

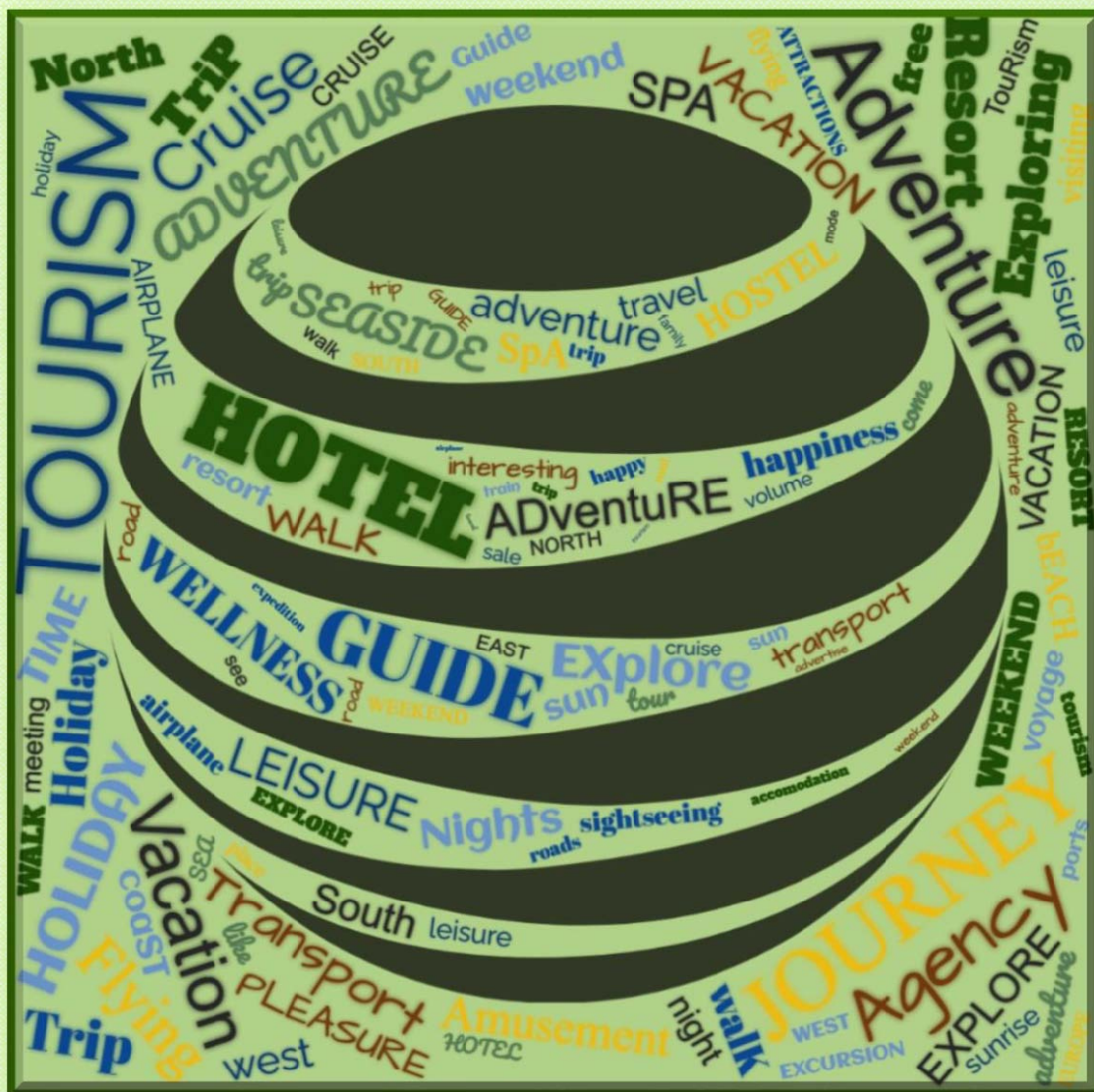


# СЪВРЕМЕННИ ПРЕДИЗВИКАТЕЛСТВА ПРЕД ТУРИЗМА

## CONTEMPORARY TOURISM CHALLENGES

### ВЫЗОВЫ СОВРЕМЕННОГО ТУРИЗМА

### DESAFÍOS CONTEMPORÁNEOS EN EL TURISMO



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СБОРНИК ДОКЛАДИ ОТ МЕЖДУНАРОДНА НАУЧНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ  
12 МАЙ 2022 ГОДИНА

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE  
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**DESAFÍOS CONTEMPORÁNEOS EN EL TURISMO**  
LIBRO DE ACTAS DE LA CONFERENCIA CIENTÍFICA INTERNACIONAL  
12 MAYO 2022

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Издателство АВАНГАРД ПРИМА  
София, 2022

Publisher AVANGARD PRIMA  
Sofia, 2022

ISBN: 978-619-239-710-4

# CONTENT MARKETING FOR THE PROMOTION OF RESORTS LOCATED IN THE NORTHEAST REGION OF BRAZIL

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**Abstract:** *Content marketing is considered a contemporary form of promoting products and services. Content production is designed to attract consumers through a creative and captivating approach, as an effective method, which may vary from theme to format. Bringing these aspects to the hotel context, especially to resorts, content marketing can be well explored, promoting elements such as the very structure of the enterprise, the local cuisine and the backstage of service provision, which are considered attractive themes for potential consumers. Taking these elements into account the study aimed at looking over the techniques and strategies of content marketing for promoting the resorts located in the Northeast region of Brazil, through a quantitative-qualitative methodology, analysing the point of view of consumers who have stayed at the resorts of the research, achieving results that demonstrate it is an effective and accessible process, mainly in digital media. Based on these results, the research may help not only in the development of marketing in the hotel sector, but also in the expansion of academic knowledge, still relatively unexplored about the relation between the themes.*

**Keywords:** *digital marketing; content marketing; hospitality marketing; resort.*

## Introduction

The innovations brought by digital media have modified the traditional sales models, so that most of them are now performed online. Facing a competitive scenario, hotel developments have begun to adopt digital media as a promotional tool, building a more frequent and direct connection with consumers.

Among the types of lodging facilities, resorts fall into a category designed for attracting, retaining, and satisfying the guests who want to take leisure trips (Murphy, 2008). These establishments stand out for adding multiple services, offering an All-Inclusive board system, activities aimed at entertaining all ages, wide pool space, besides numerous restaurant options, becoming then the main attraction or even the only one of the trip (Grampa, Nascimento & Wada, 2012). However, as in other types of enterprises, the competition becomes a challenge to keep the revenue at certain periods of the year. Therefore, content marketing comes so that companies keep in contact with consumers, through a creative and captivating approach, conveying the values they want to establish to the point of becoming the first consumption choice (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2017).

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Taking into account these aspects, this study aims to analyse the content marketing techniques and strategies to promote resorts located in the Northeast region of Brazil, in order to understand the relation between content consumption and the purchase desire in Brazilian consumers. The regional scope of this research is justified mainly due to be a mostly tourist region, with numerous resorts, a warm climate all year round, and tropical seashore landscapes, which are highly sought-after by tourists. The development of this research can help to expand the knowledge regarding the use of marketing in the hospitality sector, contributing not only to the academic community, but also to the means of lodging, which will be able to adapt their contents to the public they hope to reach to.

### **Theoretical References**

In order to stand out and succeed in a competitive market context, companies make use of marketing, whom Kotler & Keller (2016, p. 27) define as being a "social process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and desire through the creation, offering, and free exchange of valuable products and services."

Creating value for the brand is an extremely important factor to develop the purchase desire of customers. Churchill & Peter (2012, p. 11) understand it as "a business philosophy that focuses on developing and delivering superior value to customers as a way of achieving the organization's goals". Using the term, they refer to the benefits that products can offer to consumers. Kotler & Keller (2016) emphasize that brand value is directly related to the quality, service, and price that are offered to customers. The authors also add that satisfaction is a reflection of the buyer opinion based on his/her expectations. Thus, it is very important to develop brand values, focusing on the product and what it can provide to the consumer.

Getting into the digital context, Belch & Belch (2018, p. 23) establish that "the interactive nature of the Internet and social media is one of the main advantages", as they are able to provide countless information about the consumer styles and preferences, besides providing all the support for the drafting of digital marketing. Kitchen & Tourky (2022) state that the digital content consumption has become essential for the development of several society elements, ranging from the political to the market sphere, which has become interested in the niche as it is one more tool for promotion and increased sales.

In this proposal, the development of content marketing, according to Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan (2017, p. 147) can be established as "an approach that involves creating, selecting, distributing, and amplifying content that is interesting, relevant, and useful for the clearly



defined audience." The idea of offering content, according to Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan (2021), it is less intrusive than ads, attracting consumers' attention rather than repelling it.

The influence that mobile technology has been exercising on the consumer and its influence on purchasing behavior is another element that should be highlighted. Minazzi (2015) states that the improvement of mobile devices has enabled a greater number of informative connections, supporting the communication between consumers and content. Considering the hotel context, it reflects on the reliability of information, the relevance that social media has been currently gaining, in such a way that communities start spreading more opinions about the means of lodging, influencing the final booking process of consumers. Therefore, the contents produced by other users have become more reliable than the ones developed by the companies, furthermore when it comes to products that will confer experiences (Tsiotsou & Ratten, 2010).

The hotel enterprises must be sure about the market typology they are integrated, in order to effectively promote their developments. According to the Ministry of Tourism (2010), the resort typology stands out for being understood as a mean of lodging with a leisure and entertainment oriented infrastructure, in addition to affording services that include physical activities, recreation and interaction with the existing nature in the hotel facilities.

Although it is a quite explored niche in the modern world, its emergence dates back to the Roman Empire period, where the idea started developing through public baths spread throughout Rome and surrounding cities. During the Renaissance period, they were baptized SPA, with the purpose of relaxing and promoting social interactions among the population. By the beginning of the Contemporary Age, these places developed and started offering new attractions (such as games and events), in addition to lodging, which was already a commercial activity at the time. After the end of the Second World War, the demand for these environments raised, became popular and named resort (Mill, 2008).

### **Methodological Procedures**

In order to enable this study, we have chosen a quantitative-qualitative nature of research, based on the analysis of empirical data collected from the consumers perspectives on interactions with content marketing from resorts in the Northeast of Brazil.

The core was on resorts located in the northeast of Brazil to delineate the study. There are 67 resorts registered in the "Sistema de Cadastro de Pessoas Físicas e Jurídicas" (Record of Legal and Natural Persons) that integrate the Tourist Trade (Cadastur), considered the region with more resorts in Brazil, representing 41%.

The population chosen for the research concerns Brazilian consumers who take leisure trips, and they have already stayed at resorts in the northeast of Brazil. The random selection of this sample has enabled to get the most different guest profiles who stay, and they are interested in the chosen hotel segment.

For the data collection phase, which took place during the last two weeks of August 2021, an online questionnaire was prepared and applied, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, containing 45 multiple-choice questions about the interests and the relation of the public with the content prepared to promote the resorts. A total of 227 answers were collected, of which 218 were valid.

In the analysis of the results it was used Excel software, in addition to the ranking calculation, and from it, the average calculation (symbol  $(\bar{x})$ ), which enabled to measure the use of content marketing techniques and strategies used by consumers in order to assisting on booking process for resorts in the northeast of Brazil (Oliveira, 2005).

To perform this calculation, values were assigned to the variable responses on the Likert scale: I totally disagree (1), I partially disagree (2), I neither disagree nor agree (3), I partially agree (4), I totally agree (5). Thus, it is understood that when the ranking coefficient is closer to the value 1, it represents a higher degree of disagreement, and when it is closer to the value 5, it represents a higher degree of agreement of the respondents about the statements presented in the question under analysis.

$$Ranking = \frac{\sum(xi \cdot fi)}{\sum fi}$$

**fi** = observed frequency of each response for each item

**xi** = value of each response

From these results, a diagnostic interpretation was performed in order to identify which strategies and contents are most effective in promoting resorts in the Northeast region, as well as the association between the use of content marketing techniques and the interest of the sample in the hotel typology chosen for the research.

## **Results and Discussion**

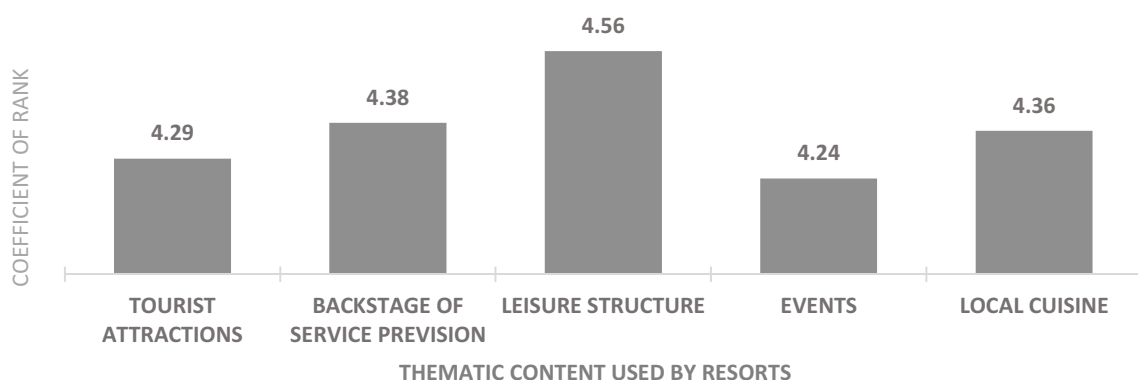
Taking into account the coefficients obtained, it can be stated that content marketing is an effective and relevant process ( $\bar{x} = 4.22$ ) to be used by resorts in the expectation of promoting the means of lodging.

For the individuals who had already stayed in the establishments of the research scope, it is noted that the use of strategies is common, and it assists in the decision-making during the resort reservation process in the Northeast of Brazil. In particular, it can be seen that the contact with information about the means of lodging through the Internet ( $\bar{x} = 4.44$ ) is much more relevant than the contact through other means ( $\bar{x} = 2.41$ ). Another interesting topic, refers to the accessibility of information. They do not consider it difficult to access the content (1.96) and in general they search for it before taking a trip (4.75), in addition, they agreed that they find it difficult to choose accommodation without having access to information about it (4.43).

Carrying on analysing the content marketing strategies, the textual and photographic quality of the content produced by the establishments has proved not to be a very impressive factor in decision-making (3.78), but they become much more attractive and interesting when they are linked to relevant themes about the destination. Another important factor is information reliability. The large portion of respondents give more credibility to information provided by other individuals who had already stayed at the establishment, including friends and family ( $\bar{x} = 3.88$ ) and linked to this, they usually indicate the resorts to other people when their experiences are positive (4.76). Despite the significant number of respondents who usually recommend the lodgings, only a portion of them usually post contents about their experiences on social networks (3.32), what could help to promote the resorts.

Deepening into the content marketing themes, it is observed a greater interest of the sample who has already stayed at the resorts regarding the exposure of leisure areas and structures (4.56), the backstage of service provision (4.38) and local cuisine (4.36). Besides these themes, information about tourist attractions (4.29) available at the destination and the promotion of events (4.24), both promoted by the host city and by the hotel itself, (Graphic 2).

CHART 2 - Thematic content used by resorts for promoting social networks.



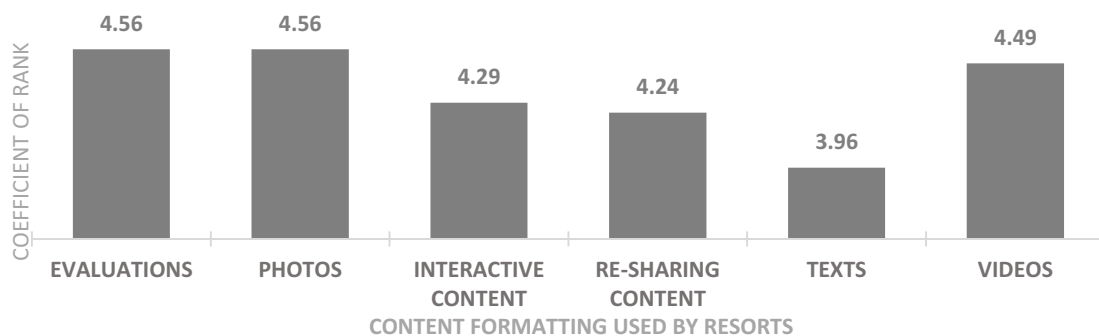
Source: Prepared by the author, 2021



Although the theme is an extremely important factor to arouse interest in the consumer, Pulizzi (2014) points out that the content formatting (Graph 3) is also responsible for attracting customers to consume the information that companies want to pass on. Thus, it is observed a highlight for the imagery resources, represented by photos (4.56) and videos (4.49) and also for the evaluations (4.56), especially when they are exposed by the company itself. Besides these formatting, the development of interactive content (4.29) also proves to be relevant for users, who feel closer and heard by the company.

The content re-sharing generated by other users (4.24) is in fifth position with regard to the most attractive formatting for consumers. This one may seem like an interesting strategy from an organizational point of view, but it can become repetitive and demonstrate a lack of creativity to produce original content. Finally, we have the texts (3.96), which are usually consumed when individuals seek information about the destinations, but can hardly attract consumers to the point of making a reservation in the enterprise without the imagery aid.

CHART 3 - Content formatting used by resorts for social network promotion



Source: Prepared by the author, 2021

### Final Considerations

Hotel industry is responsible for promoting the provision of round the clock service all year. In order to ensure the revenue of the establishments, it is necessary the commitment of several sectors, especially the marketing sector, intended to promote the means of lodging. It is a fact that in some periods of the year, the public's interest in booking daily rates in hotels decreases due to several factors. Thus, marketing should be devoted to promote the hotel establishments through a creative and captivating approach, ensuring a contact with consumers, who may evolve into possible sales later on.

Considering the results obtained with this study, one can state that content marketing is an effective resource when it comes to the promotion of resorts located in the Northeast region

of Brazil, mainly through digital media, given the high coefficients obtained with the samples. The research has enabled a greater understanding of the interactions between consumers and content marketing in the hotel booking process, involving important elements such as accessibility, reliability and quality of the information present in the content.

Another interesting aspect revealed by the research is the lack of knowledge regarding the different lodging categories. It is a fact that many characteristics are only possible to be perceived within the academic and professional context. However, converting these differences into attractive contents for consumers may represent a competitive advantage, considering that it will be necessary to expose the structure and services that, in general, in resorts, are fuller and present a greater diversity in comparison with other means of lodging.

Taking into account the results obtained with this research, it can be considered that the purpose of analysing the techniques and strategies used by content marketing for the promotion of resorts located in the Northeast region of Brazil was achieved and may assist in the improvement of the marketing procedures of hotel developments present in the region. Moreover, the possibility of working in content marketing and resort represents a relevant experience from the academic point of view, since the relation between the two themes was relatively unexplored theoretically.

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