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A Comprehensive Exploration of the Jordan Tourism Board's 2023 Strategic Planning, News, and Social Media

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry is one of constant change in its nature, as it operates within a world that has become increasingly globalized with vast opportunities through the digital age. The study is anchored in two core research questions, determine the prevailing themes and narrations about 2023 news and posts that are related to Visit Jordan and secondly to find out how those narrations were constructed and what implications does it have for Jordan's tourism industry. Content analysis of Visit Jordan's news articles and social media posts in 2023 concerning major attractions and forms of tourism in Jordan is another topic that the study explores. However, cultural aspects emerge as the main focus of this type of tourism including such sites as Jerash, Petra, etc. Besides, architectural and heritage, natural tourism, adventure, outdoor tourism, festive and religious tourism, events, and seasons tourism, plus the diversification of Jordan's provision.

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Introduction

Many economies rely heavily on the tourism industry for boosting their economy and promoting culture development globally. Likewise, Jordan which lies on the center-body of the Middle East is not excluded from it (Muheisen, 2023). For decades, Jordan has become one of the most desirable locations that are marked with mixed memories of past, present and future (Jordan on the List of Lonely Planet's Top Countries to Visit in 2019 | Visit Jordan, 2019). Anthropology in action: critical for example, the world has been looking at the rich cultural heritage of the country represented in iconic sites such as Petra and the buzzing city of Amman (UNESCO Jordan Celebrates 50 Years of World Heritage Convention with Photo Exhibition, 2022).

However, the tourism industry of Jordan though being very attractive is highly complex and intensively competition. JTB has steered the growth and development of the sector by implementing appropriate measures and promoting tourism as a tool for investment in this sector. These already have made appreciable contribution towards development of tourism as a pillar in the economics of our nation (MoEnv., 2020).

Therefore, the ability of JTB's marketing policies in generating and maintaining tourists traffic and the role of such policies in developing Jordan's tourism industry are key issues for investigation. This study looks into who we are and tries to unravel what the messages that were shared by JTB entail in 2023. The research problem at the core of this study is encapsulated in the following research questions:

Firstly, what has been the dominant inspiration for the 2023 News/Post visit Jordan? This question could be addressed when analyzing the narrations and shared topics in JTB's content produced, with the broader objectives to enhance Content-Driven Tourism Marketing (Camprubí & Coromina, 2016).

Secondly, how are these themes developed and what are the ramifications associated with representing Jordan's touristic industry and attractions? This query addresses the structuring of themes and narratives involved in depicting Jordan as a top tourism destination. The study also tries to look into the effects that these stories have on travelers' attitudes toward visiting Jordan.

In order to achieve this goal, our research objectives include the following. First of all, this study will investigate the promotion materials for Jordan produced by the JTB including recurrent themes and ideas presented within such materials and their contribution to the image of Jordan as prime tourism destination. The content analysis will involve examination of the textual and visual components that constitute the JTB's advertising materials.

In addition, our aim is to evaluate the efficiency of the JTB's promotion means which relate to attracting future tourists and inviting them to come to Jordan. In the process, we will examine the extent to which they are compliant with the principles associated with effective DMS, especially those that use stories and themes to develop an iconic photograph.

Therefore, we hope that our study will offer additional insights into the effectiveness of marketing and especially content-driven initiatives for enhancing tourism in Jordan. This exploration will not just illuminate the particular techniques used by the JTB but also generate some lessons and advice for destination marketing in general. The results of this study will be useful for scholar's and practitioner in the field of tourism and marketing, for next years to influence about the future of Jordanian tourism industry.

Literature Review

The tourism industry in Jordan holds a crucial position within the nation's economic framework, contributing significantly to its overall growth and development. A thorough examination of existing literature reveals a complex interplay of factors that shape this sector. Researchers have delved into various aspects of Jordan's tourism industry, shedding light on key issues that contribute to its success and resilience. One significant area of focus is the importance of destination marketing. Alkhafaji and Kbelah (2019) examine the relationship between accounting conservatism and investment efficiency, emphasizing the influence of managerial ownership on investment decisions, revealing the intricacies of decision-making within the industry. Such research underscores the critical role of informed financial decisions in destination marketing. Additionally, the transformative impact of technological advancements has been highlighted. Momani, Alsakhnini, and Hanaysha (2022) emphasize how technology adoption has enhanced operational efficiency and overall effectiveness in the industry. This underscores the need for technology integration as a cornerstone of destination marketing strategies. Furthermore, the susceptibility of the tourism industry to political crises is a key concern, as demonstrated by Ali Hyasat (2007). His research examines the adverse repercussions of political upheavals on Jordan's tourism and offers strategies for mitigating these challenges. This work underscores the necessity of assessing the impact of political crises on the destination

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image, further reinforcing the significance of destination marketing strategies.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which sent shockwaves through the global tourism industry, receives meticulous attention from W. K. Al-Zoubi (2023). His study dissects the pandemic's economic consequences on Jordan's tourism industry, emphasizing the importance of coordinated support from both the private and government sectors to ensure the industry's resilience. This highlights the need for adaptable marketing strategies in the face of unexpected crises. Environmental sustainability is a recurring theme, particularly through the work of Zain Abdin, Rana Albahsh, and M. Al-Anaswah (2022). They underscore the need for improved green supply chain management standards to enhance corporate governance, emphasizing the role of sustainability in destination marketing. Cultural heritage forms the backbone of Jordan's tourism appeal, as exemplified by Khlaif Mustafa Gharaybeh's (2015) study on desert tourism in Wadi Rum. This research provides valuable insights into the sector's appeal, reinforcing the importance of marketing these unique attractions effectively.

The integration of interactive media and virtual reality in tourism marketing has emerged as a growing trend, as explored by Alkurdi, Alananzeh, Qaddhat, Haijawi, and Alhasanat (2023). Their research reveals the enormous potential of technology in enhancing the tourist experience, making tourism more engaging and informative for travelers. The tourism industry thrives on the effectiveness of its marketing and advertising strategies, and Jordan has embraced this significance to enhance its position within the Middle Eastern tourism landscape. Researchers such as Omar Abedalla Ahmed Alananzeh (2012) have highlighted the profound influence of marketing strategies on visitor satisfaction, emphasizing the pivotal role these strategies play in enhancing the tourist experience.

The role of information technology in marketing, creatively explored by Mashael Saqer Al Khasawneh (2015), underscores the indispensable role of information technology in fostering creative marketing initiatives, expanding tourism markets globally. With the digital age firmly established, online presence has emerged as a cornerstone of the tourism industry, as demonstrated by Ra'ed Masa'deh and his team (2017). Their research emphasizes the importance of maintaining a high-quality online presence to enhance user satisfaction, especially in an increasingly digitized world. Medical tourism has been on the rise globally, and Jordan has identified this sector as a promising area for growth, as highlighted by Abdel Fattah Mahmoud Al-Azzam (2016). His research emphasizes the potential of this sector, focusing on the core components of marketing mix strategies that attract medical tourists to Jordan.

In the pursuit of sustainable tourism, collaborative efforts have been instrumental, exemplified by Mohammed Shunnaq and collaborators (2008). Their research offers a transformative blueprint for sustainable tourism, integrating heritage, archaeology, and religious sites as core components. The impact of external crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, underscores the importance of resilient tourism strategies, as examined by B. H. Al-Nsour (2021). The research offers recommendations for mitigating the impact of external crises and enhancing resilience in the tourism industry, further underscoring the importance of effective marketing in crisis management.

The marketing strategies employed by Jordanian five-star hotels have been explored, with Hussein M. Hussein Ibrahim (2018) shedding light on the complex web of factors influencing these strategies. Understanding these dynamics provides essential insights into tourism marketing and its interplay with broader socio-political contexts. In the modern landscape, electronic marketing plays a pivotal role in influencing consumer purchase decisions, as highlighted by Nour Marwan Qtaishat (2022). The implications for local companies to enhance their electronic marketing methodologies are substantial, particularly in an increasingly digitized world. The impact of Jordan's National Tourism Strategy on the country's economic development is a critical aspect to consider, as shown by Ahmed Mahafzah (2015). The commitment of Jordan's government to invigorate the tourism sector has resulted in a positive ripple effect on the local economy, highlighting the strategic importance of national-level strategies.

In conclusion, the multifaceted nature of marketing and advertising strategies in the tourism sector plays a pivotal role in Jordan's tourism growth. Jordan's rich historical and cultural attractions, coupled with a proactive approach to marketing, position it as a compelling destination within the Middle Eastern tourism landscape. The nuanced findings and insights from these diverse studies serve as valuable compass points, informing, guiding, and potentially transforming Jordan's tourism sector to perpetuate its status as a noteworthy destination for travelers worldwide.

Method and Data

The present study employs a qualitative research approach, specifically thematic analysis, to investigate a corpus of news and social media posts published on the

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official Visit Jordan website in English and both Facebook and Instagram posts during the year 2023 (January to October). This methodological choice was made to elucidate the prevailing themes and underlying narratives in these articles and directions of the posts, aiming to gain a comprehensive understanding of the key topics and discourses shaping the representation of Jordan as a tourist destination. The research questions driving this study are twofold: Firstly, what are the dominant themes and narratives in the 2023 news articles and social media posts on Visit Jordan? Secondly, what are the most attractions and marketing strategies used on Facebook and Instagram? Through thematic analysis, and content analysis this research seeks to uncover the latent patterns, trends, and underlying discourses, thereby contributing to a nuanced comprehension of the promotional strategies and tourist experiences associated with Jordan in 2023, as projected on Visit Jordan's official platform.

Significance of the Study

The relevance of this study is the fact that it will help to understand the promotional strategies and image portrayal of Jordan as a tourism destination through Visit Jordan official website and the Visit Jordan Social Platforms in 2023. This understanding can be important to stakeholders in tourism sector, such as policymakers, marketers, and destination management organizations. Such knowledge can be used to make decisions that will enhance the quality of the content and help the sector of tourism in Jordan to thrive. In addition, the results of the study also have relevance for academia by contributing to the body of knowledge about destination marketing and representation in the digital era and the case of Middle Eastern tourism. In summary, this study aims to uncover the complexities of tourism promotion and the implications for Jordan's position in world tourism, providing practical implications for the economic and social development of the country.

Results

Thematic Analysis of News Articles

Table 1. Thematic Analysis of News Articles

Theme Identifier	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3	Article 4	Article 5
T1: Promotion of Jordan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
T2: Collaboration & Partnerships	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
T3: Economic Impact	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
T4: Sustainable Tourism			✓		
T5: Cultural Exploration			✓		
T6: Community Engagement			✓		
T7: Market Penetration				✓	✓
T8: Television Promotion				✓	✓
T9: Target Audience				✓	✓
T10: Content Distribution				✓	✓

T11: Promotion for Tour Packages				✓	✓

The cross-tabulation table, presented in table 1, offers a concise summary of the most prominent themes identified in the five articles on the tourism sector in Jordan. Here are some observations based on the table:

1. Consistent Themes: Themes run across all five articles to some extent. These comprise the development of Jordan as a tourist site (T1), involvement with other stakeholders (T2), and the role of tourism on the Jordanian economy (T3). This consistency speaks about the central theme of Jordan's tourism policy and its desire to establish Jordan as a desirable destination, forge partnerships and acknowledge the role of tourism in the economy.

2. Unique Themes: There are some themes that are peculiar to different articles. Some of the themes in Article 3 include: sustainable tourism (T4), cultural exploration (T5) and community engagement (T6). This shows that Article 3 specifically focuses on these issues which might be important to tourism in Jordan as regards to something happening or a project.

3. Market-Specific Themes: Articles 4 and 5 also bring into play themes that are related to the penetration of markets (T7), TV promotion (T8), targeting a certain audience (T9), and content distribution (T10). The themes of the articles point to Jordan's new market penetration, especially, Singapore using the television as the advertisement platform, to particular segment of the audience. This strategy also conforms with the idea of making Jordan attractive to prospective tourists worldwide.

4. Promotion for Tour Packages: T11 theme of promoting tour packages is emphasized in Article 4 and Article 5. This theme is related to the strategic objective of attracting potential tourists to select Jordan as a travel destination and the provision of specialized tour packages. This theme is found in both articles and indicates the importance of structured offers to attract tourists.

Generally, the cross-tabulation table, a general comparison of thematic emphasis across the articles is enabled. This article brings out common and unique themes showing strategies of Jordan's tourism industry in attracting foreign tourists and developing tourism as a growth strategy. Content Analysis of Visit Jordan Posts in 2023 (January –October).

Results according to Key Attractions in Jordan

Table 2. Results according to Key Attractions in Jordan

Attraction	Number of Mentions
Petra	4
Dead Sea	4
Wadi Rum	4
Jerash	4
Main Hot Springs	3
Aqaba (Red Sea)	3
As-Salt (UNESCO World Heritage site)	2
Dana Biosphere Reserve	1
Quseir Amra (UNESCO World Heritage Site)	1
Amman Citadel	1
Shaumari Wildlife Reserve	1
Wadi Al Hasa	1
Wadi Mujib (Coral Reefs)	1
Bethany Beyond the Jordan	1

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Umm Qais	1
Citadel (Amman)	1
World of coral reefs in Aqaba	1

Table 2. summarizes briefly but succinctly the attractions in Jordan and the references to them in the analyzed posts. This data has important findings regarding the significance of different places within Jordan tourism story on social media. Well-known sites like Petra, Dead Sea, Wadi Rum, and Jerash, with four mentions, each represent major points of focus in the promotional content. These attractions are clearly of interest to content creators and in harmony with the tourism strategy for being historical, cultural and natural values.

The number of mentions for each attraction is different and highlights the variety of the destinations advertised. The Main Hot Springs, Aqaba (Red Sea), and Dana Biosphere Reserve stand out with three mentions as notable places that feature prominently in the social media conversation. Also, UNESCO World Heritage sites of As-Salt and Quseier Amra were included as they show the strategic importance of culture and the history behind the tourist's promotion.The table also reflects the range of attractions in Jordan, which goes beyond the popular spots like Wadi Al Hasa, Bethany Beyond the Jordan, and Umm Qais. The specific mentions of these places indicate a conscious move to showcase all the places available for tourist exploration outside the normal routes.

Results according to Type of Tourism in Jordan

Table 3. Results according to Type of Tourism in Jordan

Type of Tourism	Number of Repetitions	Posts
Cultural Tourism	4	9 (Quseir Amra), 4 (Jerash), 20 (Jerash), 28 (Jerash)
Historical and Archaeological	3	4 (Jerash), 20 (Jerash), 28 (Jerash)
Architectural and Heritage	2	32 (Umm Qais), 36 (Petra)
Natural Tourism	5	5 (Dead Sea), 17 (Dana Biosphere), 45 (Red Sea in Aqaba), 51 (Main Hot Springs), 56 (Dead Sea)
Adventure and Outdoor	6	21 (Red Sea in Aqaba), 22 (Wadi Rum), 41 (Wadi Rum), 58 (Wadi Rum), 60 (Aqaba), 61 (Red Sea in Aqaba)
Festive and Religious	1	31 (Ramadan Mubarak)
Event and Seasonal	2	24 (World Wildlife Day), 26 (International Women's Day)
Mystery and Curiosity	1	49 (First Lady of Cyprus visiting Amman Citadel)
Night and Stargazing	1	16 (Stargazing in Wadi Rum)
Miscellaneous	16	1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 19, 25, 35, 40, 44, 59, 64, 65

In this section, we examine the forms of tourism advertised in a number of social media posts on the Jordanian tourism industry. Table 2 classifies these posts into the different categories of tourism and counts the number of repetitions for each category. To begin with, the posts are evidently dominated by the kind of tourism referred to as "Cultural Tourism". Majority of these posts fall into this category and are mostly centered on Jerash, historical and archaeological sites. The numerous posts on cultural tourism reinforce the prominence of Jordan's heritage as the main tourism attraction. The "Historical and Archaeological" category is significant although it is to some extent an overlap with cultural tourism. Articles posted in this category mainly revolve around the heritage and the importance of Jerash to Jordan's tourism promotion. The historical sites are considered important by these posts and appeal to a specific group of tourists interested in archaeology and history.

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The posts have given a special attention to "Architectural and Heritage Tourism" and "Natural Tourism" categories, which demonstrates the variety of attractions Jordan has. Though not as much, the distinctive appeal of heritage tourists to sites like Umm Qais and Petra is notable. However, the artificial tourism posts largely focus on Jordan's beauty, mainly highlighting the Dead Sea, Dana Biosphere Reserve, Red Sea in Aqaba, Main Hot Springs, and Wadi Mujib. These posts portray efforts aimed at luring nature admirers and adrenaline junkies to go around Jordan's landscapes.

The adventure and outdoor tourism posts cover different adventure activities such as diving, sandboarding, camel tours and beach activities. These posts signify Jordan commitment towards advertising adventure tourism and targeting tourists who look for outdoor experiences. The table mainly concentrates on certain categories of tourism. However, note that "Festive and Religious tourism," "Event and seasonal tourism," "Mystery and Curiosity tourism," and "Night and Stargazing" appear less. This will be evident under the following categories such as the religious aspect of Jordan's religious events, cultural celebrations during Ramadan, special events such as World Wildlife day, as well as a unique experience of stargazing in Wadi Rum.Last but not least, the "miscellaneous", posts are usually more general and diverse, talking about different aspects of Jordan tourism but without a specific angle. The numerous posts in this category indicate that Jordan wishes to attract numerous tourists by promoting numerous tourist offerings.

Results According to Marketing Strategy

Table 4. Results According to Marketing Strategy

Strategy Type	Number of Repetitions
Destination Promotion	14
Cultural and Historical Emphasis	9
Natural Beauty	8
Adventure Activities	4
Photography	9
Call to Action (CTA)	7
Sustainability and Wildlife	3
Special Occasion Posts	5
Digital Convenience	1
Hashtags	Consistently used

The results table captures adequately the different marketing strategies applied to 69 posts within the framework of the research. It emphasizes "Destination Promotion" with 14 instances in the post as its key focus on the tourism to Jordan. The frequency of "Cultural and Historical Emphasis" (9 occurrences) underlines the heritage dimension of Jordan's attractions. Natural beauty and photography have significant roles to play, emphasizing the beauty of Jordan and the potentials of photography. Seven times, the judicious use of the "Call to Action" (CTA) seeks to engage the audience. Moreover, "Special Occasion Posts" (5 occasions) uses the current events. Although "Adventure Activities" (4 times) and "Sustainability and Wildlife" (3 times) are less frequent, they add diversity to the content. Finally, there is "Digital Convenience" (1 time), which refers to modern conveniences. Relevant hashtags should be consistent in the social media marketing. This analysis of data forms one of the essential parts of the research findings. It also provides a basis for the understanding of social media marketing strategies in the tourism sector.

Recommendations

Stronger collaborative partnerships: To have stronger collaborative partnerships, the tourism industry in Jordan needs to actively embrace a variety of stakeholders. For example, by engaging with local communities, tour operators and international travel agencies, Jordan can develop a wide network that will promote the country as a tourist friendly destination. This is achievable through joint marketing campaigns, pooling of resources and creating unique experiences that depict the diversity of attractions in Jordan.

Diversify Tourism Offerings: Although cultural tourism continues to be pivotal, there is need for an array of

diversified offerings in order to attract a wider range of tourists. By enhancing adventure and outdoor activities, sustainable and wildlife focused experiences and architectural heritage tours can increase the range of tourists coming to Jordan. This may involve developing new tour packages or advertising less known but arresting destinations.

Leverage Social Media for Targeted Marketing: The findings from research confirm the effective utilization of social media. Consequently, Jordan must continue utilizing these platforms for targeted marketing purposes. From this viewpoint, tailored content targeting specific audience segments as well as integration of eye catching visuals would serve to maximize the impact of social media campaigns. Moreover, story telling should be employed along with interactive content that will further extend reach whilst still prompting higher user engagement on social media platforms.

Embrace Sustainability: With a growing inclination toward eco-friendly travel and general sustainable tourism trends globally; Jordan requires more efforts to encourage sustainable tourism. This is by implementing environmentally friendly lodgings, responsible tour operators as well as protecting natural resources in the country. Certification programs and collaboration with international organizations on sustainability can help in making Jordan a responsible tourism destination. Promote Off-Peak Tourism: To mitigate the seasonality of tourism, Jordan should encourage off-peak travel by developing specialized off-season packages. These packages can target different demographics, such as adventure travelers in the summer and cultural enthusiasts during the winter. Promotional efforts that emphasize unique experiences during non-peak periods can also assist in balancing tourist inflow across the calendar year.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the research findings provide an overview of the key themes, narratives and marketing strategies used by Jordan's tourism industry Several key insights can be drawn from these findings:

Narrative and themes: Jordan's tourism sector uses a multi-pronged approach, focusing on cultural heritage, natural beauty, tourism and sustainability Research day a dynamic narrative that helps attract different tourists many have been revealed. The country's rich historical heritage, as seen in places like Petra and Jerash, remains an important theme. At the same time, the promotion of natural attractions such as the Dead Sea and Wadi Rum adds depth to Jordan's tourist offerings. Adventure activities and sustainability programs further exacerbate the issue, appealing to today's changing travelers.

Effective marketing strategies: Jordan's tourism industry demonstrates its expertise in using various marketing strategies to reach the target audience. The strong presence of "Cll to action (CTA)" and "digital convenience" options signals a focus on user engagement and convenience. The widespread use of hashtags in social media posts contributes to increased visibility. The circular approach of "adventure activities", "sustainability and wildlife", and "destination promotion" ensures that Jordan is positioned as a holistic travel destination.

Growth potential: While Jordan's tourism industry has grown impressively, there is always room for improvement. Collaboration with local and international partners can further enhance the country's tourism profile. By promoting lesser-known destinations and offering different products, Jordan can tap into new markets. Adopting sustainability practices can not only be in line with global tourism practices but can also contribute to the preservation of a country's natural resources. Future prospects: Jordan is well positioned to harness the power of social media to promote tourism. Interactivity and immersiveness can be used to create engaging travel experiences for prospective visitors. As the tourism industry continues to evolve, Jordan can adapt by innovating its marketing strategies and responding to changing traveler preferences.

Lastly, the Jordanian tourism industry sees potential for continued success and expansion of its global reach. By strengthening partnerships, offering tributes, using social media, embracing sustainability, and targeting low-cost tourism, Jordan can build a strong foundation for the continued growth of its tourism sector. The research findings contribute to a deeper understanding of industry strategies and claims, serving as a valuable guide for future tourism strategy Jordan's unique blend of history, culture and natural beauty positions it as an outstanding travel destination and keeps its position in world tourism strong through the improvement of the routes it has developed.

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