

**Analytical Study of Digital Marketing Applications in Algerian Hotels:
A Case Study of 13 Hotels in Constantine Province**

دراسة تحليلية لتطبيقات التسويق الرقمي في المؤسسات الفندقية الجزائرية:

دراسة حالة لـ 13 فندق بولاية قسنطينة.

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to analyze the digital marketing tools used by hotels such as Social Media Marketing, Search Engine Optimization, Google AdWords, Booking.com and TripAdvisor.

We adopt a descriptive research by using a case-study method comprising the analysis of the process of booking customers for a room in the hotel and we divided the process into four levels: traffic, website, booking system and booked, each level incorporating a set of indicators integrated into digital marketing tools. We choose 13th hotels in the state of Constantine- Algeria.

The results show that the majority of hotels in the province of Constantine do not apply digital marketing tools and even free of charge, except for international hotels that have branches in the province of Constantine. Finally, a set of recommendations have been proposed for hotels to achieve their objectives in light of environmental complexity.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Hotels, booking process, Constantine.

ملخص

الهدف من المقالة هو تحليل أدوات التسويق الرقمي التي تستخدمها الفنادق مثل التسويق عبر وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي وتحسين محركات البحث و *tripAdvisor* و *Booking.com* و *GoogleAdWords*

نعتمد بحثاً وصفيًا باستخدام طريقة دراسة الحالة التي تشمل تحليل عملية حجز العملاء لغرفة في الفندق وقسمنا العملية إلى أربعة مستويات: حركة المرور، والموقع الإلكتروني، ونظام الحجز والحجز النهائي، كل مستوى يتضمن مجموعة من المؤشرات تدرج ضمن أدوات التسويق الرقمي. تم اختيار 13 فندق ناشطة بولاية قسنطينة الجزائر.

أظهرت النتائج أن غالبية الفنادق في ولاية قسنطينة لا تطبق أدوات التسويق الرقمي وحتى مجانية منها، باستثناء الفنادق الدولية التي لها فروع في ولاية قسنطينة. أخيرًا، تم اقتراح مجموعة من التوصيات للفنادق لتحقيق أهدافها في ضوء التعقيد البيئي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق الرقمي، الفنادق، عملية الحجز، قسنطينة.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Digital marketing is one of the important elements for successful businesses, especially for hospitality and tourism business represented by hotels. It makes it easy for hotels to target specific audiences and reach them with a lower cost, digital marketing platforms make it a lot easier for businesses to personalize the customer's journey, they use information provided by advertising platform from the behavior of the customers with the website and interaction with its content. The business responds to each behavior with a tailored marketing message, which makes the customer, feel more special knowing that the company recognizes his actions with the business. These benefits allow the business to automate most of the advertising process and focus more on improving the customer's experience and journey.

Many hospitality firms adopt digital tools as way to cope with a competitive environment, high client turnover and rising guest expectations (Melián-González & Bulchand-Gidumal, 2016, p. 30). According to Deloitte [2012], technology must be: easy to use, mobile and social. Hotels like other organizations have been turned into digital marketing to be close to the concept of consumer loyalty and being up-to-date with all advanced technology (Maria-Luminita Cojocea & Monica Maria Coros, 2014, p. 80).

Digital marketing is the marketing of products or services using digital technologies to connect with current and prospective customers (Desai, 2019, p. 196).

Concerning the Algerian hotels industry, there have not yet been identified any recent and relevant research addressing this issue. Therefore, the question that arises is:

What is the present situation of the Algerian hotels in the digital marketing reality, especially in Constantine province and what can be done to convert it to a beneficial one?

This paper aims to analyze the degree of adoption and extent of the use of digital marketing in Algerian hotels and the province of Constantine as a sample, and this by proposing evaluation indicators for digital marketing at each level of the process of customer booking rooms. This

research helps hotels to successfully adopt and implement digital marketing as a strategy in their business plan in the competitive market.

2. THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. What is digital marketing?

There are many definitions of the term digital marketing, so that each researcher gave his own definition based on the scientific specialization or professional experience, or by the sector under study.

Digital marketing as per the study of Chaffey and Ellis can be defined as the application of the Internet and similar advanced digital technologies in conjunction with traditional marketing communications to achieve marketing objectives (Ishaq & Reena, 2018, p. 176). In addition to this definition, digital marketing use numerous digital plans and channels to connect with customers where they spend much time online (Desai, 2019, p. 196), Therefore technological innovations lead to transition from traditional marketing to digital marketing (Singh, 2016, p. 1)

2.2. Traditional marketing versus digital marketing

Traditional marketing is a structure of conventional marketing that was used before the internet era was rampant (OKportal Technology, 2019), also it is non-digital way used to rise the purchasing of products and services (Afrina, Sadia, & Kaniz, 2015, p. 71). While the digital marketing is the use of technologies and data to support marketing activities in order to improve customer knowledge by matching their needs (Madhu & Deepak, 2018, p. 323), those activities executed through digital (online) platforms, including the company website, virtual communities, blogs, social media, mobile applications (D.Hollebeek & Macky, 2019, p. 29).

The following table n°1 highlights the difference between traditional and digital marketing.

Table 1. Traditional marketing and digital marketing comparison

Variable	Traditional marketing	Digital marketing
Tools	Traditional marketing fall under one of four categories like direct mail, telemarketing, broadcast, Business cards, notices,	Digital marketing includes online advertising, email marketing, social media, text messaging, affiliate marketing, search

	announcements, business promotions on TV and Radio, Print advertisements in daily newspapers and Magazines to publicize an occasion or products	engine optimization, pay per click
Interaction	No interaction with the audience.	Interaction with the audience.
Measurement	Results are not easy to measure and inaccuracy of measurement.	Results are easy to measure with accuracy.
Modification	One campaign prevails for a long time.	Campaigns can be easily changed with ease and innovations can be introduced within any campaign.
Customer service	24/7 customer service coverage is not possible. Responses can only occur during work hours.	24/7 customer service coverage is possible. Response or feedback can occur anytime
Cost and time	Expensive and time-consuming process.	Reasonably cheap and rapid way to promote the products or services.
Advertising campaigns	Advertising campaigns are planned over a long period.	Advertising campaigns are planned over short period.

Source:(Ishaq & Reena, 2018, p. 177)(OKportal Technology, 2019)(Afrina, Sadia, & Kaniz, 2015, pp. 71-72)

Through this, digital marketing is an extension of traditional marketing through the use of advanced technologies for great effectiveness and achieve the marketing strategies of the company

2.3. Advantages of using digital marketing for the organization and the customer

Digital marketing through rapid technological development offered various advantages to consumer how has changed its buying behavior. The advantages of using digital marketing are given below:

- **Stay updated with products or services:**

Digital marketing tools allow the consumers to stay updated with the company information.

- **Greater engagement:**

Consumers can engage with the company's various activities with the help of digital marketing. Consumers can visit company's website, read the characteristic information about the products or services, make purchases online, and provide feedback.

- **Clear information about the products or services:**

Consumers get real and clear information about the products or services through digital marketing. The chance of misinterpretation of the information taken from sales person is a little. The Internet also provides multiple information about the product or services offered to enable the consumer to make a purchase.

- **24/7 Shopping not stop:**

Through digital marketing, the consumer can make purchases at any time through online platforms without time and space restrictions.

- **Share content of the products or services:**

Digital marketing allows viewers of various media platforms to have the opportunity to share and share content with others, making it easier to transfer and obtain the information necessary to make a purchase.

- **Prices of products and services are available**

The process of displaying the prices of products and services through the digital marketing channel facilitates the process of selecting products and makes them clear and transparent for online shoppers. This price offer is suitable for constantly communicating with customers and keeping them updated.(Afrina, Sadia, & Kaniz, 2015, pp. 74-75)

2.4. Digital Marketing tools: usage and effectiveness.

Marketers with the proliferation of ICTscan fine-tune their marketing messages to effectively target small consumer segments within the country/region and provide the necessary expertise and engagements as well as services according to the special needs of the target group of customers. In this case, the ICTs includes a big data, artificial intelligence, GPS, Bluetooth, Zigbee, QR code and other technologies related to mobile phone and the Internet(Dwivedi, Rana, Slade, Singh, & Kizgin, 2019, p. 1)

Generally, digital marketing contains three important elements: content (articles, blog posts, publications, e-books, research, copy of a sales page, social networking campaigns, search engine optimization “SEO”); design (inclusion of images and photos for content, infographics, schema, photos, videos); statistics (analytics, key performance metrics, goals and objectives, conversion channels, customer LTVs) (Morzhyna , Oliinichenko , & Postykina , 2019, p. 177)

Following are some of most common digital marketing tactics and the channels concerned:

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):**

Search Engine Optimizers generally refer to scientific methods and processes to encourage web traffic to websites. SEO identifies structured and goal-oriented technologies that simplify the structure of the site, the languages it uses, the mechanisms of interaction with the site, etc., designed to encourage the site to land itself in the top part of the search engine listings in the light of the keyword entered Site user (Lee, Jang, Lee, & Oh, 2016, p. 198). The channels that benefit from SEO include Websites, Blogs, and Infographics (Desai, 2019, p. 196). Obviously, Google.com is the leading search engine by far (with 77.12%) according to the data taken by Stat Counter between August 2018 and August 2019 (Stat Counter, 2019).

- **Social Media Marketing:**

Social Media Marketing is a broad category of advertising spend, including social media advertising, user-generated product reviews, virtual worlds, blogger adoption, RSS feeds for content and social news sites, podcasts, games, and consumer-generated ads. Social media marketing through social media technologies, channels and programs is used to create, communicate, deliver, and exchange offerings that have value for an organization's stakeholders (Jacobson, Gruzd, & Hernández-García, 2019, p. 2). The goal of social media marketing is to increase brand awareness, increase website traffic and generate customers for your company (Ismail, 2017, p. 130). The Most Effective B2C Social Media Marketing Channels are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Snap chat, Pinterest, and Google+ (Desai, 2019, p. 197) (shanebarker, 2018).

- **Affiliate Marketing:**

Affiliate Marketing combines sharp performance incentives with the broader efficiencies of online advertising (Edelman & Brandi, 2015, p. 2). Affiliate marketing is an advertising style in which a company compensates third-party publishers to generate traffic or leads to the company's products and services. The third-party publishers are affiliates, and the commission fee incentivizes them to find ways to promote the company (Investopedia, 2019).

- **Inbound Marketing**

Inbound marketing is to create and share content (Soegoto & Simbolon, 2018, p. 1). The inbound marketing is also the process of attracting potential customers to a business before they have any plan and intention to become real customers (Nedaei, Khanzadi, Majidi, & Movaghar, 2018, p. 12).

- **Pay Per Click (PPC)**

Pay-per-click marketing is a way of using search engine advertising to generate clicks to your website rather than "earning" those clicks organically (Afrina, Sadia, & Kaniz, 2015, p. 74). The three predominant advertisement billing schemes used by search engines are pay-per-impression (PPM), pay-per-click (PPC), and pay-per-action (PPA) (King, Abrahams, & Ragsdale, 2015, p. 4818). One of the most famous model of PPC is Google Ad Words, which allows you to pay for top slots on Google's search engine results pages at a price "perclick" of the links you place. Other channels where you can use PPC mainly include Paid ads on Facebook, promoted Tweets on Twitter, Sponsored Messages on LinkedIn (Desai, 2019, pp. 197-198).

- **E-mail marketing**

E-mail marketing is actually the most used form of direct marketing in condition of internet. It is an inexpensive ,yet effective form of addressing on whether potential or existing customers. When using email marketing, you must retain several important metrics for a successful email campaign. The most important metrics are delivery rate; opening rate and click through price (Hudák, Kianičková, & Madleňák, 2017, p. 344).

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research is exploratory in nature; it focuses on literature review,

newspaper, journal, the personal experience of the authors. Additionally and to achieve the objectives of the study, a scale was proposed to measure the digital marketing techniques used by hotels. 13th hotels in the province of Constantine-Algeria have been selected. These technologies fall into four steps of interest to any hotel.

- **Step 1: Traffic indicator.** The hotel links its website to a range of channels and websites, which are characterized by a high degree of traffic. The traffic indicator contains a set of variables: google my business, Booking.com, trip advisor, social media (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram), Google AdWords, Facebook Ads, Google rating, SEO and Google hotel rank.
- **Step 2: The hotel website index.** After the hotel attracts the potential consumer to its official website, the hotel is required to provide the necessary information and room-related features, prices, attached services and free services as well as provide a sense of safety for the browser. A website index consists of a set of elements, namely Website, Speed, Mobile friendly, , Security, Up to Date and Google Analytics
- **Step 3: Hotel reservation system indicator.** This phase begins as soon as the consumer intends to reserve the appropriate room. The special booking system indicator includes the necessary elements of any room reservation within the hotel like Available Now, Payments en Dinar, Payment with Credit card, Free registration and security.
- **Step 4: Indicator of the benefit of booking and beyond the impact.** This step is in the process of evaluating the customer for the room used and how to re-attract to make a room reservation. Among the tools, we find.



4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

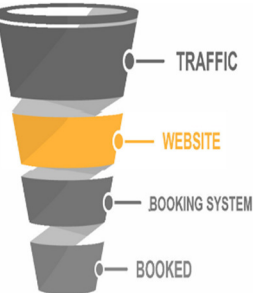
Step 1: Traffic indicator

	Google My Business	Booking websites	Social Media	Ads	Google Rating/5	SEO Rank/Page	Google Hotels Rank
Hotel Hocine	✓	✓	✓	✗	4.0 (254)	3/2	12
Hotel Ibis Costantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	3.7 (46)	2/1	3
Hotel Novotel Constantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	3.5 (345)	-	9
Hotel Marriott Constantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	4.3 (421)	6/3	2
Hotel Protea Constantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	4.1 (65)	1/1	1
Hotel El Bey	✗	✓	✓	✗	4.0 (71)	4/2	4

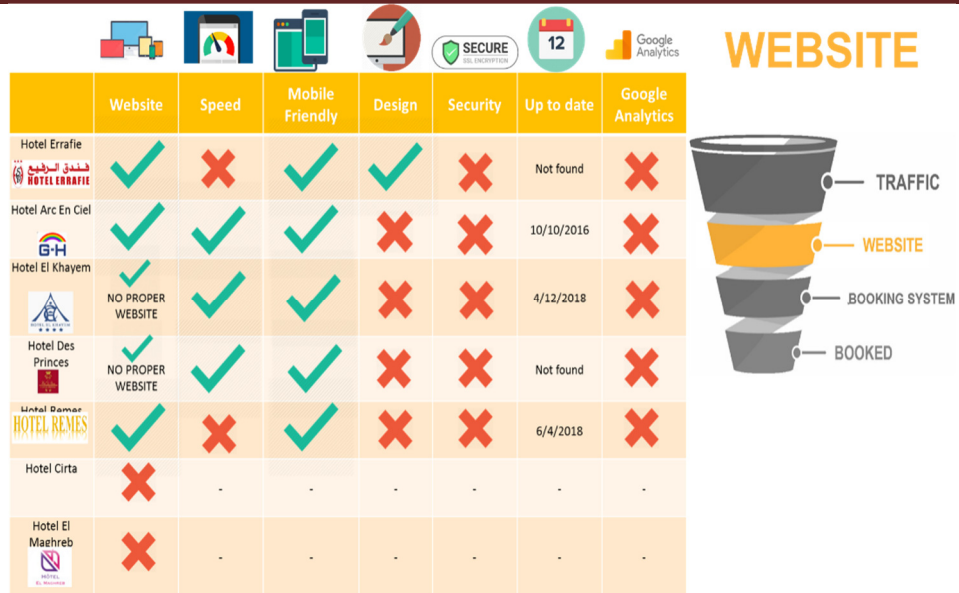


	Google My Business	Booking websites	Social Media	Ads	Google Rating/5	SEO Rank/Page	Google Hotels Rank
Hotel Hocine	✓	✓	✓	✗	4.0 (254)	3/2	12
Hotel Ibis Costantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	3.7 (46)	2/1	3
Hotel Novotel Constantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	3.5 (345)	-	9
Hotel Marriott Constantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	4.3 (421)	6/3	2
Hotel Protea Constantine	✓	✓	Not Connected	✗	4.1 (65)	1/1	1
Hotel El Bey	✗	✓	✓	✗	4.0 (71)	4/2	4








• Step 2: The hotel website index.




	Website	Speed	Mobile Friendly	Design	Security	Up to date	Google Analytics
Hotel Hocine	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗	23/8/2015	✗
Hotel Ibis Costantine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	23/2/2019	✓
Hotel Novotel Constantine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	29/1/2019	✓
Hotel Marriott Constantine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11/2/2019	✓
Hotel Protea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	11/2/2019	✓
Hotel El Bey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	12/3/2017	✗



WEBSITE

	Website	Speed	Mobile Friendly	Design	Security	Up to date	Google Analytics
Hotel Errafie 	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	Not found	✗
Hotel Arc En Ciel 	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	10/10/2016	✗
Hotel El Khayem 	NO PROPER WEBSITE	✓	✓	✗	✗	4/12/2018	✗
Hotel Des Princes 	NO PROPER WEBSITE	✓	✓	✗	✗	Not found	✗
Hotel Damar 	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗	6/4/2018	✗
Hotel Cirta 	✗	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hotel El Mæhreb 	✗	-	-	-	-	-	-



• **Step 3: Hotel reservation system indicator.**



BOOKING SYSTEM

	Available	Payment Dinar	Payment Visa/Master	Free Registration	Security
Hotel Hocine 	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓
Hotel Ibis Costantine 	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Hotel Novotel Constantine 	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Hotel Marriott Constantine 	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Hotel Protea Constantine 	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓
Hotel El Bey 	✓	✗	✗	✓	✗



	AVAILABLE NOW	Payment Dinar	Payment Visa/Master	Free Registration	SECURE SSL ENCRYPTION
Hotel Errafie	✗	-	-	-	-
Hotel Arc En Ciel	✗	-	-	-	-
Hotel El Khayem	✗	-	-	-	-
Hotel Des Princes	✗	-	-	-	-
Hotel Remes	✗	-	-	-	-
Hotel Cirta	✗	-	-	-	-
Hotel El Maghreb	✗	-	-	-	-

4. CONCLUSION

The results show that the majority of hotels in the province of Constantine do not apply digital marketing tools and even free of charge, except for international hotels that have branches in the province of Constantine.

Conclusion, there are a lot of challenges which digital marketing applied in hotels, may face as: expertise and knowledge with digital marketing, creating relevant and rich content on hotel website, effective social media management, determining appropriate digital channel, measuring and tracking performance of digital marketing tools.

This research will be useful for website managers to understand what keywords the tourist use while searching destination information before and after the booking of the room.

The manager of hotel can take these pieces of suggestions:

- Track your Customers Behavior and activity after the service.
- Create a Loyalty Program.
- Use Social Media Marketing.
- Create Content & track your social media accounts and reviews.
- Have a Customer Centric Strategy, where you develop the customer

Experience.

- Make your Service Compatible with the Local Customer's Culture.
- Use All kinds of Advertising for More Visibility.

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