



## Young-elderly individuals' use of social media for travel purpose

### Utilização de mídias sociais por jovens-idosos para fins de viagem

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#### Abstract

The population is rapidly ageing in many developed countries. However, little research has been conducted to better understand older individuals' use of the Internet and social media for travel purposes. This qualitative study focuses on identifying young-elderly (aged 60-75) travellers as disinclined, opportunistic and 2.0 users of social media and on exploring possible enablers and barriers to their use. Fourteen individuals were interviewed, and the results suggest a quite clear divide in how actively social media is used by the informants. Seven informants were categorized as disinclined, six as opportunistic and one as a 2.0 user. There also seem to be heterogeneous perceptions of social media for travel purposes - several possible enablers and barriers were found among the informants to consulting online reviews and blogs for travel planning and to sharing travel experiences online.

**Keywords:** Social media, tourism, older individuals, technology adoption and use, consumer behaviour.

#### Resumo

A população está envelhecendo rapidamente em muitos países desenvolvidos. No entanto, poucas pesquisas têm sido conduzidas para entender melhor o uso da Internet e dos mídias sociais pelos idosos para fins de viagem. Este estudo qualitativo centra-se na identificação de jovens idosos (60-75 anos) viajantes como utilizadores desinteressados, utilizadores oportunistas ou utilizadores 2.0 de mídias sociais, e na exploração de possíveis facilitadores e barreiras para o seu uso. Catorze indivíduos foram entrevistados, e os resultados sugerem uma clara divisão em como os mídias sociais são ativamente usados pelos informantes. Sete informantes foram categorizados como desinteressados, seis como oportunistas e um como usuário 2.0. Parece haver também percepções heterogêneas dos mídias sociais para fins de viagem - vários possíveis facilitadores e barreiras foram encontrados entre os informantes para consultar revisões on-line e blogs para planeamento de viagens e para compartilhar experiências de viagens on-line.

**Palavras-chave:** Mídias sociais, turismo, idosos, adoção e uso da tecnologia, comportamento do consumidor.

## 1. Introduction

Social media is growing as a platform in tourism and hospitality (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010; Leung, Law, van Hoof & Buhalis, 2013; Minazzi, 2015). Mobile technology such as tablet devices and smart phones is taking the digital development even further. Habits are changing and mobile devices are nowadays used more and more to access social media (PhoCusWright 2015). One consumer segment, which is becoming very relevant, is the so-called young-elderly (aged 60–75) segment (Allmér & Råberg, 2013; Carlsson Walden, Vogel & Merne, 2014; Nikou, 2015). Population ageing is faced by most developed countries. For example, in Finland the proportion of persons aged 65 or over in the population is estimated to rise from the present 18 % to 26% by 2030 and to 28% by 2060 (Statistics Finland, 2012). Even globally, the segment of the population aged 60 or over is the fastest growing (United Nations 2013). However, only little research has been conducted on the influence of the Internet on the older tourist market (Vigolo & Confente, 2014; Pesonen, Komppula & Riihinen, 2015a). According to Pesonen, Komppula & Riihinen (2015b), the senior traveller market is quite heterogeneous with respect to the use of online travel. A growing number of older people in countries such as Finland are Internet users. This is revealed by a Statistics Finland survey on the use of information and communications technology. In 2015, 90 % of people aged 55–64 and 69 % of people aged 65–74 had used the Internet in the past 3 months. According to the same survey, 53 % of the population aged 16–89 had followed social network services during the past three months, with corresponding percentages of 35% for age group 55–64 and 19% for age group 65–74 (Statistics

Finland 2015). It should be noted that the percentages are clearly lower for the older population than for the younger population (Statistics Finland 2015).

Based on the fact that there is a lack of research of older tourists' online behaviour and the increased but quite heterogeneous use of Internet in this segment, it seems necessary and timely to investigate young-elderly individuals' social media involvement for travel purposes. This study focuses on:

- identifying young-elderly individuals as disinclined, opportunistic and 2.0 users of social media for travel purposes, and
- exploring possible enablers and barriers to their use of social media.

Hence, the contribution is mainly within the older tourists' online behaviour, adoption and use of social media and the growing knowledge-base of technological platforms as mediators of tourism experiences.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Older travellers and social media use

Yoo & Gretzel (2012) argue that "social media are not used by all online travellers for travel planning but by a substantial number of them". Erickson (2011) argued that Facebook plays an important role in maintaining contact with family and relatives for individuals over 65. Important types of social media used by travellers are travel blogs, online travel reviews and communities (Yoo & Gretzel 2012). Also videos and photos are increasingly used by travellers to share their tourism experience (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). Seniors

research the Internet for travel information in different ways, e.g. through Google searches and by visiting travel sites (Thebault, Picard, & Ouedraogo, 2013). However, according to the same authors, seniors rarely use social networks such as Facebook and Twitter for travel planning. Also Pesonen et al. (2015a) found a rather low use of social media for travel purposes among Finnish seniors. On the other hand, research conducted by Reisenwitz, Iyer, Kuhlmeier & Eastman (2007) shows that seniors are online for more hours and more frequently and feel more comfortable online. Niemelä -Nyrhinen (2007) concluded that the elderly (baby boomers) in Finland have, generally speaking, a low level of technology anxiety. Pesonen et al. (2015b) concluded that senior travellers are quite different and they divided nine Finnish senior travellers into three tentative segments based on their online travel use; the adventurous experimenters, the meticulous researchers and the fumbling observers. Thebault et al. (2013) identified the following three groups when investigating seniors in their research of vacation travel online: Disinclined, Community-minded (opportunists) and 2.0 users. Disinclined seniors do not seek the advice of unknown Internet users nor provide any. Community-minded (opportunists) seek advice and use it for their travel purposes. 2.0 users of social media are those individuals who both seek and share information; they are the most active users of social media. According to Smith (2014), 46% of online seniors in America use social networking (e.g. Facebook), and these social network adopters have more persistent social connections with the people that are close to them. Many travellers have also developed new routines during trip settings due to the use of a smartphone, e.g. finding information about the trip, booking tickets and taking photos and sharing these with others immediately (Wang, Xiang & Fesenmaier, 2014).

## 2.2 Enablers and barriers to social media use in travel

Trustworthiness has been widely discussed within social media research as a barrier to use (Leung et al., 2013). According to Yoo & Gretzel (2010), trust among consumers depends on the web site used and upon perceptions of the creators of the content. In holiday planning, user-generated content as an information source was found more reliable than mass media advertising, travel agents and official tourism web sites (Fotis, Buhalis & Rossides, 2012). However, in the same study friends and relatives were rated as the most trustworthy information source for holiday planning. According to Leung et al. (2013) it is unclear whether social media is more trustworthy than other information sources from the consumers' point of view in a travel context. In a study that compared different age groups among visiting international tourists, older adults (aged 50–64 and over), primarily relied on travel agencies and tour operators (Chianga, Manthioua, Tanga, Shinb & Morrison, 2012). Thébault et al. (2013) found that older consumers prefer online sites that they know. This is also confirmed by Pesonen et al. (2015b) who found that half of their older respondents prefer familiar and safe brands when looking for travel-related information online.

Parra-Lopez, Gutiérrez-Tano, Diaz\_Armas & Bulchand-Gidumal (2012) found that individuals' motives (functional and hedonic) and ability affect their intention to use social media in travel. The use of online travel communities is driven by social and hedonic

benefits (Wang & Fesenmaier, 2004). The enjoyment and fun aspects of social media in the travel planning process have also been discussed by Gretzel & Yoo (2008). Also a study by Chung & Koo (2015) indicates that enjoyment is a key factor for travellers to use social media. The same authors also suggest information reliability, complexity and effort to be important elements that influence the perceived value of social media in the travel information search process. Motivational factors to share tourism experiences also differ depending on the content and type of social media used (Munar & Jacobsen, 2014).

Gretzel, Yoo & Purifoy (2007) argue that the time constraint is a main reason for travellers' non-contribution in social media. The same authors also found lack of interest, lack of confidence and laziness to be important obstacles for travellers' contribution in social media. Time concern as a barrier was also found by Thebault et al. (2013) in their study of French and Canadian seniors. Parra-Lopez et al. (2012) indicate in their study that skills and competencies of users stimulate their intention to use social media.

## 3. Methodology

We conducted a semi-structured qualitative study in spring 2015 with 14 individuals within the age group 60–75. The respondents were selected in co-operation with a pensioners' association in Finland. The purpose was to achieve a balance in gender and age, and to have both low-proficiency users of the Internet and high-proficiency users of the Internet. Also travel frequency (low and high) was taken into account. In practice this meant that our contact person at the association made calls to solicit participation among their members and selected respondents based on their willingness to participate and according to our selection guidelines. The selection of the respondents can hence be described as purposive (McGehee 2012), see Table 1 for the characteristics of the informants. It should be noted that the sample is composed of university or vocationally educated individuals who all have an active working career behind them. The respondents are likely to be biased towards people with a higher educational degree and a larger household income than the average Finnish 60–75 aged individuals (cf. Pesonen et al. 2015b). High income and a higher educational degree have both, generally speaking, been seen to have a positive impact on technology adoption and use. Our aim here is, nevertheless, not to generalize results to a total population but gain explorative insights on young-elderly individuals as disinclined, opportunistic and 2.0 users of social media for travel purposes.

An instrument was developed to guide the interviews. The instrument included three parts with questions on the informants' Internet, mobile device and social media use for travel purposes. The questions primarily analysed in this paper were in the social media part of the interview and the questions are listed below:

- Describe the type of social media you use and how actively you participate
- What kind of travel information sources do you trust the most?
- Do you read other travellers' reviews, blogs before your trip?
- Do you ask other travellers for tips in, e.g. Facebook, discussion forums before your trip?
- How do you search for travel information during your trip?



- How do you share your travel/holiday experiences during your trip?
- Do you use social media for sharing your experiences during your trip?
- Describe how you mostly share your travel/holiday experiences after your trip
- Do you use social media for sharing your experiences after your trip?
- Why do you use/do you not use social media?
- Do you see that the use of social media impacts your travel experience?

The questions are flexible in character, which allowed us to account for individual differences and take advantage of the iterative nature of interviewing (McGehee 2012). All informants were strangers to the two interviewers and the interviews lasted for about an hour on average. The interviews were voice recorded and manually transcribed. Direct citations have been translated into English by the authors. The interviews were preceded with a questionnaire to collect background information of the informants (see Table 1). In the analysis we also used NVivo 10 to measure word frequency and to conduct text searches.

**Table 1 - Informants**

Nr	F1	F2	F3	F4	M5	M6	M7	M8	F9	F10	F11	M12	M13	F14
Age	75	69	71	62	62	73	74	60	60	72	69	69	72	71
Retired	2003	2008	2010	-	-	2005	2002	2014	2014	2003	2006	2013	2005	2008
Education	Vocational	Vocational	University	Vocational	University	Vocational	Vocational	University	University	University	University	Vocational	Vocational	University
Annual household income	12.000	25.000	90.000		90.000	100.000	50.000	35.000	110.000	80.000	55.000	70.000	60.000	45.000
Family	Living alone	Living alone	Married	Widow	Married	Married	Married	Living alone	Married	Married	Married	In relation	Married	Widow
Travel Frequency	Once a year	2-7 times a year	2-7 times a year	2-7 times a year	2-7 times a year	2-7 times a year	>= once/month	2-7 times a year	2-7 times a year	2-7 times a year	>= once/month	2-7 times a year	Once a year	2-7 times a year
Trips past 3 years, Domestic	8	15	10	1	4	10	4	5	4	6	25	10	2	0
Trips past 3 years, Abroad	3	10	12	2	11	10	3	10	7	3	1	7	4	15
Perceived online proficiency	Poor	Moderate	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Moderate	Good	Moderate	Moderate	Mediocre	Mediocre	Excellent	Excellent	Good
Internet importance before trip	Not at all	Very	Very	Medium	Extremely	Medium	Very	Very	Extremely	Extremely	Very	Extremely	Extremely	Extremely
Internet importance during trip	Not at all	Slightly	Very	Medium	Very	Very	Not at all	Medium	Extremely	Very	Not at all	Extremely	Very	Medium
Internet importance after trip	Not at all	Medium	Very	Medium	Medium	Very	Medium	Medium	Extremely	Very	Not at all	Extremely	Very	Very
Main purpose to travel	Holiday, visit friends, children / grandchildren	Senior dance trips	Holiday, visit friends, children / grandchildren	Holiday, Senior dance trips	Holiday, Work	Holiday, visit friends, children / grandchildren	Senior trips	Holiday and visit friends	Holiday and visit friends	Holiday and visit friends	Summer house	Holiday and visit friends	Holiday	Holiday, visit friends, children / grandchildren
Main travel style	Self-organized	Packaged trips	Self-organized	Packaged trips	Self-organized	Self-organized	Packaged trips	Self-organized	Self-organized	Self-organized	Self-organized	Self-organized	Packaged trips	Self-organized
Preferred destination	New and Known	New	New and Known	New and Known	New	Known	Known	New	New and Known	New	Known	New	New	New and Known
Main travel partner	Spouse	Senior dancers	Spouse	Friends, Children / grandchildren	Friend	Spouse	Pensioners	Alone	Friend and spouse	Friend	Alone	Spouse	Friends, Spouse, Children / grandchildren	Alone. Friends, Children / Grandchildren
Barriers to travel	None	None	None	None	Economy	None	None	None	Economy	Family	Family	None	Health	Economy

Source: Own elaboration.

#### 4. Results

All the informants, except for one (F1), stated that they are active users of the Internet in their daily life. They e-mail, read newspapers, and search for information, etc. online. Eleven of them have also entered an e-buying era for travel services. F1, M6 and M7 said that they do not purchase travel online. Online travel agents (OTAs) such as Booking.com, Hotels.com and eBookers were frequently mentioned. Convenience and price seemed to be the main drivers for purchasing travel online. Nine informants (F3, F4, M5, M6, M8, F9, F10, M12 and F14) also use a personal smart phone and/or a tablet device to connect to the Internet during their trips. They use their mobile devices, e.g. to find local sights, check reviews, weather and opening hours, and find the shortest routes to places. Many of them also find Internet important in all stages of the trip - before, during and after (see Table 1).

Despite the active use of the Internet, seven informants (F1, F2, F4, F10, F11, M5, and M6) reported that they do not actively consult other travellers' reviews and/or blogs for travel planning purposes. Six informants (F3, F9, F14, M7, M8 and M13) stated that they actively consult other travellers' reviews and/or blogs for trip-planning purposes but only one informant (M12) reported that he actively both consults and shares travel experiences in social media. We refer to these three groups as Disinclined, Opportunistic and 2.0 users (Thebault et al. 2013) of social media for travel purposes and analyse them accordingly next.

##### 4.1 Disinclined users

Seven informants (F1, F2, F4, F10, F11, M5 and M6) reported that they do not actively consult other travellers' reviews, blogs for trip-planning purposes and they seemed disinclined to actively participate in social media for travel purposes at any stage of the trip, nor do they ask for travel tips in Facebook or in online

discussion forums. Facebook is used by two informants (F4 and M5), mainly for keeping in touch with family members. M6 uses Skype to keep in touch with his daughter who lives abroad. Four of the informants (F1, F2, F10 and F11) do not use social media networks in their daily life. For example, F11 has registered in Facebook, encouraged by others, but she has never activated her account. Time constraints and lack of interest seemed to be the most common reason for not consulting other travellers' reviews and blogs.

*"I have no interest for it... it is probably important to many but I have just not fallen for it."* (F1)

*"I have no time for it"* (M5)

*"There are other things to do"* (F11)

*"I don't care what other people have written"* (F10)

They primarily trust other sources of travel information such as friends (F10, F1, M5, and F4), magazines (F2), senior dance association (F2) and travel agencies (F1). Also a concierge service was mentioned by M6. These seven informants also seemed disinclined to share their travel experiences online. For most of them simply discussing and showing pictures face to face with their friends and family is good enough. They also think that nobody would be interested in the content they would share (such as pictures or comments). Also privacy and trust issues and 'laziness' were mentioned.

*"... I don't think people would be interested in where I have been or what I have experienced... One can tell family and friends... I just share with the ones I travel with, we have collected material and created a film."* (F10)

*"I think one should be careful with what to put out there... Today's youth do not understand that the pictures will always stay there."* (F2)

*"Why should we spread out everything about ourselves?"* (F1)

*"I am too lazy."* (M5)

*"I have a policy that I need my privacy."* (M6)

However, some of them may rate and/or review a travel service online after the trip if such a request is sent by a travel company.

*"I have answered requests from booking.com..."* (F10)

*"If I am asked to write a review I do it."* (F4)

*"If I receive a request to rate a hotel service I can do it but I would not write a review."* (F11)

F2 also stated that even though she does not herself use social media she likes to follow when her friends show her pictures or information from Facebook.

#### 4.2 Opportunistic users

Six informants (F3, F9, F14, M7, M8 and M13) can be classified as opportunistic users of social media for travel purposes. They actively consult review sites such as TripAdvisor for travel-related issues. These individuals also use social media for other purposes. The informants mentioned services such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, Skype and YouTube. For example, F9 joined Facebook as a pensioner and participates in a family group in WhatsApp. M8

chats with friends and M7 listens to music in YouTube. F3 follows what others write in Twitter and may comment when her grandchildren tweets. Content generated by other travellers was mainly consulted at the pre-trip stage, but also during the trip with their personal mobile devices. They mentioned that reviews and content generated by other travellers' have a considerable impact on their travel planning. However, they never ask for travel tips in, e.g. online discussion forums and Facebook. The following six narratives describe their answers well.

*"I read blogs and reviews before we book... Reviews give a good hint and sometimes plans are changed due to them..."* (F9)

*"Reviews are very good, I always check them out ... when we recently went to Mauritius I checked out reviews and they were very good..."* (F3)

*"...reviews have an impact. If they are very negative, then they have a slight deterring effect."* (M13)

*"Yes, I check out reviews online, they are very important, especially the pictures e.g. what the dining hall looks like."* (M7)

*"...I have my tablet device with me to check out cultural events and if someone has recommended what to do."* (M8)

*"I do not usually check out reviews of restaurants at home, here I listen more to what friends say and what I see. Sometimes I check out what ratings the restaurants have received... however abroad I always do it."* (F9)

Except for finding useful hints and tips for planning purposes, the informants also expressed elements of enjoyment and convenience as motives for consulting other travellers' experiences.

*"It is fun to read people's comments and how they can describe the same place so differently."* (F3)

*"It is convenient, fast way to collect information about what I need to know... An effective encyclopaedia."* (F9)

When asked what travel information sources they mostly trust, F3 said that friends but also online reviews. F9 mentioned that it is a total evaluation based on many sources but TripAdvisor comments should be treated with caution. F14 Googles information and checks sites such as Booking.com. M13 mentioned articles online, destination web sites and blogs. M8 mentioned friends to be the most trusted information source but he also found online information important. M7 was highly involved in a senior travel group and hence he found a local travel agent to be a very important information source.

The informants were, however, primarily not interested in sharing their travel experiences online. None of these informants had published any pictures of their trips in social media and they seemed quite passive about posting reviews about their trip experiences. They reported similar barriers as the disinclined users. However, digital tools (e.g. Icolor digital photo books) were used to store and organize pictures and memories.

*"I don't think people would be interested in my postings."* (F14)

*"I write an old fashioned diary still and like it that way."* (M8)

*"There is a lot of drivel in there... I have decided that I'm not going to participate."* (M7)



*"We invite children and grandchildren to our house to look at photos on the TV screen."* (F3)

*"I use photo books such as Iffolor."* (M13)

One interesting point was made by F3, who stated that she is not willing to post any comments or pictures during her trip in Facebook, because she does not want to tell thieves that her house is empty.

As for the disinclined users these informants may rate or review a travel service online after the trip if such a request is sent by a travel company. WhatsApp and Facebook were, however, also mentioned as good communication tools with friends and family during trips. Some of them also felt that they are obligated by the environment they live in to at least try to be active in social media. F9 concluded that social media just is today's melody. It should also be noted these informants regarded themselves as having at least moderate online skills (see Table 1), which is higher than for the disinclined informants. We could, however, not identify clear differences between these opportunistic users and the disinclined users regarding the other variables (age, gender, education, household income, travel style, purpose to travel etc.) presented in Table 1.

#### 4.3 2.0 Users

Only one informant (M12) both actively consults and shares travel experiences in social media. He carefully reads other travellers' reviews both prior to and during the trip, especially when he visits new places. He feels that social media has considerably changed the way he researches information from different sources. However, he points out that there is a lot of drivel online and that he is quite selective in what discussion forums he participates in. He also uploads a lot of photos and seemed to be proud of his participation in social media. The photos are primarily published in Flickr, but he also uses Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram. He consults travel reviews and blogs for the same purposes as the opportunistic users. An exact main reason for sharing his pictures in social media he could not give. For him, social media seemed to have become a natural part of his life and his travel experience. He seemed to enjoy participating with opinions and sharing knowledge, being able to advise people and engage with them. He even admitted to being addicted to his gadgets and social media, and he referred to himself as a technology savvy person with excellent online skills. He also finds an Internet connection to be extremely important in all stages of the trip (see Table 1). Furthermore, Table 1 shows that his main travel style is self-organized trips, he prefers new destinations and he is a quite experienced traveller without financial or health restrictions to travel.

### 5. Discussion and conclusions

This study focused on identifying young-elderly individuals as disinclined, opportunistic and 2.0 users of social media for travel purposes and on exploring possible enablers and barriers to their use of social media.

Based on the results, we identified seven informants as disinclined, six as opportunistic and one as an active 2.0 user of social media for travel purposes. The disinclined can here be described as non-active consulters of other travellers' reviews and blogs for trip-

planning purposes. They also seem disinclined to actively participate in social media for travel purposes at any stage of the trip. The opportunistic users can here be described as active consultants of user generated content for travel-related issues, but they are quite passive as online reviewers and content generators themselves. These individuals also use social media for other purposes. Several of them use social media networks and messaging platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp or Skype to communicate with friends and family, but mainly not for travel sharing, e.g. actively upload pictures and make postings about their trips. The 2.0 user can here be described as an active consulter and sharer of travel experiences in social media in all stages of the trip on different social media platforms.

The results suggest several possible enablers and barriers to young-elderly travellers' use of social media for travel-planning purposes. The findings indicate a consensus among the disinclined users that other information sources than content created by other travellers online are primarily to be trusted for travel purposes. Time constraints and lack of interest seemed to be other common reasons for not consulting other travellers' reviews and blogs. The disinclined users also rated, generally speaking, their online proficiency lower than the opportunistic users. Hence, some guidance and knowledge enhancement may be needed to push the adoption and use of social media for travel-planning purposes among young-elderly travellers. Regarding variables such as age, gender, education, household income, travel experience, travel style and purpose to travel we could not find clear differences between the disinclined and the opportunistic users. A larger sample with quantitative analysis should, however, be more suitable for profiling the categories according to background variables. Among the opportunistic users the main motive for consulting other travellers' experiences seemed to be linked to knowledge enhancement, finding good hints and tips, but also elements of enjoyment and convenience were mentioned. The opportunistic users also expressed that content generated by other travellers has a considerable impact on their travel planning. They also seemed to trust various information sources such as online reviews for travel planning. For the 2.0 user social media seemed to have become a natural part of life and the travel experience. Enjoyment, helping others and engaging with them seemed to be the main drivers for the 2.0 use of social media for travel purposes.

The main barriers to sharing travel experiences online among the disinclined and opportunistic users seemed to be related to various issues such as privacy and trust, laziness and a belief that nobody would be interested. Simply discussing their travel experiences with friends and family seemed to be good enough for most of the informants. However, many of them are likely to rate a travel service online after the trip if such a request is sent by a travel company. Making it easy and efficient for people to contribute and reminding them about it is critical to increase contributions (Gretzel et al., 2007) and this seems true for young-elderly travellers.

To sum it up, this study suggests heterogeneous perceptions among young-elderly travellers to use social media for travel purposes - several possible usage enablers and drivers were

identified among the informants in the three different categories. This is in line with previous research that older individuals are quite heterogeneous in their use of information technology for travel purposes (Pesonen et al., 2015b). There also seems to be a clear divide between the informants in how involved they are with social media for travel purposes as we were able to divide them into three groups - disinclined, opportunistic and 2.0 users. Categorizing individuals helps to understand the market structures and diffusion of ICT in different contexts. Hence, we see that this study has contributed to the literature of older tourists' online behaviour, adoption and use of social media and the growing knowledge-base of technological platforms as mediators of tourism experiences. Further studies should, however, be of a quantitative character in order to verify the categorization on a broader scale (i.e. national, multi-national), to profile the categories according to specific cohort variables (e.g. past travel experience, past technology use, travel style) and to identify the enablers and barriers that have the strongest impact on the use of social media in this target group. Quantitative studies with, e.g. cluster analysis may also identify more specific categories and of another character than proposed here. This study has to be seen as a beginning to further research young-elderly travellers' perceptions and use of social media on a broader scale.

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