SUSTAINABILITY ON INSTAGRAM: AQUA VILLAGE HEALTH RESORT & SPA CASE STUDY

João Caldeira Heitor^A, Mariana Inácio Marques^B, Helena Pimentel^C

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Purpose: The aim of this study is to analyze the hotel Instagram posts that were posted on the social network, to verify people reactions as well as understand their content in terms of sustainability. Also, explore the opinions about the posts they did and understand if people can perceive the sustainability work looking at these posts. The article's object of analysis is the Aqua Village Health Resort & SPA hotel unit, a luxury hotel structure that advertises itself as sustainable, with a strong connection to the environment, endogenous and water resources. **Design/Methodology/Approach:** Authors used a mix approach, with netnography and survey quantitative analysis. Authors used netnography, counting and analyzing the 89 posts that the company made on Instagram, during seven months, between June and December 2022, to verify the types of posts and the reactions they provoked, as well as to assess their content in terms of sustainability. To complementing this analysis, surveys were carried out to test what the first and last post of each of the months under analysis transmits or makes them feel. **Findings:** The paper provide empirical insights about how to promote a sustainable Hotel on Instagram. Looking at the major conclusions, the paper provide information about the importance of Instagram posts and information about how a hotel can be sustainable and communicate that through social networks. With these results authors can conclude that the hotel does not use Instagram to be promoted as a sustainable player. **Research, Practical & Social Implications:** Authors suggest future research on how to use social media to promote sustainability. **Originality/Value:** This paper allows to understand the importance of promote a sustainable business using Instagram. Doi: https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2024.v9i2.4310

SUSTENTABILIDADE NO INSTAGRAM: O ESTUDO DE CASO DO AQUA VILLAGE HEALTH RESORT & SPA

RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo deste estudo é analisar os posts do Instagram do hotel que foram publicados na rede social, para verificar as reações das pessoas, bem como entender seu conteúdo em termos de sustentabilidade. Além disso, explorar as opiniões sobre os posts que fizeram e entender se as pessoas conseguem perceber o trabalho de sustentabilidade olhando para esses posts. O objeto de análise do artigo é a unidade hoteleira Aqua Village Health Resort & SPA, uma estrutura hoteleira de luxo que se publicita como sustentável, com uma forte ligação ao meio ambiente, aos recursos endógenos e hídricos.

Desenho/Metodologia/Abordagem: Os autores utilizaram uma abordagem mista, com análise quantitativa de netnografia e inquéritos. Foi utilizada a netnografia, contando e analisando os 89 posts que a empresa fez no

^A PhD in Tourism. ISG – Business & Economics School, CIGEST and Centre for Tourism Research, Development and Innovation (CiTUR). Portugal. E-mail: joao.heitor@isg.pt Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3369-6126
^B PhD in Communication Sciences. ISG – Business & Economics School, Lisbon, GOVCOPP – Aveiro and CIGEST, Lisbon. Portugal. E-mail: mariana.marques@isg.pt Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1898-0740
^C PhD in Tourism. ISG – Business & Economics School, Lisbon and CIGEST. Portugal.
E-mail: helena.pimentel@ulusofona.pt Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0323-1472

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. |Miami, v. 9 | n. 2| p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024.

1

Instagram, durante sete meses, entre junho e dezembro de 2022, para verificar os tipos de posts e as reacções que provocaram, bem como para avaliar o seu conteúdo em termos de sustentabilidade. Para complementar esta análise, foram realizados inquéritos para testar o que o primeiro e o último post de cada um dos meses em análise transmite ou faz sentir.

Resultados: O documento fornece informações empíricas sobre como promover um hotel sustentável no Instagram. No que respeita às principais conclusões, o artigo fornece informações sobre a importância das publicações no Instagram e informações sobre como um hotel pode ser sustentável e comunicar esse facto através das redes sociais. Com estes resultados, os autores podem concluir que o hotel não utiliza o Instagram para ser promovido como um ator sustentável.

Pesquisa, Implicações Práticas e Sociais: Os autores sugerem investigação futura sobre a forma de utilizar as redes sociais para promover a sustentabilidade.

Originalidade/Valor: Este artigo permite compreender a importância de promover um negócio sustentável utilizando o Instagram.

Palavras-chave: Sustentabilidade, Comunicação Online, Instagram, Recursos Endógenos.

SOSTENIBILIDAD EN INSTAGRAM: ESTUDIO DE CASO DE AQUA VILLAGE HEALTH RESORT & SPA

RESUMEN

Propósito: El objetivo de este estudio es analizar los posts de Instagram del hotel que se han publicado en la red social, comprobar las reacciones de la gente, así como entender su contenido en términos de sostenibilidad. Además, explorar las opiniones sobre los posts que han realizado y entender si la gente puede percibir la labor de sostenibilidad viendo estos posts. El objeto de análisis del artículo es el hotel Aqua Village Health Resort & SPA, una estructura hotelera de lujo que se anuncia como sostenible, con un fuerte vínculo con el medio ambiente, los recursos endógenos e hídricos.

Metodología: Los autores utilizaron un enfoque de métodos mixtos, con análisis cuantitativo de netnografía y encuestas. Se utilizó la netnografía, contabilizando y analizando los 89 posts que la empresa realizó en Instagram a lo largo de siete meses, entre junio y diciembre de 2022, para comprobar los tipos de posts y las reacciones que provocaban, así como para evaluar su contenido en términos de sostenibilidad. Como complemento a este análisis, se realizaron encuestas para comprobar qué transmiten o hacen sentir el primer y el último post de cada uno de los meses analizados.

Conclusiones: El artículo proporciona información empírica sobre cómo promocionar un hotel sostenible en Instagram. En cuanto a las principales conclusiones, el artículo proporciona información sobre la importancia de las publicaciones en Instagram e información sobre cómo un hotel puede ser sostenible y comunicarlo a través de las redes sociales. Con estos resultados, los autores pueden concluir que el hotel no utiliza Instagram para promocionarse como actor sostenible.

Implicaciones de la Investigación: Los autores sugieren futuras investigaciones sobre cómo utilizar las redes sociales para promover la sostenibilidad.

Originalidad/Valor: Este artículo permite comprender la importancia de promover un negocio sostenible utilizando Instagram.

Palabras clave: Sostenibilidad, Comunicación en Línea, Instagram, Recursos Endógenos.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, almost everyone is connected to online social networks and tourists look for destinations and experiences in these networks. For Cohen et al. (2018) social media are characterised by the capacity of storytelling and therefore this can enable organizations to transmit their values through technologies. In this way, tourism organizations must adapt their social media branding strategies to successfully brand their products and their core values, as sustainability or others.

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

2

Sustainable development in the hotel industry comprises three pillars of development: economic growth, environmental protection, and social progress (Estander & Pitta, 2008). It is, therefore, the adoption of an integrated set of measures in these areas. It should also be noted that Feil and Schreiber (2017) refer to the existence of a general acceptance of the need for a balance between human and environmental needs, so this topic assumes greater acuity.

Sustainability in tourism "refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability", mentioned by United Nations World Tourism Organization. They noted it is also important that a sustainable tourism have a good use of environmental resources, conserving natural heritage and biodiversity; respect socio-cultural authenticity of host communities and guarantee viable long-term economic operations, as stable employment, and social services to communities (UNWTO, 2021).

Aqua Village Health Resort & Spa identifies itself as a promoter of sustainable and ecological tourism and it is located in Serra da Estrela, Portugal, in a context of nature. The hotel opened in 2009 and is the first energy self-sufficient resort using different renewable energy systems. The resort defines itself as environmentally friendly, using renewable energy sources, with a geothermal power plant that uses the Earth's energy and temperature and solar thermal panels, thus producing almost all the energy consumed. According to Francisco Cruz (Publituris, 2022), director of this five-star hotel, Aqua Village Health Resort & Spa wants to invest "in a new perspective of luxury vacations by the river, in the centre region of Portugal (...) in a place where there is everything to enjoy unique days", with the possibility of outdoor activities or spa treatments.

Aqua Village Resort was distinguished among the best hotels in the world in 2019 by the Haute Grandeur Global Excellence Awards, considering the experiences it offers and the client's opinions. Specifically, in the Resort category, the hotel received 4 distinctions: Best Boutique Resort in Europe, Best Hotel Apartment in Portugal, Best Family Resort in Portugal, and Best Thermal Water Resort in Portugal. In the Restaurant category, the hotel was awarded the best Restaurant of Portuguese Cuisine in the World, best Restaurant for Families in Europe, best Hotel Restaurant in Portugal, and best Restaurant with a View in Portugal. And in Spa category, the distinction of best Thermal Water Spa in the World and best Resort Spa in Portugal (Publituris, 2020).

The aim of this study is to analyse the hotel Instagram posts that were posted on the social network, to verify people reactions as well as understand their content in terms of

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

3

sustainability. To do so, we posed a main question: Does the Aqua Village Health Resort & SPA hotel use *Instagram* to promote sustainability?"

Instagram was chosen because, according to DataRarePortal (2022) more than 50% (59, 6%) of Portuguese population used this social media network in 2022.

The article is divided in five parts. Besides the introduction, the second part refers to the literature research of sustainability in hotels and social media communication. This is followed by the empirical part, where methodology is presented, the characterization of the sample, the instruments and the procedures used. Then, in the fourth section the results are presented in hospitality sustainability. In fifth section the conclusions as well as study limitations and some proposals for future research.

LITERATURE RESEARCH

It is important to expose some of the recent literature about the theme. So, this topic is divided in three parts: the first one expose sustainability issues, in the second one, authors present an application of sustainability in hospitality and in the third part, the social media communication is studied.

Sustainability

The consequences of climate change and environmental impacts have created an imperative for industries and organizations to adopt and implement environmentally sustainable policies and practices (Khatter, A., 2019). When we refer to the concept of "sustainability" we identify three key areas: economic sustainability that rests on stable levels of employment and economic growth, social sustainability that refers to the recognition of the populations' needs and social development; and environmental sustainability, which refers to the responsible use of natural resources and the protection of the environment (Schaltegger, S. et al, 2017).

There is an increasing need for organizations to use environmental sustainability as a core business value (Khatter, A., 2019), not only because of the negative impacts that companies and organizations generate on the environment, but also because of the awareness of its customers regarding the adoption of environmentally sustainable initiatives by the respective companies (York, 2016).

Some studies prove the importance of companies use and improve management and use of technology to become more efficient in responding to environmental challenges (Herrera-Cano & Herrera-Cano, 2016; Henriques, M. H., 2017; Imon, S. S., 2017; Koide, R., 2017).

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

4

Various organizations have defined policies and positions regarding the definition of the concept of sustainability. The World Trade Organization, which is the largest organization on a planetary scale, defines sustainable development as one of the keys to the continuity and success of its activity (Hall, 2019). The World Commission on Environment and Development argues that sustainable development is the one who "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Sáez-Fernández, F. et al, 2020 & De Castro-Pardo et al, 2019, p.42). The definition of this term can have three directions: "sustainable development, present needs and concern for future generations" (Khatter, A. et al, 2021, p. 3). Building on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNWTO and other partners defined the links between tourism and the SDGs and provided recommendations to accelerate the shift to a more sustainable tourism sector by aligning policies, business operations and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (UNWTO & UNDP, 2017).

The study of sustainability management has relied on the stakeholder theory, with the aim of seeking to understand socio-environmental behavior and corporate social responsibility motivations. Constituting itself as a part of a stakeholder group, the organization seeks to respond to the needs and interests of stakeholders in the general purpose of management (Mensah, I., 2014). Stakeholders, in general, want companies to undertake responsible practices and to provide information about these practices and their effectiveness (De Grosbois, D., 2012).

Hospitality Sustainability

Environmental sustainability has assumed increased importance on a global scale, with a growing recognition of good environmental management practices by tourism companies and consumers (UNWTO, 2019).

As a significant and growing sector of the tourism industry, the hotel industry is responsible for adopting measures conducive to the sustainability of tourist activities, to be verified by consumers (Hsieh, Y. C. J., 2012). In this sense it is imperative for the hotel industry to address the importance of environmental issues and ensure the sustainability of its activity, given its dependence on the natural environment that attracts and wins customers that sustain the viability of its business. (Boley, B.B., 2013; Khatter, A., 2019).

To attract customers and maintain growth and profitability, hotels are responding to green-conscious stakeholders (Leonidou et al., 2013; Shanti, 2016). Despite the progress made by hotels in becoming more sustainable, they are still struggling to promote this effectively to

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

5

their stakeholders (Peiró-Signes et al., 2014). In the last decade there has been a greater awareness of the need to adopt environmental sustainability measures in hotel units, verifying and demonstrating the "environmental commitment to sustainable business management" (Kim, 2021).

The challenge that arises is to know how the industry can combine economic sustainability with environmental sustainability, through the mitigation of the environmental and carbon footprint, by reducing energy and water consumption, and by reusing and recycling with continuous actions (Khatter, A. et al, 2021, p. 4).

The hospitality industry has adopted, gradually, a green practice for managing environmental issues and implementing sustainable business practices (Kim, A. 2021). Sharing shared responsibilities, companies and customers must develop joint action that provides social and environmental results, in addition to commercial objectives. (York, J. G, 2016).

These issues become more acute when the results of recent studies have shown the impact that sustainable and ecological hotels have on the behaviour change experience of tourists (Ibnou-Laaroussi, S. 2020). In this way, guests are more willing to pay higher prices for the hotels' ecological practices, corresponding to the needs of the interested parties (Chen, L.-F. 2019; Tasci, A. D., 2017). However, customer perceptions of a hotel's commitment to sustainability practices are gained when they verify that there is a real ecological commitment. (Kapoor, P.S. et al, 2022).

Social Media Communication

Digital activity and technology have transformed tourism and hospitality industry, it allows organizations to strengthen their relationships and communicate with customers, who tend to buy experiences by listening to peers' comments and reviews on digital social networks.

Social media communication brings out consumption and influences travel experiences, so tourism services have increased their social media publications because of the marketing potential and customer engagement. Hospitality organizations can be a source for the co-creation of experiences to attract customers to the business and visitors to the destinations. In this sense, is important that tourism organizations develop more effective digital marketing strategies (Michael & Fusté-Forné, 2022).

Tourism organizations should consider the power of what they publish or post, because this communication have an impact on the image perception and consequently on the tourist behavior and preferences. Understanding and utilize social media processes is essential to

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

6

transmit information brand. Pointed by Cohen et al. (2018), not only marketers understand how people behave and influence each other, but they can also become agents who share stories and promote brand narratives on social media.

Tiago et al. (2018) verified that social media are not directly related to the number of visitors and the number of fans cannot be considered as a reliable indicator. However, their study show that media posts constitute an important part of the communication on social media, playing an important role within this context, so the tourism organizations need to adopt an active posture online and adapt to different markets to maximize customer engagement.

To Schorn et al. (2022) if a social media post about sustainable accommodation was sponsored, results show no direct impact from the tourists on the interest in obtaining further information, which shows that disclosures do not affect the interest in receiving information about the product but only the evaluation of the organization. Therefore, tourists consider influencers who promote sustainable products to be less expert if an organization pays for their post. It is more favorable for influencers to show personal benefits when influencers promote eco-friendly products, because personal benefits increase the perception of the influencers' expertise and consequently their trustworthiness and likeability. The influencers who are perceived as experts are more likeable and this leads to a higher interest in information about the product or service.

The communication about sustainable tourism specific on Instagram and the role of influencers can impact on tourist destinations and also in raising awareness of sustainable tourism priorities. Sustainability and concrete communication in tourism industry and destination is very important, especially considering the impact by social media technologies on tourists' preferences and their destination image perceptions (Palazzo et al., 2021).

According to Conti and Cassel (2019) "Instagram offers a space in which the tourist can 'play' with symbolic tools in order to reflect on his/her own experience and deliver a message, whether this is a message of opposition among survival, adventure and comfort, or among stress, crowds and other social pressures as opposed to freedom, silence and meditation" (p.428). Instagram allows users to connect with pages and interact with other users, through comments and messages. Pages with a specific word can be followed or tagged, which in turn can generate comments or new followers. Hashtags play an important role because they are not only keywords with a meaning, but also a link for an image or other message searchable through Instagram.

Kapoor et al., 2022 reveal that an attribute-value message is more effective in persuading travelers to stay at an eco-friendly hotel than a simple recommendation message.

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

7

For travelers with high levels of environmental concern, the attribute-value message has a stronger impact on stay intentions related to perceptions of the hotel's commitment to sustainability. It is important that organizations and their managers should consider the environmental beliefs of social media influencers and their followers because attribute-value messages lead to more favorable perceptions of the eco-friendly hotel among tourists who are concerned about the environment.

For Lund et al. (2020), social media and destination management organization could have a positive or a negative perception, some messages or posts can be seen as destructive for some people, or it can be seen as positive for another. But even negative comments do not necessarily have negative consequences, because messages about the brand contributes to a higher visibility and thus higher brand recognition. Organizations should tell positive narratives that impact users to share positive stories, encouraging users to act as ambassadors defending the brand. Storytelling is a collective process that creates a community identity.

The UNWTO, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), and national industry associations and destination marketing organizations have an important role in promoting the value of the market. A more reflexive understanding of knowledge and management is necessary to understand the implications of knowledge circulation and actions for sustainable tourism. In this process, the fundamental challenges the tourism faces are shifting to a more humanity mentality where travelers have more concern about ecosystems (Hall, 2019).

METHODOLOGY

The study of Khatter (2019), carried out in 220 hotels, found that only 26% of the sampled hotels included information related to the environment on their websites. This appears to be a missed opportunity to showcase hotels' environmental efforts in response to consumer and stakeholder demands. For some years there have been some research related to the environmentally sustainable practices of organizations based on the messages they transmit on the internet (de Villiers, 2011; Soma, 2016).

This paper presents a mix approach. In fact, authors made netnography (social media analysis), counting and analyzing the 89 posts doing by the hotel on *Instagram*, during seven months, between June and December 2022. The objective is to verify the types of posts and the reactions they provoked, as well as to assess their content in terms of sustainability, on *Instagram.* The netnography analysis was carried out from 7 to 13 of january, 2023.

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

8

The other technique used is a survey, carried out to test what the first and last post of each of the months under analysis transmits or makes the respondents feel. Authors had 170 answers, between february, the 13rd until april, the 3rd, 2023.

RESULTS

As results, author will present firstly the netnography results on table 1.

Table 1 – Posts analysis

Month	Day	Tipology (Video/Photo)	Likes/Visualizations	Comments	Month	Day	Tipology (Video/Photo)	Likes/Visualizations	Comments
december	30	Video	4887	0	august	31	Video	1236	1
	28	Vídeo	223	3		29	Photo	45	0
	26	Photo	78	1		26	Video	9390	1
	21	Photo	64	0		24	Photo	60	1
	19	Video	13250	7		22	Photo	125	3
	16	Photo	75	0		19	Photo	54	1
	14	Photo	57	0		17	Photo	61	1
	12	Photo	31	0		15	Photo	41	0
	9	Photo	111	1		12	Photo	44	0
	7	Photo	63	0		8	Photo	249	0
	5	Photo	88	0		6	Photo	45	1
	2	Photo	55	0		3	Video	4050	2
						1	Photo	238	5
Total december	**12**		**18982**	**12**	**Total august**	**13**		**15638**	**16**
november	30	Photo	74	0	july	29	Photo	68	0
	28	Photo	43	0		17	Photo	46	0
	25	Photo	79	2		25	Photo	77	0
	23	Photo	112	0		20	Photo	66	0
	21	Photo	99	0		18	Photo	54	0
	18	Photo	90	0		15	Photo	44	0
	16	Photo	159	0		13	Photo	75	2
	14	Photo	183	4		10	Video	1476	0
	11	Video	3655	2		7	Photo	70	0
	9	Photo	178	0		5	Photo	71	0
	7	Photo	39	1		3	Photo	57	1
	2	Video	2435	0		1	Video	67	0
Total november	**12**		**7146**	**9**	**Total july**	**12**		**2171**	**3**
october	31	Photo	25	0	june	28	Photo	40	0
	28	Photo	125	1		26	Video	2809	1
	26	Video	4679	3		24	Photo	54	0
	24	Vídeo	43	2		22	Photo	30	0
	21	Photo	34	0		20	Photo	127	0
	19	Photo	56	0		17	Vídeo	1693	0
	17	Photo	63	1		15	Photo	45	0
	14	Photo	76	1		13	Video	5888	0
	12	Photo	80	2		11	Vídeo	2565	0
	10	Photo	38	0		7	Photo	535	0
	8	Video	5343	1		6	Photo	201	3
	6	Photo	40	1		3	Photo	67	1
	4	Photo	70	0	**Total june**	**12**		**14054**	**5**
	3	Video	2157	1					
Total october	**14**		**12829**	**13**	**Total**	**89**		**73738**	**68**
september	30	Photo	66	0					
	28	Photo	46	0					
	26	Photo	28	0					
	23	Photo	74	1					
	21	Photo	133	0					
	19	Photo	60	1					
	16	Video	1723	0					
	14	Photo	136	4					
	12	Photo	194	2					
	10	Photo	142	1					
	9	Photo	78	0					
	7	Photo	72	1					
	5	Photo	131	0					
	2	Photo	35	0					
Total september	**14**		**2918**	**10**					

Source: Personal elaboration

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

9

As we can see, in those seven months (between june to december, 2023), the hotel made 89 posts on Instagram, with 73 738 likes or visualizations in total. The number of comments is low (68). From these 89 posts, 19 are videos.

After the netnography results, author present the survey ones. Our sample was majority composed by woman's (Fig. 1).
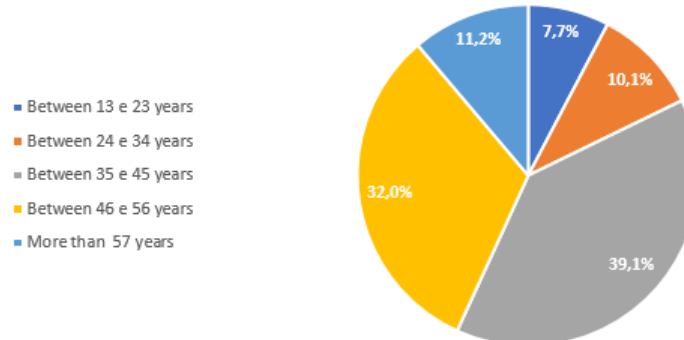
Figure 1 – Sample gender distribution
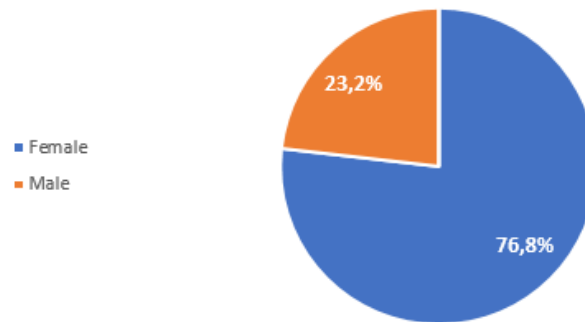
Source: personal elaboration

Regarding the age distribution, we can see at Fig. 2 that 71.1% have between 35 and 56 years old. The majority (76.3%) lives in Lisbon metropolitan area. 40.2% have a degree.
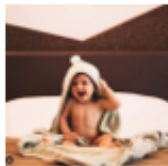
Figure 2 – Age distribution
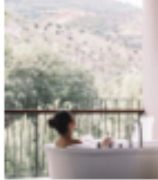
Source: personal elaboration

Now, authors present the results about what people think when they look at the posts, including the text in it. There will be presented the 3 more voted feelings in each post. On table 2 authors showed the results:

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

10

Table 2 – Survey results: feelings about posts

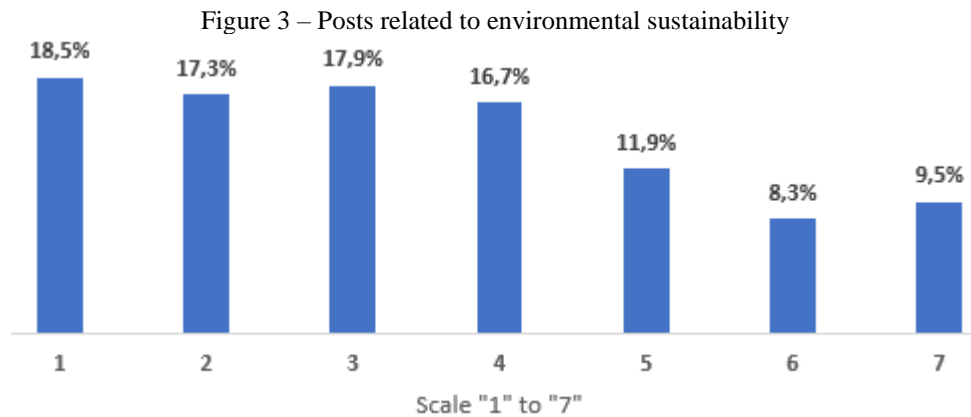| ID	Image	Text	Emojis	3 more voted feelings
1		"Memories with the best company"	♡	Romance (91.1%) Having a rest (37.9%) Confort (28.4%) Sustainability (2.4%)
2		"One more day at the Paradise"	♡ ◦	Nature (70.2%) Having a rest (63.1%) Environment (36.9%) Sustainability (9.5%)
3		"Summer combines with....happy moments!"	♡	Romance (78.1%) Having a rest (39.6%) Confort (33.7%) Sustainability (3%)
4		"Holidays are synonymous with peace, rest and fun. All this, and much more, in our company."	😊 ♡	Having a rest (70.4%) Confort (39.1%) Nature (39.1%) Sustainability (8.3%)
5		"Unique moments, for two, in nature, in a 5-star environment. Because you deserve!"	◦	Romance (73.4%) Nature (59.8%) Having a rest (53.3%) Sustainability (14.8%)
6		"Around here, the holidays continue and the proof is in the visible satisfaction of the most demanding guests."	😊	Family (83.3%) Happiness (61.9%) Confort (35.7%) Sustainability (3.6%)
7		"A sunny, relaxing and inspiring afternoon"	😊 🌿 🌞	Having a rest (68.5%) Nature (58.9%) Confort (47.6%) Sustainability (14.9%)

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

11

ID	Image	Text	Emojis	3 more voted feelings
8		"Autumn with warm temperatures and sunny days"	🌿	Nature (68%) Having a rest (60.9%) Water (45%) Sustainability (13%)
9		"The colors of an autumn night, still with a taste of summer"	☺✨✨	Having a rest (57.4%) Confort (52.1%) Happiness (27.8%) Sustainability (5.3%)
10		"Recharge and enjoy life's little pleasures"	🌿	Having a rest (82.2%) Confort (63.9%) Water (23.7%) Sustainability (4.1%)
11		"Feel the present moment"	♡	Having a rest (71.6%) Confort (53.8%) Nature (49.7%) Sustainability (7.1%)
12		"December is the month for saying goodbye and taking stock of the year that is coming to an end. Stop and relax to enter 2023 with energy. Enjoy the last few weeks of 2022 as you deserve. Accept our suggestion!"	No Emoji	Having a rest (68.5%) Confort (43.5%) Water (41.1%) Sustainability (6.5%)
13		"This is one of the possible scenarios for your weekend. A day of rest and relaxation in the best 5-star thermal water resort in Europe."	No Emoji	Having a rest (79.8%) Confort (58.9%) Nature (41.7%) Sustainability (12.5%)
14		"Is there a better way to enter 2023?"	No Emoji	Having a rest (59.9%) Confort (46.1%) Romance (31.7%) Sustainability (9.6%)

Source: personal elaboration

Regarding the fact that publications seem to be related to environmental sustainability, respondents were asked to use a scale of 1 to 7, in which the "1" correspond to "Don't agree at all" and "7" correspond to "completely agree", the results showed that the majority does not agree, as we can see at figure 3.

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

12

Figure 3 – Posts related to environmental sustainability

Source: personal elaboration

In fact, the term "sustainability" has a media of 8.2%, which is low. If we look at table 2, the ID 7 post is the one that has more percentage, but even in that one it was the fifth option out of nine option and is tied with happiness option.

Looking at the last question, an open one, some of the respondents (17.6%) expressed their opinions. Authors analyzed the answers left at the end and figure 4 summarizes the most mentioned aspects.

Figure 4 – Summary of the mentioned aspects

Photos focusing on people and not in the environment.	Images focus on personal feelings and not to environment.
All the pictures show white, young and beautiful persons in a hetero relationship. Those who does not belong to this type, can feel excluded.	Many of the images show a bathtub full of water, which turns out to be the opposite of sustainability, given the scarcity of water.
Posts showing stereotips.	Little or nothing in the publications reminds sustainability.

Source: personal elaboration

CONCLUSION

With this investigation, authors wanted to analyze if the Aqua Village Health Resort & SPA hotel unit, a luxury hotel structure that advertises itself as sustainable use social media to promote sustainability practices they have. For that, 89 posts on Instagram social media were analysed and a survey was made.

As final conclusions, authors can point out that, the hotel is active on Instagram, having a considerable number of posts. However, the interaction is low, as they have less comments than posts. Also, looking at these 89 posts, none of them refers what the hotel has in terms of sustainability or even about prizes they won.

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

13

Analyzing the survey's results, authors can conclude that the Instagram posts are not related to sustainability. In fact, the option "Sustainability" is not a considerable option for the respondents. The most chosen option was "having a rest", follow by "Confort" and "nature". Also, on the survey, the majority of the respondents reinforce that the posts do not seem to be related to environmental sustainability. With these results we can conclude that Aqua Village Health Resort & SPA does not use Instagram to be promoted as a sustainable player. At the end of the survey, at an open question, some of the respondents made strong considerations, even stating that many publications reveal the opposite of environmental sustainability.

Suggestions: looking at the results, authors suggests that the hotel can star using Instagram to promote themselves in terms of what they do for the environmental sustainability and even the prizes they won.

Limitations: the major limitation was having answers to the survey.

Future Research Lines: for future research, authors can point out an interview with the hotel director to understand if this is a strategy for the hotel.

REFERENCES

Boley, B.B. and Uysal, M. (2013). Competitive synergy through practicing triple bottom line sustainability: evidence from three hospitality case studies, *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, Vol. 13 No. 4, 226-238

Chen, L.-F. (2019). Afiliação em redes hoteleiras como estratégia de desempenho ambiental para hotéis de luxo. *Jornal Internacional de Hospitality Management*, 77, 1–6. DOI: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.08.021

Conti, E. & Cassel, S.H. (2019). Liminality in nature-based tourism experiences as mediated through social media, *Tourism Geographies*, 22:2, 413-432, DOI: 10.1080/14616688.2019.1648544.

Hall, C. (2019). Constructing sustainable tourism development: The 2030 agenda and the managerial ecology of sustainable tourism, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 27, 1044-1060. DOI: 10.1080/09669582.2018.1560456

De Castro-Pardo, M.; Pérez-Rodríguez, F.; Martín-Martín, J.M.; Azevedo, J.C. (2019). Planning for Democracy in Protected Rural Areas: Application of a Voting Method in a Spanish-Portuguese Reserve. *Land*, 8 (10), 145.

De Grosbois, D. (2012). Corporate social responsibility reporting by the global hotel industry: Commitment, initiatives and performance, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, Vol. 31 No. 3, 896-905.

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

14

De Villiers, C. & Staden, C. (2011). Shareholder requirements for compulsory environmental information in annual reports and on websites, *Australian Accounting Review*, Vol. 21 (4), 317-326

Henriques, M. & Brilha, J. (2017). UNESCO Global Geoparks: A strategy towards global understanding and sustainability. *Episodes,* 40(4),349–355.

Herrera-Cano, C. & Herrera-Cano, A. (2016). Maldivian disaster risk management and climate change action in tourism sector: Lessons for the sustainable development agenda. *Advances in Sustainability and Environmental Justice*, 19,113–131.

Hsieh, Y. (2012). Hotel companies' environmental policies and practices: a content analysis of their web pages. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 24 No. 1, 97-121.

Ibnou-Laaroussi, S., Rjoub, H., & Wong, W.-K. (2020). Sustentabilidade do Turismo Verde entre Turistas Internacionais e Sua Influência na Conquista do Meio Ambiente Verde: Evidências do Norte de Chipre. *Sustentabilidade,* 12(14), 5698. doi:10.3390/su12145698

Imon, S. (2017). Cultural heritage management under tourism pressure. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes,* 9 (3), 335–348. doi:10.1108/WHATT-02-2017-0007

Kapoor, P.S., Balaji, M.S., Jiang, Y. & Jebarajakirthy, C. (2022). Effectiveness of Travel Social Media Influencers: A Case of Eco-Friendly Hotels, *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol 61(5) 1138–1155, doi.org/10.1177/00472875211019469.

Khatter, A., McGrath, M., Pyke, J., White, L. & Lockstone-Binney, L. (2019). Análise das políticas e práticas ambientalmente sustentáveis dos hotéis: Sustentabilidade e responsabilidade social corporativa em hotelaria e turismo. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, vol. 31 No. 6, 2394-2410. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-08-2018-0670

Khatter, A., White, L., Pyke, J., & McGrath, M. (2021). Stakeholders' Influence on Environmental Sustainability in the Australian Hotel Industry. *Sustainability,* 13 (3), 1351. doi:10.3390/su13031351

Kim, A., Kim, K. & Nguyen, T. (2021). The Green Accommodation Management Practices: The Role of Environmentally Responsible Tourist Markets in Understanding Tourists' Pro-Environmental Behaviour. *Sustainability*, 13(4), 2326. https://doi.org/10.3390/su13042326

Koide, R., & Akenji, L. (2017). Assessment of policy integration of sustainable consumption and production into national policies. *Resources*, 6(4),48. DOI:10.3390/resources6040048

Leonidou, L., Leonidou, C., Fotiadis, T. & Zeriti, A. (2013). Resources and capabilities as drivers of hotel environmental marketing strategy: Implications for competitive advantage and performance, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 35, 94-110.

Lund, N., Cohen, S. & Scarles, C. (2018). The power of social media storytelling in destination branding, *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 8, 271-280, ISSN 2212-571X, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2017.05.003

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

15

Mensah, I. (2014). Stakeholder pressure and hotel environmental performance in Accra, Ghana. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, Vol. 25 No. 2, 227-243.

Michael, N. & Fusté-Forné, F. (2022). Marketing of luxurious gastronomic experiences on social media: The visual storytelling of luxury hotels, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 24, 827–838, DOI: 10.1002/jtr.2548.

Palazzo, M., Vollero, A., Vitale, P. & Siano, A. (2021). Urban and rural destinations on Instagram: Exploring the influencers' role in #sustainabletourism, *Land Use Policy*, Vol 100, 104915, ISSN 0264-8377, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landusepol.2020.104915.

Peiró-Signes, A., Verma, R., Mondéjar-Jiménez, J. & Vargas-Vargas, M. (2014). The impact of environmental certification on hotel guest ratings. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, Vol. 55 (1), 40-51.

Publituris (2022). https://www.publituris.pt/2022/09/13/aqua-village-health-resort-spa-assinala-6-o-aniversario-com-novo-programa. Accessed in april, the 5th, 2023.

Publituris (2020). https://www.publituris.pt/2020/09/23/aqua-village-health-resort-spa-e-o-melhor-spa-de-aguas-termais-do-mundo. Accessed in April, the 5th, 2023.

Sáez-Fernández, F., Jiménez-Hernández, I., & Ostos-Rey, M. (2020). Seasonality and Efficiency of the Hotel Industry in the Balearic Islands: Implications for Economic and Environmental Sustainability. *Sustainability*, 12(9), 3506. doi:10.3390/su12093506

Schaltegger, S.; Burritt, R.; Petersen, H. (2017). *An Introduction to Corporate Environmental Management: Striving for Sustainability*; Routledge: New York, NY, USA.

Schorn, A., Vinzenz, F. & Wirth, W. (2022). Promoting sustainability on Instagram: How sponsorship disclosures and benefit appeals affect the credibility of sinnfluencers, *Young Consumers*, Vol 23, 345-361, DOI 10.1108/YC-07-2021-1355.

Shanti, J. (2016). A study on environmental sustainability practices of star hotels in Bangalore, *Asian Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 5 No. 1-2, 185-194.

Soma, K., Termeer, C. & Opdam, P. (2016). Informational governance – a systematic literature review of governance for sustainability in the information age, *Environmental Science and Policy*, Vol. 56, 89-99.

Tasci, A., Khalilzadeh, J., Pizam, A., & Wang, Y. (2018). Network analysis of the sensory capital of a destination brand. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*, 9, 112–125.

Tiago, F., Couto, J., Faria, S. & Borges-Tiago, T. (2018). Cruise tourism: social media content

and network structures. *Tourism Review*, Vol 73, 433-447, DOI 10.1108/TR-10-2017-0155.

UNWTO & UNDP (2017). Tourism and the sustainable development goals – Journey to 2030. Madrid: UNWTO.

UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organization – (2021). *Sustainable Development*. Disponível em: https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development. Accessed in april, the 4th, 2023.

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

16

United Nations World Tourism Organization. Climate Change & Tourism. 2019. Available online: http://sdt.unwto.org/en/content/climate-change-tourism

York, J., O'Neil, I. & Sarasvathy, S. (2016). Exploring environmental entrepreneurship: identity coupling, venture goals, and stakeholder incentives, *Journal of Management Studies*, Vol. 53 No. 5, 695-737. doi:10.1111/joms.12198

Intern. Journal of Profess. Bus. Review. | Miami, v. 9 | n. 2 | p. 01-17 | e04310 | 2024

17