ACADEMIC WEEKLY DIGEST

YOUR WEEKLY DIGEST OF KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

THAI RESTAURANT CHOICES:

Navigating Online Insights for Dining Delights

This study done by Dr Songphon Uthaisar and colleagues explores tourists' online information search behaviour, combining user-generated and marketer-generated content to analyse restaurant choice.

Using eye-tracking technology and interviews with 28 participants, it uncovers the impact of various factors, including pictorial and written information, positive and negative reviews, offering valuable insights for travellers.

TOURISTS' ONLINE INFORMATION SEARCH BEHAVIOR: COMBINED USER-GENERATED AND MARKETER-GENERATED CONTENT IN RESTAURANT DECISION MAKING

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Tourist information search behaviour is one of the most important aspects of risk reduction in the travel decision-making process. Understanding tourists' behaviour when searching for online information has been heavily weighted toward user-generated content (UGC), mainly employed deductive research approaches.

This study examines the influence of both UGC and marketer-generated content (MGC) on tourists' choice of restaurant, using eye-tracking technology to measure customers' visual behaviour combined with retrospective think-aloud interviews. Data was collected from 28 participants in a laboratory-based study.

Video recordings of participants' eye movements during the task aided participant recall in follow-up interviews. This study offers insights into the integrated investigation of the influence of UGC and MGC on tourists' information search behaviour.

The results from this study identify the conscious and unconscious cognitive processes that tourists undergo as part of their restaurant information search behaviour. It validates and extends understanding of the roles of pictorial information, written information, and other factors, and newly clarifies the role of both positive and negative reviews in influencing restaurant selection from international tourists' perspectives.

Eye-tracking and RTA techniques provide tangible evidence to support the literature and extend the understanding in the context of information factors influencing the choice of a restaurant

Uthaisar, S., Eves, A., & Wang, X. L. (2023). Tourists' Online Information Search Behaviour: Combined User-Generated and Marketer-Generated Content in Restaurant Decision Making. *Journal of Travel Research*
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