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WEB SEARCH DATA AS AN INDICATOR OF TOURISM DEMAND: IMPLICATIONS FOR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

ABSTRACT

The increasing availability of digital data has created new opportunities for analysing and understanding tourist behaviour in the context of digital strategic communication. This study focuses on the potential of web search data as an indicator of tourism interest and examines its implications for strategic communication in tourism. Using Google search data, keyword analysis is applied to identify patterns of destination-related searches across countries. Following a pretest, the expressions "travel to" and "visit" were selected for the analysis of online tourism interest. The dataset comprises high-volume search queries from the 34 most populous countries. The data are derived from 2019, which serves as a benchmark year for international tourism activities. The findings indicate that search query data can serve as a meaningful indicator of tourism demand and reveal differences in how destinations are explored online. The expression "travel to" is more frequently associated with broad, exploratory searches, whereas "visit" tends to indicate more specific, destination-focused interest. Correlation analysis shows a significant positive relationship between search interest and tourism demand indicators. The study highlights the value of search behaviour analysis as a complementary methodological approach and demonstrates its relevance for strategic communication, public relations, destination marketing and management.

Keywords: search query, big data, tourism destination, e-tourist, strategic communication.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism promotional tools used by countries and tourist boards nowadays are oriented towards digital sphere. Online platforms are new strategic points for attracting new generations of tourists. The internet is growing and so is the significance and understanding on the usage of big data and artificial intelligence (AI). Web analytics is becoming one of the pillars and a crucial source of information for business planning and strategic thinking. Destination experience is shared via different online channels. User-generated content (also tourist-generated content) is constantly growing together with "data exhaust" produced by online user activities. Proportionally is growing the importance of those data for strategic decision-making but also, from the tourist perspective, the significance in choosing certain destination. The data represents a challenge and an opportunity at the same time. First, a challenge of promptly communicating and maintaining a good relationship with target publics (among them tourists) and, secondly, an opportunity to recognize their needs through their comments, reviews, devices and transactions. Collecting this kind of data, in accordance with privacy and personal data protection, can improve tourist offers and services. It is known that excellent public relations and in extension strategic communication rely on two-way symmetrical communication (Grunig and Grunig 2008), listening to and hearing what their publics want. to be adjusted to their specific needs. It is a sustainable point of view on organizations, destinations, and tourism in general.

The concept big data gives different perspective on data collection and analysis. It is the data that needs to be defined, selected and extracted from the sum of existing data. At the same time, with the progressive development of AI, it becomes a fuel for artificial intelligence. The interdependence of big data and AI is very strong because those large data sets need a creator and interpreter of the insights. This could be human or AI supported researcher. The use of big data and AI has been widely promoted in many areas nowadays. Medical staff could make personalized patient charts, they could be used in agriculture (using data from sensors) for making better decisions how to grow crops or for making predictions, recognizing certain trends and patterns in human thinking and behaviour.

The latter possibility of big data implementation has a very important role in strategic communication. When thinking about big data coming from user-generated content, their devices and transactions, different opportunities come to mind, such as opinion mining/sentiment analysis, text summarization, collecting location data and web search data (Li et al. 2018). Users search the web using internet browsers or search engines such as Google. These engines all use certain algorithms that make searching easier and more time-effective. The most popular search terms show up first. Google Autocomplete results therefore provide certain insights into what are the most popular queries around certain

topic. It is fundamentally keyword research. By contextualizing this data, it can take on a much deeper meaning and significance.

There are some challenges that need to be addressed and discussed in relation to web search data. There is an issue with replicability of research based on this data considering enormous data generated every second and secondly the question of those massive and anonymous number of users that create these data (Troumbis and Iosifidis 2020). Regarding that, it is important to emphasize "the rule of thumb" in the internet culture – the idea about only 1% of the users actively participating in the internet community and 99% of the users only lurking. Furthermore, the limitations of web search data could be also associated with their constrained linguistic diversity (Troumbis and Iosifidis 2020).

Considering some of these limitations, this paper is focused on user web search data. It is examining how can search engines be used for big data research and getting insights within strategic communication in tourism. Most of the studies in communication science is focused on user opinions and experiences through published content on digital platforms. Certainly, user sentiments towards certain destination are valuable in the tourism sector. But also, SEO* keywords and optimization for destination promotion and branding are important in the tourism industry. However, deeper analysis and interpretation of web search terms often remain neglected as it is pointed out to be time-consuming. In this study, web search data from Google Autocomplete results were analysed with the aim of discovering which countries and destinations were popular at the peaks of global tourism in 2019. The analysis is aimed at examining the potential of keyword research to reveal users/tourists' digital habits associated with tourism online search. Furthermore, an additional aim of this research is to determine the relationship between e-tourists' interests and destination visits.

BIG DATA IN TOURISM

Tourists leave their trace online before they decide to visit a tourism destination. With the development of digital platforms and increasingly frequent digital communication, the concept of e-tourism has emerged, which encompasses various activities on the internet aimed at researching destinations and making decisions regarding a stay in the destination (Petr, 2008). Li et al. (2023) emphasize that e-tourism "establishes commercial links via the Internet to supply tourism-related items/products, such as flights, hotel reservations, and vehicle rentals". Ödemiş (2022) highlights the characteristics of an e-tourist who organizes a trip and makes travel decisions through the effective use of ICT technology. E-tourists are also active after the visit when they share their experiences online.

Personalized online promotion campaigns are benefits of collecting big

* Search Engine Optimization

data in tourism industry. Aggregating data from different sources entails obtaining more information about user/tourist needs, thus implying better decision-making for them and tourism experts. Li et al. (2018) emphasize that big data in tourism research comes from three different data sources – users, devices and operations. User-generated content is mostly created in two data types – online textual and photo data. This kind of data can be analysed in various ways. For example, sentiment analysis can identify the attitudes of tourists towards a certain destination. A literature review shows that, apart from users as a data source, big data in tourism is collected from some devices (GPS data, Bluetooth data, WiFi data…) and operations that make transaction data (Li et al. 2018). Transaction data can be collected through user web search. Randy Olson made an analysis with Google autocomplete by typing "Why is [country] so" (Kleinman 2014). The results revealed many stereotypes in most popular search queries concerning countries in Europe. Web search data enabled through Google predictions also represent a form of transaction data. Big data can also be collected in other operations such as webpage visiting data, online booking data and consumer cards data (Li et al. 2018). Song and Liu (2017) claim that the main purpose of big data in tourism is to enhance emotional connection between tourists and other stakeholders in this industry by giving insights into how to improve customer services. Through a blend of various collected data – users, devices and operations, together with their association, integration and correct interpretation (sometimes with the support of AI), managers in tourism can be more efficient in strategic communication. They can predict the steps that tourists will take, thus providing better service to meet their expectations. Höpken et al. (2018) emphasize the concept of the "tourism knowledge destination" (TKD) as a strategic framework for business intelligence and data mining by using different data sources and improving management decision-making. A study by Truong (2020) gives a marketing perspective on the tourism search patterns and the volume of keywords related to cultural information in different tourism regions of Vietnam - Hanoi, Hue, Danang, Hoi An and Ho Chi Minh. Different tools for opinion mining can help in analysis of tourist feedback such as user ratings and reviews. Traces that users leave by searching the web provide necessary information for strategic approach. Li et al. (2020) suggest in their study on forecasting tourist arrivals at Siguniang Mountain in China that predicting tourist demand based on big data from search engines and online review platforms can significantly improve forecasting performance. Li et al. (2020) and Li and Law (2019) in their studies show the possibilities of using Google search data and search query data potential. However, many methods and tools used for big data analysis have yet to be improved and further developed. Li et al. (2021) think that search engine data is mostly used for forecasting research and "methodological advancements in text mining, sentiment analysis, and social network analysis are required to

transform data into time series for forecasting".

Tourist boards are now constantly developing new applications for getting more information about tourism trends and tourist needs. The UN Tourism, formerly The World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), awards the best projects for Innovation in Research and Technology*. The winners are those countries and innovative projects that provide solutions in the direction of sustainable and smart tourism. Big data is after all in the essence of smart tourism. It is regarded as sustainable tourism with a new way of thinking. "A smart tourism ecosystem (STE) consequently can be defined as a tourism system that takes advantage of smart technology in creating, managing and delivering intelligent touristic services/experiences and is characterized by intensive information sharing and value" Gretzel et al. (2015, p. 8). It seems that opportunities for using and interpreting big data are almost unlimited. Some studies show that combining search engine data with historical tourism data and weather data can enable daily tourism volume forecasting for tourist attraction (Bi et al. 2020). Truong (2020) emphasizes that keyword research can enable linking users to specific sites by revealing relevant keywords. Therefore, this type of analysis can provide insight into tourists' opinions to explain how the image of a place/destination is formed.

Big Data for Strategic Communication

Contemporary strategic communication integrates public relations and marketing communications. Without research there is no serious planning of communication. Therefore, PR and marketing experts use different approaches to collect data about their publics. Planning communication programs today means to consider data from diverse sources. Internet data has a strong impact on research, planning and evaluation in the field of communication. There are several important characteristics that make big data very useful in public relations and marketing research. Strong (2015) emphasizes some of them: it is social data which allows examination of social relationships; it is longitudinal data that can be traced and gives an insight on how users behave; it is breadth of data, which means that the web remembers everything; it is real-time data; it is unobtrusive data – therefore, users are not involved in the process of collecting data; it is retrospective data and all digital activities are recorded. Wiencierz and Röttger (2017) also see numerous advantages of using big data in public relations and marketing communication: better communication with diverse targeted publics, online touchpoint analysis, fast identification of topics for storytelling and issue analysis, recognition of important influencers, better reputation management, better customer support services and brand communication, use of predictive analytics. Big data could have a significant influence on decision-

* https://www.unwto.org/UNWTO-awards

making. Yang and Kang point out that: "Nowadays, the planning and implementation of any strategic communications campaign relies on how consumer behavior data are understood" (2015, p. 89).

These data are often aggregated from user-generated content in different form (ratings, reviews, comments…) and offers a basis for opinion formation and motivation for purchase. Detection of topics and trends in society are important parts of communication management within public relations and strategic communication. By using big data, public relations and marketing experts can recognize users that can reach and have influence on other users. Taking all this into account, digital linguistics as an approach for better understanding digital communication together with web search data and keyword research are becoming increasingly important and high on the list of priorities in developing tourism promotion strategies. Tabesh et al. (2019) summarize that even with continuous development and progress in big data analytics, many organizations still do not seem to be using big data effectively for strategic planning and decision making. Brewis et al. (2023) point out that big data "can improve the profitability and competitiveness of organisations by extending market knowledge and strategic marketing insight" but still organizations are having a hard time with management and use of big data.

GOOGLE SEARCH ENGINE

A predictive use of big data and their interpretation require a serious attention. Especially when it comes to web search data, misinterpretations are likelier to occur, which can be seen from the well-known case of Google Flu Trends (Google, 2019). This Google service was used for estimating influenza outbreaks in many countries. The algorithm used search queries associated with the flu to predict where the disease would spread. Initially, Google stated that their service had over 90% match with the records of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (Ginsberg et al. 2009). However, a lot of attention was drawn during 2013 when Google Flu Trends overestimated the disease spread by predicting that 11% of the U.S. population had influenza, which was almost twice as high as the prediction of the Centers for Disease Control. Strong (2015) emphasizes that the reasons for that lie in the inadequacy of the approach which did not consider the context of the counted web searches. The publicity of the topic and increased interest for influenza on social media were the reasons why there was an increase in web search rather than a real outbreak. For these reasons, Google Flu Trends made a significant misjudgement.

The idea behind Google autocomplete is to reduce typing by about 25 percent and Google estimates it saves overall more than 200 years of typing time per day (Sullivan, 2020). Google autocomplete results are not suggestions; they rather represent an algorithm that offers predictions based

on users' searches on Google. The algorithm works automatically. Therefore, it entails no human intervention and influence on the results. It is based on a few key factors, such as how often other users search specific terms and whether it is also associated with other popular topics. The algorithm provides trending searches that are also associated with the user's location and previous searches. Vanamala et al. (2016) had in mind something similar for e-tourists - an intelligent tourist web search engine. They developed an emotion-based search technique which takes whole queries typed by users and then filters the unwanted keywords (Vanamala et al. 2016).

When using Google, searches made in the past can affect overall Google autocomplete results depending on location. Consequently, Google Trends can be used for getting insights about overall popular search terms. It can show most searched keywords in a certain period. Moreover, popular keywords can show which topics have high media coverage. Trending searches represent "popular topics in your area that change during the day and aren't related to your search history" (Google 2025). Some terms can be without predictions, which can be caused by several reasons: the search term is not so popular; the search term is completely new (needs some time to have visible predictions); if an insulting or sensitive term was related with a name or if the search term violates Google's policies (Google 2025).

RESEARCH ON WEB SEARCH DATA

The main aim is to examine possibilities of keyword research based on web search data in the tourism industry and strategic communication. Secondly, the aim of this research is to analyse Google search results, as an output derived from big-data systems, to determine which destinations retrospectively arouse interest among users at the peak times of international tourist arrivals in 2019. This pre-pandemic year is often described as a referent and one of the most successful years in terms of international arrivals (Richter 2025). Web search results from different countries are compared and correlated with available secondary data on international travel from selected countries to better understand the relationship between e-tourists' interests and realized visits to tourism destinations.

Research Questions

1. What aspects are displayed in web search results when the keywords "travel to" and "visit" are used?
2. Does geographic proximity influence the popularity of certain tourism destinations among users?
3. Is there a significant relationship between users' online search interests and travel to the destination?
4. Is there a difference in the significance of the relationship between users' online search interests and travel to the destination in different world regions?

Sampling

One of the objectives was to get an insight into web search results from different locations/countries. Therefore, the analysis included most searched terms from 34 most populated countries according to the Central Intelligence Agency (2019) and the U.S. Bureau world population statistics.* Combined with these data are user statistics gathered from Internet Worlds Stats (2019) and the countries with the highest number of internet users were included. Certain countries that have a population of over 40 million, such as Iran and Sudan, were not included because of the restrictions imposed on Google in these countries in the period of analysis in 2019. Consequently, web search data was not available. In the analysed period, the countries and regions with restricted access were Crimea, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria. When it comes to Google search from China, it should be mentioned that Google redirected all web search from Google.cn to Google.com.hk located in Hong Kong. The higher number of users from each country, the more relevant web search results. The data for analysis were collected using Keyword Tool*, an independent software used to provide insight into users' most popular searches and search volumes from different locations. It serves as an unbiased search tool, comparable to the partially unbiased Google Incognito mode. The data included in this research were from June and July 2019. Based on data from tourism destinations worldwide, international tourist arrivals reached 1.5 billion in 2019 and continued to grow following strong growth in 2018 (+6%) (UNWTO 2020). The unit of analysis represents search volume, counted in thousands per month. For the correlation research, a sample of 125 units of analysis was selected, representing the relationship between the searched terms as the independent variable and visits to the destination in 2019 as the dependent variable. The most searched terms from each country were included and correlated with the most visited destinations for each country. The results were also considered and compared by groups of countries belonging to one of the world regions. Countries from Africa were not included in the correlation analysis due to a lack of data on visits abroad in 2019.

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Methods and Procedures

In his book Keyword Intelligence, Jones (2012, foreword) describes the essence of the keyword research approach: “The better you can understand your keyword universe, searcher intent, and now, social media conversations, the more opportunities you will have to connect with consumers, identify new products, and expand into new markets”. For the purposes of this study, based on keyword analysis, Google, as the most popular

* These countries with population over 40 million are: China, India, United States, Indonesia, Brazil, Pakistan, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Russia, Japan, Mexico, Ethiopia, Philippines, Egypt, Vietnam, Congo, Turkey, Germany, Thailand, France, United Kingdom, Italy, Myanmar (Burma), Tanzania, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Kenya, Colombia, Argentina, Ukraine, Algeria, Uganda, Iraq.

* Keyword Tool, available at: keywordtool.io

search engine, was chosen for the analysis of web searches for tourism destinations. Google results were analysed using the Keyword Tool service.

The analysis was carried out only for the English language because, when searching for information about foreign destinations, users often use this most widely accepted international language, and tourist boards use it in their promotional campaigns for international markets. Considering the aim of this research, key search terms were selected after a pre-test for the analysis. Terms such as "tourist", "travel", and "visit" are frequently used in combination with "destination". The three terms in question are defined lexicographically as follows. "Tourist" is "a person who travels and visits places for pleasure and interest" or "someone who visits a place for pleasure and interest, usually while on holiday" (Cambridge Dictionary 2025). Keywords such as "travel" and "visit" are closely associated with tourism intentions. "Travel" means "to make a journey, usually over a long distance" or "to go from one place to another on a trip, usually over a long distance" (Cambridge Dictionary 2025). The term "travel to" was used in keyword research. Some "travel to" autocomplete results, such as "travel to moon", "travel to agartha", and "travel to mars", were not included in the analysis because the research focuses on real destinations available in the tourism market. Secondly, "visit" represents "an occasion when you visit a place or person" or "to visit a person or place, usually for a short time" and "to go to a place in order to experience it, or to go to a person in order to spend time together" (Cambridge Dictionary 2025). "Visit" is also a keyword often used by tourist boards in destination promotion and branding, e.g., 'Visit Greece'"*. "Accommodation" was disregarded in this analysis as autocomplete results showed there are various reasons for accommodating a person (work, migration, tourism, a friendly visit). Quantitative analysis and descriptive statistics were used in this keyword research. The most popular autocomplete results for each search term were selected in each country and then summarized and descriptively represented as an overall result in 34 countries. Correlation research is conducted between independent variable – web search interests for certain tourism destinations and dependent variable – data on international travel from selected countries in 2019. Existing data on international travel was collected from countries' national statistics and available surveys on visits abroad.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. One is the exclusive use of the English language for keyword research, which means that interests in destinations expressed in other languages are not captured. Secondly, search trends can be influenced by specific events that, during certain periods, receive significant media attention and thus

* www.visitgreece.gr

generate increased interest in particular search terms. Moreover, the selected search terms for analysis do not solely represent interest or intention to visit certain destinations. Finally, there is a challenge related to the opacity of search algorithms and the rapid generation of data. The research results should not be generalised but can serve as useful indicators of users' search patterns regarding tourism.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Keyword Research Results

The results of the analysis indicate that, in the 34 most populated countries, users entering the search term “travel to” in the browser tended to find information mostly about Japan and Australia (Table 1). These two terms are followed by other searches such as Canada, Antarctica, Africa, Turkey, Thailand, China, Korea, India, Greece and Bali. The results also show that users search for information not only about a specific destination, such as Bali, but, even more, they seek broader insights about the country or even the continent where they intend to travel or in which they are interested. Bali is positioned within top ten destinations associated with the search term “travel to” representing an island and not a whole country, or a continent. Antarctica is also among listed destinations as a continent that is almost not inhabited, except for – occasionally – scientists and their supporting staff. It seems that in the era of globalization, when travel has become accessible and affordable for many people, tourists want to go where others have not yet been. This is also could be interpreted as a sign of resistance to mass tourism and over-tourism which are lately becoming significant challenges for tourism destinations. Thinking about traveling to Antarctica could be just an imaginative idea but some findings indicate that in the 2018-2019 tourism season, Antarctica welcomed over 55,000 visitors, an increase of 7% on the previous year (Shijin et al. 2020). This points to an increase in new forms of tourism such as “polar tourism” (Shijin et al. 2020). Antarctica tourism is rapidly growing nowadays and exceeding 100,000 annual visitors in last few years (IAATO 2026).

The results suggest that Australia and Japan could be very popular search terms among 34 countries due to their geographic proximity to many of the most populated. In 2018-19, Australia recorded a record 9.3 million international visitors (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2020).

Table 1. Searched world destinations - search term "travel to" in 34 countries (Keyword Tool)*

	Travel to	Frequency
1	japan	17
2	australia	17
3	canada	13
4	antarctica	12
5	africa	10
6	turkey	9
7	thailand	9
8	china	8
9	korea	7
10	india	7
11	greece	7
12	bali	7

When it comes to results with the search term "visit", the most popular and destination was Australia. It is followed by Amsterdam, Rwanda, Britain, London, Dubai, Auschwitz, Korea, Canada, Bali and Antarctica (Table 2). The results indicate that there are some differences and similarities when using search terms "travel to" and "visit". "Travel to" is used when searching is broader and more general, while "visit" is related to more specific destination search. There are more trending cities and places associated with this search term such as Amsterdam, London, Dubai, Auschwitz and Bali. It is interesting that among other destinations a specific location such as Auschwitz are also popular. Auschwitz was "the largest of the Nazi concentration and death camps" (History.com editors 2024), located in southern Poland. Auschwitz-Birkenau recorded a record number of visitors in 2019: around 2.32 million people from all over the world visited the former Nazi concentration and extermination camp (https://www.auschwitz.org/).

An insight that Rwanda is among popular web searches in selected countries proves that this country has been developing strongly digital tourism. The "Visit Rwanda"* promotional campaign, which included a partnership with the famous Arsenal football club, contributed to interest in Rwanda (Yaw Voets 2021). "In just over two decades after a devastating civil war, Rwanda became travel's best kept secret" (Nagy 2019). The interest in Rwanda could also be attributed to its geographical proximity to populous African countries included in this study.

* The table shows the frequency of terms searched for on the internet, which are ranked in the top ten in 34 countries
* https://visitrwanda.com/tourism/

Table 2. Searched world destinations - search term "visit" in 34 countries (Keyword Tool)**

	Visit	Frequency
1	australia	18
2	amsterdam	13
3	rwanda	12
4	britain	12
5	london	11
6	dubai	11
7	auschwitz	10
8	korea	7
9	canada	7
10	bali	7
11	antarctica	7

Geographic Proximity

The results in Table 3 show that most popular searches are associated with near or neighbouring destinations. For example, users in China mostly searched for Hong Kong, while users in India for Bhutan, users in the United States for Cuba and users in Indonesia for Bali (Table 5). This shows that users/tourists are mostly realistic about their travelling plans. They tend to opt for closer destinations. The reasons could be found in travelling expenses and travelling duration.

Table 3. Geographical Proximity and web search popularity - search term "travel to" (Keyword Tool)

China	India	United States	Indonesia	Brazil	Pakistan	Nigeria	Banglade sh	Russia	Japan
travel to hong kong	travel to bhutan	travel to cuba	travel to bali	travel to brazil	travel to pakistan	travel to canada	travel to india	travel to russia	travel to japan
travel to china	travel to maldives	travel to greece	travel to japan	travel to canada	travel to turkey	travel to dubai	travel to bhutan	travel to moscow	travel to tokyo
travel to canada	travel to ooty	travel to canada	travel to singapore	travel to usa	travel to lahore	travel to ghana	travel to thailand	travel to japan	travel to tohoku

The comparison of the results shows that the search term "visit" is also associated with closer destinations and a possible intention of visiting them (Table 4). For example, users in China search for Shanghai, users in India for Delhi, users in the United States for Orlando and users in Indonesia for Singapore.

** The table shows the frequency of terms searched for on the internet, which are ranked in the top ten in 34 countries

Table 4. Geographic Proximity and web search popularity - search term 'visit' (Keyword Tool)

China	India	United States	Indonesia	Brazil	Pakistan	Nigeria	Bangladesh	Russia	Japan
visit shanghai	visit place in delhi	visit orlando	visit indonesia	visit orlando	visit dubai	visit dubai	visit bangladesh	visit tatarstan	visit japan
visit korea	visit dubai	visit philly	visit singapore	visit usa 2019	visit australia	visit rwanda	visit australia	visit petersburg	visit auschwitz
visit rovaniemi	visit australia	visit florida	visit malaysia	visit recife	visit azerbaijan	visit canada	visit bhutan	visit tyumen	visit amsterdam

Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis examined the relationship between users' search interest in destinations and actual visits to foreign destinations from their country. The overall results of the correlation research show that the Pearson correlation coefficient establishes a significant, large positive relationship between users' search and visits to destinations ($r(123) = .505$, $p < .001$) (Table 5). In addition, countries were grouped based on their geographic proximity and affiliation to specific regions of the world. The results of the correlation and comparison of the grouped countries show certain differences. The Middle Eastern countries show the highest correlation coefficient indicating that there is a significant large positive relationship between users' search interests and destination visit ($r(8) = .656$, $p = .039$). The Southeast Asian countries show a higher correlation coefficient than the European countries, and in both cases, there is a significant medium positive correlation. The correlation results for the Latin American countries and the East Asian countries indicate that there is a non-significant medium positive relationship, while for the East Asian countries there is a non-significant small negative relationship. These results indicate a certain level of confidence and potential in predicting tourist behaviour based on search interest.

Table 5. Correlation between users' search interests and destination visit

Total sample N=125	Correlation
All countries	$(r(123) = .505, p < .001)$
Middle East	$(r(8) = .656, p = .039)$
Southeast Asia	$(r(23) = .439, p = .028)$
Europe	$(r(28) = .384, p = .036)$
Latin America	$(r(18) = .434, p = .056)$
South Asia	$(r(13) = .101, p = .720)$
East Asia	$(r(13) = .333, p = .226)$

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

E-tourists and their intentions are of great importance for tourism destinations. The communication strategies and tactics of tourist boards and other tourism stakeholders are largely geared towards the digital environment and the promotion of a desirable destination image. Monitoring users' tourism-related activities brings many benefits, such as predicting visit intentions, increasing the recognition value of destinations in a competitive environment, adapting supply to tourist demand etc.

The possibilities for using big data in tourism and strategic communication are immense, especially with the rapid development of artificial intelligence. The use of big data can enable time-efficient decision-making in the creation of communication strategies and programs. Experts in tourism and strategic communication will gain even more benefits in the future from the ability to collect and interpret big data. Tourist-generated content, along with the activities users perform online and, on their devices, provides valuable information for the tourism and communication industries, as well as for communication research.

Digital words, as user-generated traces on the internet, are attracting the interest of new disciplines such as digital linguistics, which are being developed to provide deeper insight into digital language and generated textual content.

In this paper, the results of the keyword analysis indicate that in countries with the most internet users, searches generally focus on already established tourism destinations. However, the results also show that some users are interested in discovering less explored areas and less touristy places. The results show that users primarily tend to search for destinations which are closer to their location. This may be due to factors such as travel costs, perceived safety and cultural familiarity. The correlation research results indicate some predictive power for destination visits based on users' search interest. The comparison of different countries and regions shows that level of confidence can vary. This correlation discrepancy could be conditioned by culture. When comparing European and Asian tourists, there are certain cultural differences that influence travel. While they cannot be generalised, they can explain certain differences in the relationship between search interest and destination visit. For example, some studies (Li et al. 2018) suggest that tourists from collectivist cultures in Asia are more likely to travel in groups or with family, whereas tourists from more individualistic Western cultures more often travel independently. Cultural background may also influence food preferences and perceptions of language barriers.

Future keyword research in tourism and strategic communication could adopt a mixed-method approach, with in-depth analysis considered for tourism-related keywords. Keywords are contextual, and interpretation should be based on clear evidence. As each country is unique, specific search terms may enable deeper analysis and interpretation of tourism

needs and experiences, leading to a better understanding of a destination's travel intentions and image. The use of various tools, from those providing search volume insights to more advanced tools such as artificial intelligence that summarise and highlight key search preferences, offers diverse perspectives on the interests and intentions of e-tourists.

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PODACI IZ INTERNETSKOGA PRETRAŽIVANJA KAO POKAZATELJ TURISTIČKE POTRAŽNJE: IMPLIKACIJE ZA STRATEŠKO KOMUNICIRANJE

Sve veća dostupnost digitalnih podataka stvorila je nove mogućnosti za analizu i razumijevanje ponašanja turista u kontekstu digitalnoga strateškoga komuniciranja. Ovo istraživanje usredotočeno je na potencijal podataka iz internetskoga pretraživanja kao pokazatelja interesa za turističku destinaciju. Rad propituje implikacije takvih podataka za strateško komuniciranje u turizmu. Koristeći podatke Google pretraživanja, primijenjena je analiza ključnih riječi za identifikaciju obrazaca pretraživanja povezanih s destinacijama u različitim zemljama. Nakon prethodnoga testiranja izrazi „putovanje u“ i „posjet“ odabrani su za analizu interesa turističkih aktivnosti na internetu. Skup podataka obuhvaća najpopularnije upite pretraživanja iz 34 najmnogoljudnije zemlje. Podatci su izvedeni iz 2019. godine, koja služi kao referentna godina za međunarodne turističke aktivnosti. Nalazi pokazuju da podatci o upitima pretraživanja mogu poslužiti kao potencijalan pokazatelj turističke potražnje i otkriti razlike u načinu na koji korisnici istražuju destinacije na internetu. Izraz „putovanje u“ češće se povezuje s obuhvatnijim pretragama, dok „posjet“ obično ukazuje na specifičniji interes usmjeren na destinaciju. Korelacijska analiza ukazuje na značajnu pozitivnu povezanost između interesa za pretraživanje i pokazatelja turističke potražnje. Istraživanje naglašava vrijednost analize korisničkih obrazaca pretraživanja kao komplementarnoga metodološkoga pristupa koji je relevantan za strateško komuniciranje, odnose s javnošću, marketing i upravljanje destinacijama.

Ključne riječi: upit za pretraživanje; veliki podaci; turistička destinacija; e-turist; strateško komuniciranje.