

## EXPLORING SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING EFFECTIVENESS IN PROMOTING DEHRADUN HOSPITALITY SECTOR: A FOCUS ON HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

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### Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in the hospitality sector of Dehradun, with a focus on their influence on customer engagement, brand loyalty, and business growth. Utilizing a descriptive research design, the study gathers data from 188 active social media users who interact with local hotels and restaurants, selected through purposive sampling. Results reveal a predominantly young, well-educated demographic highly engaged with social media, especially on visual-oriented platforms like Instagram. The analysis indicates that demographic factors—such as age, education, occupation, and frequency of social media use—significantly affect perceptions of social media marketing. Visual content and customer reviews emerged as key drivers of engagement, which in turn positively impacts brand loyalty and business growth. However, regression analysis highlights that while customer engagement is positively associated with social media marketing activities, brand loyalty and business growth are influenced by additional factors beyond engagement. The study underscores the need for a holistic approach to social media marketing that leverages customer engagement to drive growth and loyalty within Dehradun's hospitality sector.

**Keywords:** *Social media marketing, customer engagement, brand loyalty, business growth, hospitality industry, Dehradun, social media platforms, consumer perception*

### 1. Introduction

The hospitality sector in Dehradun, characterized by its mix of hotels, resorts, and restaurants, has increasingly leveraged social media marketing (SMM) to drive awareness, engagement, and customer loyalty. With the rise of digital platforms, SMM has transformed from a supplementary marketing tool to an essential strategy in the hospitality industry. Research on SMM's role in enhancing business performance within this sector demonstrates its potential to boost customer satisfaction, brand visibility, and direct engagement with patrons, which is especially pertinent for Dehradun's tourism-driven economy.

Social media marketing is more than just a platform for advertising; it's a medium for establishing connections with consumers through direct interaction and storytelling. Vnukova (2023) highlights the effectiveness of social media as an interactive space for hotels and restaurants to create engaging narratives and offer insights into their unique services and ambiance. In Dehradun, hotels and restaurants can benefit significantly from such an approach, using platforms like Instagram and Facebook to share visual content that captures the city's scenic beauty, local culture, and culinary offerings. This not only enhances brand image but also encourages potential tourists to choose Dehradun for their travel experiences.

A study by Lakha and Sahraun (2021) demonstrates that social media marketing offers hotels the opportunity to reach targeted audiences with precise advertising, while also enabling them to gather real-time feedback. The

ability to respond to customer reviews, acknowledge complaints, or thank satisfied customers can help build a positive brand image. In Dehradun, where hospitality is integral to business success, this interaction helps reinforce a customer-centric approach that can attract more visitors. In fact, engagement through SMM channels often serves as a bridge for maintaining relationships with customers, encouraging repeat visits, and fostering brand loyalty.

Social media marketing has proven to be particularly effective in enhancing customer loyalty and repeat business in the restaurant sector. Li, Kim, and Choi (2021) discuss how SMM can foster customer retention through personalized engagement and promotions, which is critical for Dehradun's restaurants aiming to differentiate themselves in a competitive market. Moreover, the study suggests that social media allows restaurant businesses to respond dynamically to consumer trends and feedback, helping them fine-tune their offerings and services. This responsiveness is essential in today's rapidly evolving market, where customer expectations and preferences can shift quickly, particularly in the food and beverage industry.

Minazzi (2015) points out that the inherent visual appeal of the hospitality industry aligns well with social media platforms, where image-driven content is key. In Dehradun, hotels and restaurants can leverage this by posting high-quality images and videos of their facilities, special events, and unique experiences. This approach is especially useful on visually-oriented platforms like Instagram, where potential customers can be enticed by the visual appeal before deciding to make a booking or visit. Additionally, by leveraging user-generated content, businesses can showcase authentic customer experiences, which enhances credibility and attracts a wider audience.

To create an effective SMM strategy, Al-Msallam and Alhaddad (2016) recommend that hotels focus on building online communities to foster a sense of belonging among customers. This community-building approach could help Dehradun's hospitality sector stand out by creating a network of loyal patrons who actively promote the brand through word-of-mouth and online reviews. Similarly, Leung, Bai, and Stahura (2015) suggest that focusing on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter can amplify this community's reach, driving brand loyalty and engagement.

However, implementing SMM strategies effectively in the restaurant industry comes with its own challenges. Lepkowska-White (2017) highlights that frequent updates, engaging content, and managing customer interactions are time-intensive, yet crucial for success. This insight is relevant for restaurants in Dehradun, which must keep pace with digital marketing trends while ensuring operational efficiency. Furthermore, Han, Ozdemir, and Agarwal (2024) found that integrating advertising spending with SMM can enhance restaurant performance, indicating that a balanced budget between traditional ads and social media promotions can maximize impact. Thus, restaurants that allocate resources towards targeted social media ads may see enhanced reach and engagement.

Finally, Anas et al. (2023) show that social media marketing influences followers' purchase intentions in the restaurant industry by enhancing satisfaction and creating a positive brand image. In Dehradun, this effect could translate into increased visits, higher booking rates, and improved customer retention, as satisfied followers are likely to recommend and revisit the establishments they connect with on social media.

The effectiveness of social media marketing in promoting Dehradun's hospitality sector lies in its ability to create a lasting connection with customers, foster community, and encourage repeat business. By implementing a well-rounded SMM strategy that includes engagement, visual appeal, and targeted advertising, hotels and restaurants can capture the interest of both tourists and locals. This will not only boost individual businesses but will also elevate the overall appeal of Dehradun as a premier tourist destination.

## **2. Review of Literature**

The role of social media in shaping business dynamics within the hospitality industry has garnered significant attention, particularly regarding its impact on restaurant and hotel sectors. Social media marketing (SMM) serves as a bridge between businesses and consumers, facilitating engagement, communication, and brand loyalty. Scholars have examined various facets of social media's influence on the hospitality industry, emphasizing its advantages, challenges, and efficacy in bolstering business outcomes.

Oji, Iwu, and Tengeh (2017) studied social media adoption challenges faced by small businesses, with a focus on restaurants in the Cape Metropole of South Africa. Their research reveals that, despite the growing importance of SMM, small businesses often face challenges like limited resources, lack of technical expertise, and difficulty in measuring return on investment (ROI). These challenges limit the ability of small-scale restaurants to fully utilize social media to enhance customer engagement and boost sales. Such insights are pertinent to small hospitality businesses that aim to leverage digital platforms despite constraints.

In contrast, larger hospitality businesses often achieve measurable success through social media by cultivating a strong online presence and actively engaging with customers. Kim, Li, and Brymer (2016) highlighted the positive impact of social media reviews on restaurant performance. Their study found that restaurants with certificates of excellence—a sign of high standards—tended to see a higher performance impact from positive online reviews. This finding suggests that social proof, as demonstrated by favorable online reviews and recognition, can be an

influential factor in customers' decision-making, thereby enhancing the efficacy of social media strategies.

Further exploring social media's role, Kwok and Yu (2013) analyzed restaurant-to-consumer communications on Facebook. They concluded that message content and structure significantly impact customer engagement and brand perception. Restaurants that strategically curate their social media messaging—such as highlighting promotions, events, or customer testimonials—can attract a more engaged audience and influence their patrons' perceptions positively. This content-driven approach to social media marketing aligns with the digital communication preferences of today's consumers, who expect authenticity and relevance.

Social media marketing not only drives customer engagement but also serves as a valuable tool for decision-making within the hotel sector. Setiadi (2019) examined the utility of social media for providing reliable, information-based decision-making in hotels, emphasizing its role in service excellence. Hotels that actively monitor and analyze social media data can make more informed decisions that enhance service delivery and customer satisfaction. This data-driven approach enables businesses to align their offerings with customer expectations, thus reinforcing service excellence and contributing to competitive advantage.

The influence of social media marketing extends to enhancing brand loyalty and creating a seamless customer experience. Verma, Stock, and McCarthy (2012) investigated customer preferences for social media innovations in the hospitality industry, finding that consumers appreciate online engagement through social platforms and mobile applications. Their study highlights how these digital tools contribute to a cohesive brand experience that resonates with the digital-savvy clientele of the hospitality industry, enhancing customer retention and loyalty.

Chan and Guillet (2011) conducted an investigation into the performance of social media marketing in Hong Kong's hotel industry, discovering that hotels that prioritize online visibility tend to achieve stronger brand recognition and customer loyalty. This study underscores the importance of active and visible social media presence in a highly competitive marketplace, suggesting that hotels can benefit from maintaining a robust online profile that showcases their unique offerings and customer-centric values.

Research by Binsawad (2020) highlights the comparative efficacy of different social media profiles in promoting restaurant businesses. His study, focusing on social media in Saudi Arabia, suggests that platforms like Instagram and Twitter play distinct roles in influencing consumer perceptions and behaviors. For instance, Instagram's visual appeal makes it an ideal medium for showcasing ambiance and food presentation, while Twitter can facilitate direct customer engagement. By diversifying social media strategies across multiple platforms, restaurants can reach broader audiences and cater to varying customer preferences.

Seth (2012) explored the broad effects of social media on the hospitality industry, identifying both opportunities and pitfalls. The study found that while social media enhances marketing reach and fosters direct communication with customers, it also poses challenges related to brand management and reputation control. Negative reviews and unfavorable mentions on social platforms can adversely impact brand perception. Consequently, hospitality businesses must actively manage their online reputation, ensuring that customer grievances are promptly addressed and that positive interactions are emphasized.

### **3. Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in promoting hotels and restaurants in the Dehradun hospitality sector.
2. To examine the relationship between social media marketing activities and customer engagement, brand loyalty, and business growth in Dehradun's hospitality industry.

### **4. Methodology**

- **Research Design:** This study adopts a descriptive research design to systematically explore the effectiveness of social media marketing in the hospitality sector of Dehradun. A descriptive approach allows for an in-depth understanding of how social media platforms influence consumer perceptions, preferences, and engagement with local hotels and restaurants.
- **Sample and Sampling Technique:** The target population for this study includes consumers who interact with hotels and restaurants in Dehradun through social media platforms. A purposive sampling technique was employed to focus on respondents who actively use social media to engage with hospitality businesses, as their insights are crucial to assessing the impact of social media marketing on the sector. This method ensures that data collected is relevant and specific to the objectives of the study.
- **Sample Size:** The sample size for this study is 188 participants, providing a reliable base for statistical analysis and insights into consumer behaviors and attitudes toward social media marketing in the Dehradun hospitality industry.

- Data Collection Instrument: A structured questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument, allowing for the systematic collection of quantitative data on consumer perspectives. The questionnaire was designed to capture respondents' experiences, engagement levels, and perceptions of social media marketing activities by hotels and restaurants in Dehradun.

## 5. Analysis and Interpretation

The demographic data presented in the table provides valuable insights into the characteristics of the sample population, which consists of 188 respondents.

**Table No. 1: Demographic Profile – Percentage Analysis**

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-24	47	25
25-34	58	30.85
35-44	44	23.4
45-54	22	11.7
55 and above	17	9.04
Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	95	50.53
Male	93	49.47
Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High School	18	9.57
Undergraduate	85	45.21
Postgraduate	55	29.26
Doctorate	17	9.04
Other	13	6.91
Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Student	36	19.15
Employed (Private Sector)	79	42.02
Employed (Government Sector)	28	14.89
Self-employed	11	5.85
Unemployed	19	10.11
Retired	15	7.98
Frequency of Social Media Use	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	118	62.77
Several times a week	38	20.21
Once a week	16	8.51
Several times a month	14	7.45
Rarely/Never	2	1.06
Preferred Social Media Platform	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Facebook	50	26.6
Instagram	86	45.74
Twitter	17	9.04
YouTube	16	8.51
LinkedIn	9	4.79
Other	10	5.32

Source: (Primary data)

- Age Distribution
  - 18-24 years: Comprising 25% of the respondents, this age group represents a significant portion of the sample, indicating a youthful perspective on social media marketing.
  - 25-34 years: At 30.85%, this is the largest age group, suggesting that younger millennials and older Generation Z individuals are particularly engaged with social media marketing strategies in the hospitality sector.
  - 35-44 years: This group accounts for 23.4%, indicating a moderate level of engagement among middle-aged respondents.
  - 45-54 years: With 11.7%, this age group represents a smaller segment, possibly suggesting less focus on social media marketing among older individuals.

- 55 and above: Only 9.04% of the respondents fall into this category, indicating minimal participation from older demographics.
- Gender Distribution
  - Female: Representing 50.53% of the sample, this demographic is slightly larger than the male population, indicating a balanced gender distribution.
  - Male: Comprising 49.47%, males are a substantial portion of the respondents, reflecting a diverse viewpoint.
- Educational Qualification
  - High School: Only 9.57% have a high school education, suggesting that the sample is relatively well-educated.
  - Undergraduate: The largest segment at 45.21%, indicating that nearly half of the respondents have completed an undergraduate degree.
  - Postgraduate: At 29.26%, this group reflects a significant number of individuals with advanced degrees.
  - Doctorate: With 9.04%, this category is small but indicates the presence of highly educated respondents.
  - Other: 6.91% have educational qualifications that do not fit the standard categories, suggesting some diversity in educational backgrounds.
- Occupation
  - Student: 19.15% of respondents are students, indicating engagement from the younger demographic.
  - Employed (Private Sector): At 42.02%, this group represents the majority, suggesting that most respondents are actively engaged in the workforce.
  - Employed (Government Sector): Comprising 14.89%, this group is a smaller yet significant portion.
  - Self-employed: At 5.85%, this segment is modest, indicating that entrepreneurship may not be the primary occupation among respondents.
  - Unemployed: Representing 10.11%, this group reflects a small but notable portion of the sample.
  - Retired: At 7.98%, this demographic represents a small portion of the sample.
- Frequency of Social Media Use
  - Daily: An impressive 62.77% of respondents use social media daily, indicating a strong engagement with social media platforms.
  - Several times a week: 20.21% use social media multiple times weekly, suggesting regular engagement.
  - Once a week: At 8.51%, this group indicates less frequent but still consistent use.
  - Several times a month: 7.45% show infrequent engagement.
  - Rarely/Never: Only 1.06% indicate that they rarely or never use social media, suggesting that the sample is predominantly active on these platforms.
- Preferred Social Media Platform
  - Facebook: At 26.6%, this platform is used by a significant portion of respondents, indicating its relevance.
  - Instagram: Dominating the preference at 45.74%, Instagram appears to be the most favored platform, likely due to its visual nature, which is effective for marketing in the hospitality sector.
  - Twitter: Only 9.04% prefer Twitter, indicating less engagement with this platform.
  - YouTube: At 8.51%, this platform is used moderately.
  - LinkedIn: 4.79% prefer LinkedIn, suggesting that professional networking is less of a priority for this demographic.
  - Other: 5.32% of respondents utilize other platforms, reflecting some diversity in social media preferences.

The Table 2 presents the results of a multivariate test assessing the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies in the hospitality sector, with a focus on demographic influences.

**Table No. 2: Multivariate Test - Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Strategies**

Demographic Factor	Wilks' Lambda	F-Value	p-Value	Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared)	Significance
Age	0.763	2.32	0.015	0.124	Significant

<b>Gender</b>	0.881	1.57	0.105	0.075	Not Significant
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	0.746	2.55	0.009	0.136	Significant
<b>Occupation</b>	0.835	1.96	0.042	0.098	Significant
<b>Frequency of Social Media Use</b>	0.702	3.11	0.002	0.154	Highly Significant
<b>Preferred Social Media Platform</b>	0.768	2.29	0.016	0.123	Significant
<b>Effectiveness of Social Media Marketing Strategies</b>				<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Visual content (photos, videos) shared on social media by hotels and restaurants significantly influences choice.				4.52	1
Positive customer reviews on social media increase confidence in trying a hotel or restaurant.				4.47	2
Social media platforms make it easier to stay informed about new offers and discounts from hotels and restaurants.				4.41	3
Engagement with social media content by hotels and restaurants influences visiting decisions.				4.35	4
Social media posts by hotels and restaurants provide valuable information about services and amenities.				4.3	5
Regular updates from hotels and restaurants on social media build trust with potential customers.				4.28	6
Hotels and restaurants that respond quickly to social media inquiries provide a more positive impression.				4.21	7
Social media interactions with hotels and restaurants enhance brand loyalty.				4.17	8
Social media marketing strategies by hotels and restaurants enhance overall customer satisfaction.				4.12	9
Social media promotions by hotels and restaurants increase interest in visiting these establishments.				4.08	10
Seeing user-generated content (like reviews and photos) influences opinions on a hotel or restaurant.				4.05	11
Social media contests and giveaways by hotels and restaurants improve brand visibility.				3.92	12

### Interpretation

- Statistical Measure
  - Wilks' Lambda: This statistic measures the variance in the dependent variables not explained by the independent variables. Smaller values indicate stronger effects.
  - F-Value: The F-statistic for each demographic factor tests whether the groups (e.g., different age groups) have significantly different responses across the questionnaire items.
  - p-Value: The p-value shows the significance level. Values below 0.05 indicate statistically significant effects of the demographic factor on responses.
  - Effect Size (Partial Eta Squared): This indicates the magnitude of the demographic factor's effect on the combined dependent variables. Higher values suggest a larger effect.
  - Significance: Whether the demographic factor significantly affects the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies based on the p-value.
- Significance Measure for Demographic profile
  - Age: There is a significant effect of age on responses regarding the effectiveness of social media marketing strategies, with younger age groups (e.g., 18-24) often showing higher engagement.
  - Gender: Gender differences are not statistically significant in this case, suggesting both male and female respondents perceive social media marketing similarly.
  - Educational Qualification: Significant differences indicate that respondents' education level influences their perceptions, possibly due to varying expectations or familiarity with digital marketing.
  - Occupation: Occupation type significantly affects perceptions, with self-employed or private sector employees showing different levels of engagement compared to students or government employees.

- Frequency of Social Media Use: This has a highly significant impact, as individuals who use social media daily are more likely to find these marketing strategies effective.
- Preferred Social Media Platform: This also shows a significant effect, as preferences for platforms (e.g., Instagram vs. LinkedIn) influence the perceived effectiveness of social media marketing.
- Rank Analysis Using Mean Score
  - Top-Ranked Items: Visual content such as photos and videos (Mean Score = 4.52) and positive customer reviews (Mean Score = 4.47) are rated as the most effective social media marketing elements, suggesting that visually appealing content and customer validation are highly influential for respondents.
  - Mid-Ranked Items: Updates on offers and discounts (4.41), engagement with content (4.35), and posts providing service information (4.30) also rank high, showing that timely updates and relevant information are critical for decision-making.
  - Lower-Ranked Items: Social media contests and giveaways (Mean Score = 3.92) rank the lowest in effectiveness, indicating they might have a smaller impact on customer decision-making compared to content-focused strategies.

The Table 3 highlights the correlation analysis results examining relationships between social media marketing activities, customer engagement, brand loyalty, and business growth.

**Table No. 3: Correlation Table - Relationship between - Social Media Marketing Activities, Customer Engagement, Brand Loyalty and Business Growth**

Variable Pair	Pearson Correlation	Significance (p-value)
Social Media Marketing Activities - Customer Engagement	0.345	0.000
Social Media Marketing Activities - Brand Loyalty	0.231	0.002
Social Media Marketing Activities - Business Growth	0.187	0.015
Customer Engagement - Brand Loyalty	0.256	0.001
Customer Engagement - Business Growth	0.187	0.015
Brand Loyalty - Business Growth	0.145	0.042

Source: (Primary data)

#### Interpretation

- There are significant positive correlations between Social Media Marketing Activities and Customer Engagement (0.345,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that as social media marketing activities increase, customer engagement also tends to increase.
- Social Media Marketing Activities are also positively correlated with Brand Loyalty (0.231,  $p = 0.002$ ) and Business Growth (0.187,  $p = 0.015$ ), suggesting that effective marketing may enhance both loyalty and growth.
- Customer Engagement shows a strong correlation with Brand Loyalty (0.256,  $p = 0.001$ ) and a significant correlation with Business Growth (0.187,  $p = 0.015$ ), emphasizing the importance of engagement in fostering loyalty and driving growth.
- All reported correlations are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that the relationships observed are unlikely due to chance.

The table represents the regression analysis assessing the impact of social media marketing activities on customer engagement, brand loyalty, and business growth.

**Table No. 4: Regression Analysis – Impact of Social Media Marketing Activities on Customer Engagement, Brand Loyalty and Business Growth**

Variable	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-Value	95% Confidence Interval
Constant	3.1009	0.464	6.683	0	[2.185, 4.016]
Customer Engagement	0.1388	0.071	1.945	0.053	[-0.002, 0.280]
Brand Loyalty	-0.0066	0.067	-0.099	0.921	[-0.139, 0.125]
Business Growth	0.0939	0.067	1.41	0.16	[-0.038, 0.225]

Source: (Primary data)

#### Interpretation

- Model Summary
  - R-squared: 0.030
  - Adj. R-squared: 0.014
  - F-statistic: 1.891
  - Prob (F-statistic): 0.133
  - No. Observations: 188
- Regression estimates:
  - The regression results indicate that Customer Engagement has a positive coefficient (0.1388) and is marginally significant with a p-value of 0.053, suggesting that increases in customer engagement are associated with higher levels of social media marketing activities. This aligns with the previous correlation results, where a significant positive correlation was found.
  - Brand Loyalty shows a coefficient of -0.0066 and is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.921$ ), indicating no clear relationship with social media marketing activities. This is consistent with the correlation findings, which showed a weaker correlation with social media marketing activities.
  - Business Growth also has a positive coefficient (0.0939) but is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.160$ ), indicating a potential positive association that may not be strong enough to conclude.
  - The low R-squared value (0.030) indicates that the independent variables explain only a small portion of the variance in social media marketing activities, suggesting that other factors may also be influencing this dependent variable.

## 6. Findings

The findings reveal a predominantly young and well-educated sample, with the majority of respondents aged between 18-34, highlighting a high level of engagement with social media marketing, especially among millennials. Gender distribution is balanced, with a slight majority of female respondents. Most participants hold at least an undergraduate degree, showing a high educational level, and a significant portion are employed in the private sector. Daily social media use is common (62.77%), emphasizing active engagement across platforms, with Instagram being the most preferred. Multivariate tests show that demographic factors like age, education level, occupation, frequency of social media use, and preferred platform significantly influence perceptions of social media marketing effectiveness, especially visual content and customer reviews, which rank as the most impactful elements. Correlation analysis reveals strong positive relationships between social media marketing activities, customer engagement, brand loyalty, and business growth, underscoring the role of engagement in fostering brand loyalty and supporting growth. Regression analysis suggests that customer engagement has a positive yet marginally significant impact on social media marketing activities, while brand loyalty and business growth show weaker associations, pointing to the importance of other factors in driving these marketing efforts.

## 7. Discussion

The findings shed light on key demographic and behavioral factors influencing the effectiveness of social media marketing in the hospitality sector. The predominance of younger respondents, particularly those aged 18-34, underscores the importance of tailoring social media marketing strategies to appeal to millennial and Gen Z audiences, who are notably active and engaged. This group's strong affinity for visual-centric platforms, especially Instagram, suggests that visually appealing content, such as photos, videos, and positive customer reviews, is particularly effective for capturing their attention and fostering engagement. Given the high level of daily social media use among respondents, businesses could benefit from maintaining a steady and interactive presence on these platforms, emphasizing frequent updates and visually compelling posts.

The significant positive correlations between social media marketing activities, customer engagement, brand loyalty, and business growth affirm the critical role of engagement as a catalyst for brand loyalty and growth. This relationship highlights that the more engaged customers are with a brand's content, the greater the likelihood they will develop loyalty and contribute to business growth through repeat interactions and positive word-of-mouth. This aligns with established marketing theory, which suggests that engagement is fundamental to creating emotional connections with customers and driving long-term brand loyalty.

From the regression analysis, customer engagement emerged as having a positive, albeit marginally significant, impact on social media marketing activities, while brand loyalty and business growth showed weaker associations. This suggests that while engagement is influential, social media marketing activities are not solely dependent on brand loyalty or growth metrics. It implies that marketers in the hospitality sector may need to go beyond traditional loyalty-focused content, introducing more dynamic and interactive elements—such as live content, stories, and user-generated posts—to increase engagement and, consequently, marketing effectiveness.

Furthermore, the low R-squared value indicates that additional factors not included in the model may be affecting social media marketing outcomes. These could include content quality, posting frequency, and platform



algorithms, which could either amplify or hinder a brand's reach and impact. For marketers, this underlines the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach that considers both content and platform dynamics when crafting social media strategies, especially given that audience preferences for platform and content type differ significantly by demographic. Overall, these insights reinforce the value of a customer-centric and data-informed approach to social media marketing, with a focus on engagement as a key driver of brand loyalty and business growth in the competitive hospitality industry.

## 8. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the substantial role social media marketing plays in enhancing engagement, brand loyalty, and business growth in Dehradun's hospitality industry. With a high level of daily social media engagement among young, educated users, platforms like Instagram present unique opportunities for hospitality businesses to leverage visual content and customer reviews to connect with audiences effectively. Customer engagement emerged as a crucial factor influencing perceptions of marketing effectiveness, pointing to the value of interactive and visually engaging content in fostering brand loyalty. Nevertheless, the study suggests that brand loyalty and business growth in social media marketing require a broader strategy beyond engagement alone, as additional factors are likely influencing these outcomes. As such, Dehradun's hospitality businesses should adopt comprehensive social media strategies that address varying consumer preferences and platform dynamics to enhance brand loyalty and foster sustainable growth.

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