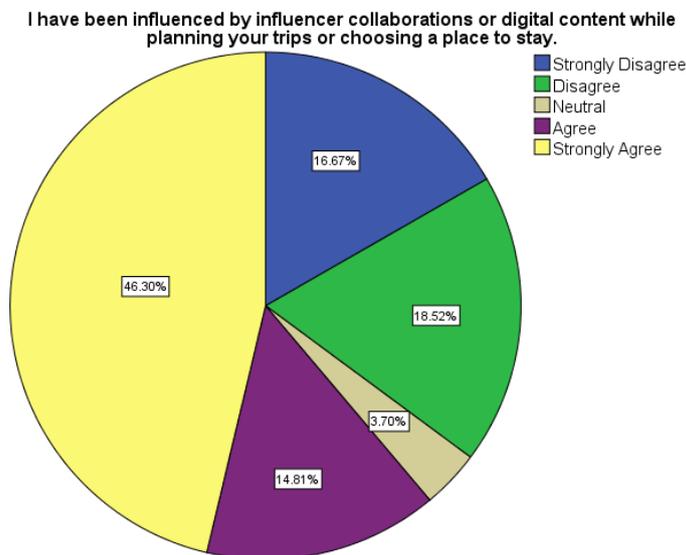
This represents that a 16.7% of respondents strongly disagree that they have been influenced by influencer collaborations or digital content while planning trips or choosing a place to stay,

18.5% of respondents disagree with the statement, 3.7% of respondents are neutral, 14.8% of respondents agree with the statement and 46.3% of respondents strongly agree that they have been influenced by influencer collaborations or digital content, showing a strong influence and impact on their decision-making process.

The data indicates that a majority of respondents have been influenced by influencer collaborations or digital content while planning trips or choosing a place to stay. This highlights the importance of influencer marketing strategies and engaging digital content in the travel and hospitality industry to attract and influence potential customers.

I think sustainability initiatives and eco-friendly practices are important in the decision to book accommodation. I am more likely to choose a hotel that communicates its environmental efforts through digital channels.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	6	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Disagree	12	22.2	22.2	33.3
	Neutral	6	11.1	11.1	44.4
	Agree	18	33.3	33.3	77.8
	Strongly Agree	12	22.2	22.2	100.0
	Total	54	100.0	100.0	

I think sustainability initiatives and eco-friendly practices are important in the decision to book accommodation. I am more likely to choose a hotel that communicates its environmental efforts through digital channels.
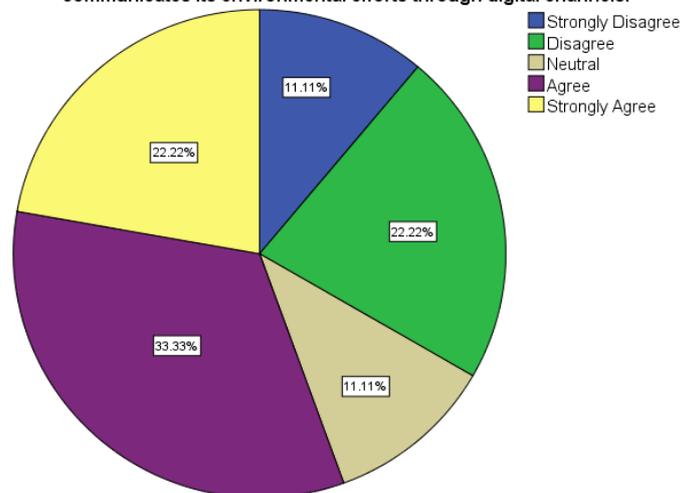
This data in the table indicates that a 11.1% of respondents strongly disagree that sustainability initiatives and eco-friendly practices are important in their decision to book accommodation, and they are less likely to choose a hotel based on its environmental efforts communicated through digital channels, 22.2% of respondents disagree with the statement, 11.1% of respondents are neutral, 33.3% of respondents agree with the statement and 22.2% of respondents strongly agree that the statement is an important aspect.

From this data, it Is seen that a majority of respondents consider sustainability initiatives and eco-friendly practices important in their decision to book accommodation, and they are more inclined to choose a hotel that communicates its environmental efforts through digital channels. This highlights the growing importance of sustainability and eco-consciousness in the hospitality industry and the value of digital communication in conveying these efforts to environmentally conscious consumers.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Hilton Goa Resort has been active in embracing major ongoing trends in the hospitality industry, particularly personalized experiences, contactless solutions, and social media marketing. Their focus on personalized experiences ensures that guests receive handmade services, enhancing satisfaction and loyalty. Contactless solutions, offer guests a safe and convenient experience, from check-ins to payments, reflecting the resort's commitment to guest well-being. Leveraging social media marketing has allowed Hilton Goa Resort to engage with a wider audience, showcase unique offerings, and build brand awareness in the digital space.

Hilton Goa Resort recognizes the importance of addressing other significant trends shaping the industry. Online reviews and ratings play a crucial role in influencing consumer decisions. By actively managing and responding to online reviews, the resort can enhance its reputation and attract more guests. Influencer marketing presents an opportunity to reach new audiences through collaborations with influencers and content creators, showcasing the resort's offerings to a diverse and engaged audience. Moreover, sustainability initiatives have become increasingly important in the hospitality sector. Hilton Goa Resort can focus on communicating its eco-friendly practices and sustainability efforts through digital channels, appealing to environmentally conscious travelers and aligning with global sustainability goals.

Talking further about the challenges faced by the resort in implementing digital and social media trends is firstly, hiring people who are up-to-date with the digital marketing skills in this digital era. Training the existing staff with digital expertise is also a hurdle for the HR department; secondly, the cost of implementation that is Integrating digital and social media technologies requires significant investment in software, hardware, training, and maintenance. This financial commitment is a little challenging for the resort.

By strategically incorporating online review management, influencer partnerships, and sustainability communication into their overall marketing strategy, Hilton Goa Resort can stay at the forefront of industry trends, enhance guest experiences, and drive business growth while contributing positively to environmental sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Since the resort already have realized the going digital and social media trends, they should still focus more on trends like Reviews and rating, Influencer collaborations and sustainability. To effectively cater to online reviews and ratings on OTA platforms, the marketing department should focus on responding efficiently to reviews. This helps maintain a standard response rate and enhances the brand's reputation, positioning it as customer-centric. Additionally, consistent uploading of high-quality social media content on platforms like Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Facebook is crucial for increasing social media engagement. Leveraging influencer collaborations, particularly with food influencers and travel bloggers, can promote the resort's ongoing 'The Zodiac Brunch' and showcase the property and location to a wider audience.

To align with sustainability trends, implementing energy-saving measures like sensor lights can reduce wastage. Encouraging guests to use reusable water bottles instead of single-use plastic is another step towards sustainability. A comprehensive waste management program can recycle food waste into useful products like fruit candy, poultry, and fish feed, or organic fertilizer. These efforts not only benefit the environment but also contribute to the resort's eco-friendly image and appeal to environmentally-conscious guests.

TASKS HANDLED AND LEARNINGS

- Responded to reviews of Hilton Goa Resort and DoubleTree by Hilton Goa – Arpora Baga on OTA platforms like Google, TripAdvisor, and Make My Trip. This task taught me how to engage with the customers, address their concerns and manage the reputation of the hotel brand.

- Conducted competitive analysis to research what other hotels and resorts are doing for social media marketing. This helped me in understanding what strategies competitors are using, what works well and recognizing areas for improvements.

- Designed materials, including the Quarterly Newsletter for the HR Department, Easter Activities poster for the Kids Club, presentation on Weddings at Hilton Goa Resort for the Sales Department and Fire and Safety reference card for the security department. This helped me to enhance my skills in graphic designing, creativity, and effective communication through visual elements.

- Proofreading materials like restaurant menus and resort's factsheets, managing PR filing, and monitoring guest-facing collaterals. This helped me in developing a attentive eye for details, ensuring accuracy and quality in all communication materials.

- Collaborated with other departments to stay updated about resort happenings. This helped me in understanding of how different departments in the resort contribute to the overall success of the resort.

- Handled marketing inventory the promotional materials and media giveaways, which helped me in developing the skill of inventory management.

- Provided assistance to other departments like events, reservations, and F&B. This helped me in developing a well-rounded understanding of the resort's operations and customer service.

- Uploaded content on YouTube and LinkedIn.

- Created a LinkTree account for DoubleTree by Hilton Goa – Arpora – Baga

- Created a WhatsApp Business account for the restaurant @Saipe at Hilton Goa Resort, these helped me to enhance skills in digital marketing and leveraging social media for the growth of the business.

APPENDIX 1 ---- Samples of the work done

Easter Brunch - Kids Activities
Poster for the Kids Club

A page from the Newsletter
designed for the HR Department
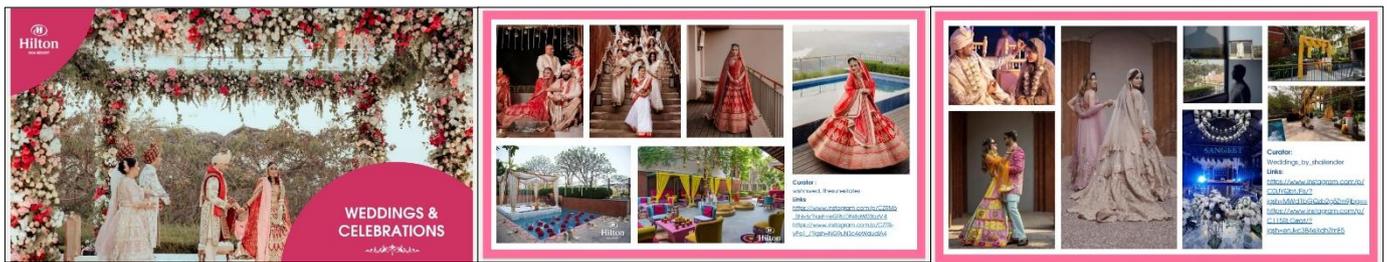
Few Slides from the presentation on Weddings at Hilton Goa Resort for Sales Department

Fire & Safety Pocket Reference Card Designed for the Security Department

APPENDIX 2 ---- Photos While at Work

The Commercials Team I worked with for the period of 4 months.

Received Trainee of the Month in March from the Cluster Director of Marketing and Communications.

ANNEXURE ----

RECENT DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS IN THE INDIAN HOSPITALITY

1. Gender

   ☐ Male

   ☐ Female

   ☐ Others

2. Age Group

   ☐ 15 – 24

   ☐ 25 – 34

   ☐ 35 – 44

3. Location

   ☐ North Goa

   ☐ South Goa

4. Which social media platform do you use the most?

   ☐ Facebook

   ☐ Instagram

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am most likely to choose a hospitality service based on its social media presence.					
I use social media platforms to share my dining experiences or food photos with my network.					
I follow some food influencers or bloggers on social media for restaurant recommendations.					
I think social media influencers play an important role in shaping food trends and restaurant choices.					

I think social media plays an important role in shaping customer perceptions of hospitality brands.					
I find interactive content (e.g., polls, quizzes, AR filters) on social media from hotels/restaurants engaging.					
I use the hotel/restaurant's website to make reservations or order food online.					
I have noticed some innovative uses of technology in the dining experience, such as digital menus or ordering systems.					
I find personalized service and tailored experiences important when choosing a hotel or resort.					
I have noticed an increase in contactless solutions such as digital check-ins and mobile payments during my recent hotel stay.					
I find social media platforms influential in my decision-making process when choosing accommodation for my travels.					
I often rely on online reviews and ratings when researching hotels or resorts, they significantly impact my final choice.					
I have been influenced by influencer collaborations or digital content while planning your trips or choosing a place to stay.					
I think sustainability initiatives and eco-friendly practices are important in the decision to book accommodation. I am more likely to choose a hotel that communicates its environmental efforts through digital channels.					

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