

Web Based Marketing: A Best Practices Examination of Rural Destinations in the
American West

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Elsie Cline

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ABSTRACT

WEB BASED MARKETING: A BEST PRACTICES EXAMINATION OF RURAL DESTINATIONS IN THE AMERICAN WEST

ELSIE CLINE

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In recent years the United States has seen a growing trend in rural travel, which has increased the awareness of rural destinations. However, in order to compete with larger destinations, rural destinations must market themselves through various online outlets. The purpose of this study was to examine the web based marketing practices of five selected rural tourism destinations in the Western United States. The destinations studied were: Tonopah, Nevada; Ajo, Arizona; Creede, Colorado; Taos, New Mexico; and Marfa, Texas. These destinations were analyzed through an examination of destination websites and social media accounts. The results showed that in order to market to the technologically savvy tourists, rural destinations should utilize social media platforms more effectively and update the destination websites on a regular basis.

Keywords: Rural tourism, social media, destination image, web based marketing, destination promotion

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background of Study

In recent years, web based marketing has had a tremendous effect on consumers' travel decisions. From 2013 to 2014, the number of internet users rose to 232 million users (Internet World Stats, 2014). With an increase in technology and social media use by consumers, marketing teams for businesses, destinations, and services turned to social media to promote organizations and attract users to their products. More than ever before, consumers depend on web based marketing to aid in the decision process for travel and tourism.

Rural tourism has been a growing trend in the United States with almost two-thirds of all adults in the United States having taken a trip to a rural destination within the past three years (US Travel Association, 2011). The increase in travel to rural areas shows great potential for the rural tourism market. These areas have the opportunity to market their destinations to many different populations, which will bring more opportunity to the residents of these areas and increase business in the towns. Rural tourism increases both population and economical development within a community. Cities that treat travel promotion as a strategic investment have seen an increase in more visitors, more jobs, and higher tax revenues (United States Travel Association, 2013). Increasing rural tourism by improving marketing strategies could have a distinct impact on these destinations by increasing tourism dollars and providing employment for the populations.

There are very few organizations that act as a resource for rural destinations so it is imperative that rural destinations use effective social media to reach consumers. With increased knowledge of how web based marketing and social media affects consumers' decision choices and the role of marketing in rural tourism development, destinations can more strategically implement their marketing plans. The purpose of this study was to examine the best web based marketing practices of rural tourism destinations in the American west. With the implementation of targeted marketing strategies towards tourists, the number of visitors to rural tourism destinations, and the amount of dollars brought into that rural community, could be increased.

Review of Literature

Research for this review of literature was conducted at Robert E. Kennedy Library on the campus of California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. In addition to books and other resources, the following online databases were utilized: Academic Search Elite and Hospitality and Tourism Complete. This review of literature focused on the background and opportunity of rural tourism, how social media affects tourists' decision choices, and the role of marketing in rural tourism development.

In the past, rural tourism was conceptualized as engagement in activities that celebrate the old ways of life (Dong et al., 2013). Although tourists are likely to travel to rural places as an escape from overcrowded urban life, studies have shown that rural tourists actually seek a range of experiences (Dong et al.; Mihailovic & Moric, 2012). For developed consumer societies, tourism is now one of the top leisure activities because of the high priority now placed on leisure (Latorre-Martinez et al., 2014). Tourists are no longer seeking only the consumption of goods and services, but also the consumption, and sharing, of experiences with others (Latorre-Martinez et al.). While there are many different tourism marketing strategies that rural destinations can use, it is important to make sure that the marketing strategy incorporates all of the unique experiences offered for a place. For example, in a study of tourists of Potter County, Pennsylvania, the top tourism activities were not related to outdoor recreation, which the town focuses its' marketing efforts on, but instead shopping and dining at local restaurants (Dong et al.). Expanding marketing for Potter County to include a range of experiences would better cater to the modern tourist.

Over the last ten years, rural destinations have faced economic development challenges as communities have shifted from economic systems based on agriculture or extraction to systems of manufacturing and tourism (Dong, Wange, Morais, & Brooks, 2013). However, it has been difficult for rural areas to create authentic tourism products to market to consumers while still preserving their unique identity (Mihailovic & Moric, 2012). Along with the struggle to hold on to identity, rural areas are challenged because of the lack of name recognition that rural communities have in comparison to more popular destinations (Brown, 2013). Regardless of the resources a rural community has, the importance of investing in tourism can provide many benefits: a greater sense of place for rural residents, upgrading local facilities, long-term prosperity, extension of the tourist season, and increased guest satisfaction (Brown, 2013; Mihailovic & Moric, 2012).

One of the greatest impacts of tourism that could be seen by communities is the economic impact. There are large potential economic benefits to attracting tourists to rural destinations. As destinations begin to modify marketing efforts to create positive destination images and focus more on the consumer relationship, the difficulty arises when trying to convert viewers to actual tourists. Increasing tourism through rural destinations can provide extensive growth to local economies. In 2012, travel and tourism generated over \$129 billion in tax revenue to government at all levels and \$54 billion to state and local governments (US Travel Association, 2013). States and cities that treated travel promotion as a strategic investment have been rewarded with increased visitors, local jobs, and tax revenues (US Travel Association, 2011). A key strategy in rural tourism development is focusing on the marketing and promotion efforts of those destinations, and making significant investments in the future of that place.

In the travel and tourism markets, web based marketing has increasingly become the primary source of information for consumers. Not only are there numerous websites that influence traveller decisions, but social media has also become one of the primary ways that people explore and select new travel destinations. The modern tourist not only seeks information and books trips online, but also shares the experiences of those trips via social media (Latorre-Martinez, Iñiguez-Berrozpe, & Plumed-Lasarte, 2014). Social media introduces the travelling consumers to endless “friends” through connections on social media platforms, which influence their decision making (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010). Social media users contribute to the images that are distributed and developed about a destination. Social media has become an essential tool for consumers to “preserve and express experiences through images and comments with friends, family, and strangers... creating an emerging network of communication and information about the tourist products consumed and destinations visited” (Latorre-Martinez et al., p. 19).

Destination images from social media are now a fundamental piece of the consumers’ decision making process (Croy, 2010). The consumer decision process is now inundated with the opinions of millions of other consumers from across the globe through the images and experiences that have been shared online. The destination images proliferated through social media and web marketing evoke strong consumer emotions (Croy; Tham, Croy, & Mair, 2013). In addition, consumers are more likely to choose destinations to visit that they have seen consistent images of over other destinations (Croy). The repetitive viewing of destination photos not only embeds images in the consumers’ brain, but also introduces tourists to a place and may even entice them to visit. The consumer decision process involves four stages: consider, evaluate, buy, and

enjoy (Hudson & Thal, 2013). Social media, especially destination images, has increased the importance of the “evaluate” and “enjoy” stages of the consumer decision journey (Hudson & Thal). In the evaluate and enjoy stages consumers utilize social media to express their experiences through reviewing websites or sharing images online. Since consumer interaction and experience sharing are important in the tourist decision process, these stages have a large impact on destination marketing.

One of the basic pillars of tourism is image, both at a level in which the consumer receives information from the outside, and at a personal level in which the tourist takes photos (Latorre-Martinez et al.). Photo based social media has become the intermediary between the creation and distribution of destination images, a trend that has changed tourism marketing (Latorre-Martinez et al., 2014). Destination images on social media have become a new form of marketing for destinations, allowing photos of those places to reach the eyes of millions who may have never seen or heard of them. Images have been shown to influence consumers’ destination choice decisions, there is a greater potential for destinations to increase tourism by marketing through social media images (Tham, Croy, & Mair, 2013). One marketing concept that has emerged as having great importance in the last ten years is managing profitable relationships with customers, and social media has shown to be a useful platform in which that relationship can occur (Mihailovic & Moric, 2012). Companies that use social media to engage with consumers have found that such engagement has strengthened their brand by increasing “followers” and recognition among the traveling consumer market (Cruz & Mendelsohn, 2010). Therefore, companies and destinations that invest in social media have since seen a strong return on investment (Cruz & Mendelsohn). This research indicates that travel

promotion and marketing through social media, and more specifically destination images, has shown to be a great tool for attracting consumers to destinations.

To increase tourism development in rural areas, marketers should aim to develop a diverse range of products and services to market to consumers. A variety of products will attract consumers who are interested in enjoying sightseeing attractions, buying physical goods, and those who wish to engage in physical activities (Clarke, 2005; Mihailovic & Moric, 2012). Promoting these diverse options through marketing and attractive destination imaging consumers will attract to the area, increase tourism, and help rural destinations achieve strategic goals (Mihailovic & Moric). Rural tourism marketing needs to focus on creating destination branding and imaging, creating tourist products that appeal to many different consumers, and ultimately, generating profits for these destinations (Mihailovic & Moric). A best practices standard in web based marketing for rural destinations will help these destinations to better target their marketing plans to potential tourists, and eventually, attract a greater number of annual visitors, increase economic welfare of the destination, and provide more jobs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the web based marketing practices of five selected rural tourism destinations in the Western United States.

Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What social media platforms are the selected rural destinations using to promote their destination?
2. Which social media platforms have the greatest reach for the selected rural destinations?
3. What destination images are being promoted by the selected rural destinations?
4. Are the selected rural destinations' destination images reflected across other marketing tools?
5. What key elements of the selected rural destination are highlighted in the marketing materials?

Chapter 2

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the web based marketing practices of five selected rural tourism destinations in the Western United States. This chapter includes the following sections: description of context, description of instrument, and description of procedures.

Description of Context

Best practices of web based marketing, including social media and websites, of five rural destinations in the American west were examined. The five destinations that were chosen for the study were: Tonopah, Nevada; Taos, New Mexico; Ajo, Arizona; Marfa, Texas; and Creede, Colorado. The American west encompasses eleven states from Texas to California and is home to a large portion of rural tourism (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2014). Rural travel in the United States is a growing trend that has now spread to international visitors. The iconic images of rural America's farms and ranches, historic sites and small towns, and national parks, monuments, and forests are powerful motivators for international travelers (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2011). The towns were chosen for this study based on small population, economy sector, destination reputation, great distance from large cities, and history.

Description of Instrument

The instrument utilized in this study was a best practice matrix (See Appendix A). The instrument was created based on research questions and the reviewed research literature. This matrix was utilized to answer the research questions regarding social media use and reach, destination image, and overall marketing practices for rural destinations. Data were collected from official town websites and social media platforms for each destination. The instrument included qualitative and quantitative data to be compared.

On February 6th, 2105 a pilot study examining two popular tourism destinations in California was conducted using the instrument. The destinations chosen were San Diego and San Francisco. The pilot study was used to test the instrument for effectiveness. Based on the pilot results, four qualitative questions were revised to increase relevancy to research questions and an additional three qualitative questions were added.

Description of Procedures

A best practices study was conducted on web based marketing of five rural towns in the American west including: Tonopah, Nevada; Taos, New Mexico; Ajo, Arizona; Marfa, Texas; and Creede, Colorado. The instrument utilized was a best practice matrix. Research was conducted in February, 2015 by reviewing websites of each destination and social media platforms including Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. The information was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet of the best practices matrix. This approach allowed for comparison and analysis of practices across destinations.

Chapter 3

PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the web based marketing practices of five selected rural tourism destinations in the Western United States. A best practices approach was utilized to examine the following rural destinations: Tonopah, Nevada; Taos, New Mexico; Ajo, Arizona; Marfa, Texas; and Creede, Colorado. This chapter includes the following sections: overview of selected organizations, social media, organizational websites, and destination images.

Overview of Selected Organizations

There are thousands of rural communities in the United States. Many of these destinations have been involved in primary sectors of the economy, including agriculture, mining, forestry, and fishing. While primary industries have increasingly moved to specific areas of the United States or to other countries, many rural destinations have turned to other sectors of economy to support their towns. Each of the five towns that were chosen for the study were once very involved in the primary sector and have since shifted their main economic basis to tourism.

Tonopah, Nevada is located in Nye County in central Nevada half way between Las Vegas and Reno. The town of roughly 2,600 people is involved in the following industries: mining, retail trade, solar energy, public administration, and tourism. Tonopah is two hours from Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and is named one of the best spots to star gaze in the nation.

Taos, New Mexico is located in Taos County in northern New Mexico. The town has a population of 5,730 and is known for skiing and winter sports, rafting adventure tours, art, and historical places. In 2014, Taos permanently closed one of its last operating molybdenum mines and has since shifted to tourism to provide jobs and business opportunities to locals. Taos is less than 10 miles from the Rio Grande Gorge National Monument.

Ajo, Arizona is located in Pima County in south central Arizona, a two-hour drive from the nearest major cities in Arizona. Ajo, with a population of 3,300, was formerly known as home to one of the largest copper mines in the world that still is home to many small mines. Ajo is the second town in Arizona to be named a Certified Wildlife Habitat Community and offers tourists rich architecture and history. The Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument is located thirty miles south of Ajo.

Marfa, Texas, a town of 1,800, is located in southwest Texas in Presidio County. Located about 90 miles north of the Big Bend National Park, Marfa was popularized to modern tourists by 1970's sculptor, Donald Judd, whose art installations are located throughout the town. Marfa was first founded as a railroad water stop, and then served as the training facility for thousands of pilots in World War II. Marfa is also known for its remarkable architectural heritage, mysterious ghosts and lights, and vast open space surrounding the town.

Creede, Colorado is located in southern Colorado in Mineral County. It has a year round population of 700, which can reach up to 4,000 during summer season due to tourists and part time residents. While the town's primary sector is now tourism, Creede was an old mining town that offers tourists a rich history, contemporary boutiques for

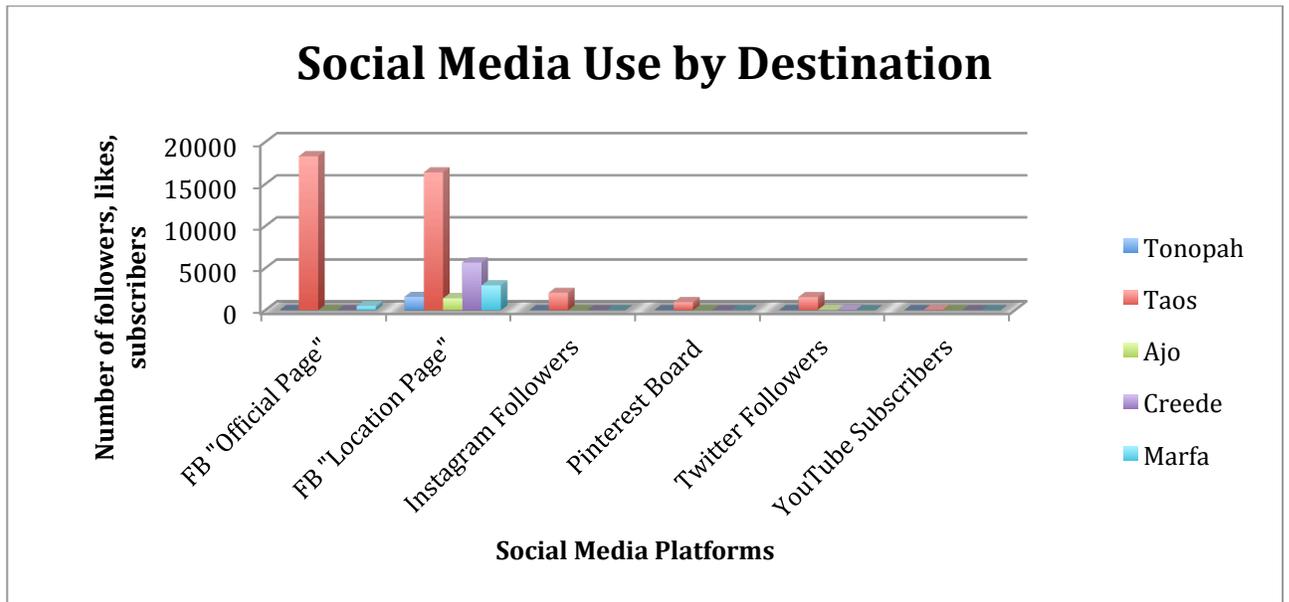
shopping, and art. The town is surrounded by five National Forests and is four hours from the closest major city in Colorado.

Social Media

Social media has become an integral part of destination marketing. Each one of the five destinations researched used at least one form of the following social media outlets: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, or YouTube. The number of social media platforms used by each town, and uses of those platforms, varied for each destination. The reach of each destination’s social media, measured by numbers of followers, likes, or subscribers is displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Social Media Use by Destination



Facebook location pages were utilized by each destination, however the amount of “likes” for each destination varied, with Taos having 10,000 more likes than any other

destination. These pages do not contain any content, rather inform the Facebook user of basic demographic information about the location. Only two destinations, Marfa and Taos, had official Facebook pages where content, images, and information were posted on a regular basis. The content that was posted on the two official Facebook pages promoted local events and businesses. The towns accomplished this by highlighting newly opened businesses, announcing upcoming events, and by posting web flyers.

Twitter was used by Tonopah, Ajo, Taos, and Creede. Even though the four destinations utilized a Twitter, Taos was the only destination that used Twitter for marketing and tourism purposes. The @TaosTourism Twitter account posted upcoming events in the town to the followers. The remaining towns' Twitter accounts did not appear to be in use. For example, the most recent post on the town of Tonopah's Twitter account was in 2011. The town of Ajo's Twitter account was for emergency alerts only and the last post was in 2014. The Twitter account for Creede had not had a post since 2013.

Taos was the only destination that utilized Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube. The accounts on each platform had recent posts and were updated at least once a week to once a month depending on the platform. The other four destinations did not utilize these as a form of social media.

Organizational Websites

Each destination had an official town website with a great deal of information and resources for visitors. The websites for Tonopah, Ajo, and Creede were controlled by the town's Chamber of Commerce. Taos and Marfa's websites were controlled by private

marketing initiatives, Market Taos and Visit Marfa. The following three destinations had a tagline that was listed on the home page of the website: Tonopah “Queen of the Silver Camps”, Ajo “Heart of the Sonoran Desert”, and Marfa “Tough to get to. Tough to explain. But once you get here, you get it.” Taos and Creede did not have a visible tagline.

The organization of the website, including tabs, links, and layout, was researched. The website for Taos was the most user-friendly of all the destinations. The website catered to tourists based on tab headings and information, had the greatest amount of resources that a user could reach from the home page, and had links to social media on the home page. The websites for Creede and Marfa were similar to the website for Taos with a simple layout designed with tourists in mind and multiple resources to assist a visitor in planning a trip. The websites of Ajo and Tonopah had less formal layouts that were harder to navigate. There was less information for tourists and more information about town business for local community members.

Destination Image

Destination images are just one of the ways that a town may attract tourists. Destination images are often promoted or established through social media and website content. In addition, the attractions, such as a mining park or ski area, and community events, for example a film festival or annual variety show, also helped to establish a destination’s image.

As Queen of the Silver Camps, Tonopah’s online media displayed a rustic mining theme throughout website content and photos. Almost every image displayed of the town

was either of mining or aerial views of the area where mining was visible. Tonopah listed the following activities on the organizational website: historic mining park, Central Nevada Museum, turquoise mine tours, and star gazing tours. The main annual event the town held was the Nevada State Mining Championship, along with other small community based activities throughout the year. The destination image of mining could be seen through images, listed activities, and the annual event held in the town.

Ajo, the “Heart of the Sonoran Desert,” had consistent images of wildlife, art, food, and history posted on social media and the towns website. The attractions listed included historic places, the open pit mining lookout, museums, and a scenic loop. The events that occurred in Ajo in 2014 all incorporated food, art, or wildlife in some way. Being a Certified Wildlife Habitat Community, the town’s destination image portrayed wildlife, along with a destination image of mining and the desert.

Taos utilized the greatest number of social media platforms and had the most images of all the destinations. The Pinterest board for Taos had images of different elements of the place including over 1,500 photos and links to Taos and New Mexico information. The rest of the images revolve around winter sports, other outdoor activities, and the Rio Grande Bridge. Numerous attractions were listed on the website from shopping, dining, and spa visits to adventure rafting, horseback riding, and skiing. However, the most consistent destination images were of art and winter sports. The annual events in Taos involved art, along with historic Pueblo ceremonies, film, wine, and music festivals. The festivals also helped to establish a unique destination image for Taos.

The images distributed by Marfa included a great deal of contemporary art, ranch lifestyle, and vast landscape. All of the images were very simple and crisp, with bright colors and content. The attractions listed by Marfa included arts, dining, specialty shopping, spas, and the Marfa Lights. Almost all of the events that were held in Marfa annually were centered around art, cinema, or music. The largest theme throughout Marfa's images was art; this destination image was established with the images, along with the website's listed attractions and annual events.

The social media and website for Creede showed many images of community events, landscapes of the area, and historical sites. The activities listed were separated into three categories: outdoor activities, winter recreation, and exploration activities. Many events took place in Creede annually, which included festivals that were centered on the outdoors, theater, food, art, or music. The outdoors was the largest theme throughout all of Creede's images. This theme was supported through the numerous outdoor events that take place there, the images on the website and social media, and the listed activities and attractions.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study aimed to explore the role of web based marketing strategies and rural tourism. This concluding chapter will include the following: a summary of the study, a discussion of the findings, implications of the findings, limitations, conclusions based on research questions, and recommendations.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the web based marketing practices of five rural tourism destinations in the American west. The United States saw a trend in increased domestic travel over the last ten years. This trend greatly increased the awareness of rural destinations and rural tourism. Tourists are also increasingly researching travel options through the internet and social media. Increasing rural destinations' presence on web based marketing platforms could offer destinations the potential to attract more tourists and, in turn, explore more opportunities for destinations both economically and socially.

A best practices matrix was created to compare the five rural destinations chosen for the study. The towns that were researched were Tonopah, Nevada; Ajo, Arizona; Taos, New Mexico; Marfa, Texas, and Creede, Colorado. Data were collected by visiting official town websites and social media platforms for each destination. The data were recorded with a best practices instrument, which included qualitative and quantitative data.

According to the results of this study, social media may have the greatest reach for rural tourism destinations to connect with potential visitors. Twitter was the most widely used social media platform and was used by all but one of the destinations. However, each destinations' Facebook pages had the greatest reach, evaluated by number of "likes" on the pages. The local Chamber of Commerce controlled a majority of the towns' websites while remainder were controlled by private marketing initiatives. Each town distributed images through the destination's website and social media. All of the towns had images that related to either the town's marketing slogan or nickname, activities in or nearby that destination, or historical photos of the town.

Discussion

Tourist needs and desires have developed and changed in recent decades. Leisure tourists are no longer seeking only the consumption of goods and services, but also the consumption of experiences and the ability to share those experiences with others (Latorre-Martinez, Iñiguez-Berrozpe & Plumed-Lasarte, 2014). The data showed that destinations highlighted adventure and recreational experiences on their websites as suggested activities for tourists. By including unique experiences and information on their websites, destinations provide greater opportunities for tourist experiences to occur. Highlighting experience based activities in rural destinations will help capture and entice the modern tourist.

Social media is one of the primary outlets consumers are now using to search for travel information as well as new destinations. Modern tourists now turn to the internet to seek travel information, book trips, and share travel experiences via social media

(Latorre-Martinez, Iñiguez-Berrozpe & Plumed-Lasarte, 2014). The current study discovered that the selected rural destinations did not utilize enough social media platforms to cater to modern tourists. Furthermore, the social media accounts used were often out of date and not updated on a regular basis. The current trends in the travel industry regarding increased social media use for rural destinations necessitates keeping social media up to date, utilizing multiple platforms, and engaging users. Therefore, rural destinations should increase social media presence on all platforms and invest in the development of those accounts.

Destination images have been shown to influence consumers' destination choices. Destination images from social media are now a fundamental piece of the consumers' decision making process (Croy, 2010). The current findings showed that rural destinations in this study provided destination images for tourists that reflected the towns' marketing campaigns. By providing consistent images and messaging about local attractions, the town itself, and unique experiences that the area offered, the destinations gave consumers a clear mental picture that might encourage them to choose that place. Updating social media and websites with current destination images will help to keep these destinations present in consumers' minds.

There were multiple limitations of this study. One limitation was uncertainty regarding the various names destinations may have used across social media platforms. Some towns simply used the town name, while others used a word or phrase before the name of the town. Without knowing the possible variations of account names for town's social media accounts, the results could be biased since they were not recorded. Another limitation was variation in the information provided across destination websites. While

some websites had many in-depth resources, some were very basic and did not include the same type of information which may have influenced the recorded results. An additional limitation was that the study was only performed on five towns due to time constraints. With thousands of rural destinations in the United States, the sample size should be increased in future research for accuracy to better represent the range of rural destinations.

This study has contributed to the knowledge of social media and web based marketing for rural destinations. The literature review explored the current state of the rural tourism market, increased benefits greater tourism could provide to a destination, and important factors considered by modern tourists' when making travel decisions. This information could benefit rural destinations when creating a more targeted marketing approach. This study explored trends in consumer travel decisions, the relationship between web based marketing and modern tourists, and provided insight into the use of social media for tourism marketing. The study results highlighted best practices in online marketing that formed the basis of the recommendations for rural tourism destinations.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Rural destinations primarily utilized the following social media platforms to promote their destination: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube.
2. Facebook had the greatest reach for rural tourism destinations.

3. The destination images that were promoted included images of the town itself, events that took place in the community, and nearby attractions.
4. The destination images distributed by rural destinations reflected the towns' marketing slogans or nicknames.
5. Recreational activities, art and history, and unique experiences were the key elements that rural destinations highlighted on their websites.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Use and actively manage multiple social media platforms to enhance the marketing reach for rural destinations.
2. Invest time, money, and effort into the destination's Facebook page to increase a town's tourist reach.
3. Promote consistent destination images regularly on all forms of web based marketing to engage consumers.
4. Develop a marketing plan based on popular aspects of the town that is consistent with the slogans or nicknames of the destination.
5. Integrate adventure based travel and unique experiences into the destination's marketing to help capture and inform the modern tourist.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Instrument

Instrument

	Tonopah, NV	Ajo, AZ	Taos, NM	Marfa, TX	Creede, CO
People					
Population					
Number of annual tourists					
Social Media					
Does the town have an official Facebook?					
How many "likes" does it have?					
Does town have Facebook location page?					
How many "likes"?					
Does the town have an instagram?					
How many followers?					
Does the town have a Pinterest?					
How many boards?					
How many followers?					
Does the town have a Twitter?					
How many followers?					
Does the town have a Youtube account?					
How many followers?					
What content is being posted in their social media?					
Websites					
Who controls the town's website?					
Does the town have a tagline?					
What attractions are listed?					
What visual images are displayed?					
What type of annual events does the town hold?					
Does the town have a well developed marketing campaign with a clear theme?					
How user friendly was the website? (including layout, tabs, and accessibility of information					