Assessment of strategies to enhance the online presence of the Mozambican government website on tourism destination marketing

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of the present paper was to explore the best practices of destination management in promoting tourist destinations through the Mozambique government website (INATUR) and identify strategies that enhance its visibility and online presence. This was only possible by (1) exploring if people are aware of the government website's existence; (2) examining the existence of indicators of the engagement behaviors for the web-users (visitors) in their searching process on the government website; (3) exploring if the engagement behavior and website features have influence on the government website visitors' satisfaction and (4) providing measures to enhance the popularity of the government website at INATUR.

Design/methodology/approach – The study combined a qualitative and quantitative methodological approach from the primary data collected via an online questionnaire survey of 269 random respondents, and the selected data was analyzed and processed using Stata 13 with the descriptive statistic and ANOVA [Analysis of Variance (an econometric model)] technique. The data was collected from secondary sources and from the interview, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis was applied with an interpretive approach.

Findings – The government website presents the minimum of relevant information to respond to the users' needs and expectations. There is little knowledge regarding the existence of the government website for tourism destination marketing. Few respondents were surprised about this website's existence. The optimistic side of responses came from those peple who used the website and it helped their expectation. The correlation analysis showed a significant positive relationship between the government website features and the visitors' searching satisfaction; the interview outputs noted that the shortage of staff at INATUR with knowledge of digital marketing engagement plays a role in solving the problem of the visibility and online presence of the website.

Research limitations/implications – One of the apparent limitations of this research was the world pandemic situation (Covid-19), which influenced to make abrupt arrangements in conducting the questionnaire survey and interview compared to the planned schedule. The interview was supposed to be a field research to have direct contact with her respondents and collect nonverbal information through the respondents' body language, but unfortunately, it was not possible. Improvising was one of the solutions and had to design an online questionnaire survey for national and international tourist respondents and an emailed interview with INATUR director. Because of that, the results showed a very significant gap between African nationals and

international respondents in number of 264 and 5, respectively (about in 98,14%) caused by the lockdown and traveling limitation.

Practical implications – The adoption of the contents in "Recommendations for policy and decision-making" can help in synergizing an integrative marketing communication strategy that enables all actors to maximize local economic benefits without spending many financial resources, and support sustainability, different tourist destination suppliers, authorities and local communities' development. Ensuring effective and efficient communication, and above all, enhancing the provision of reliable information. Reinforce the importance of the practical teaching and learning of digital platforms in tourism schools and universities; offer a thematic tool to serve as an analytical basis in future studies, encouraging continuous scientific research on the subject under study.

Social implications – Raising the awareness of the government website among tourist consumers; promoting Mozambique as a reference destination and its tourist diversity through the use of the government website; capitalizing tourists' enterprises for communities' development; improving the competitiveness of destinations through greater exposure of tourism products and services on the government website boosts the economic gains for the development of the tourism sector in the country. Accessibility to the information channel of Mozambican tourist destinations via the government website, and stimulating the desire to visit; improve and enrich the visitor's experience quality on the government website in the tourist information consultation.

Originality/value – It is the first research in the country about tourism destination marketing using indicators like customers' behavioral engagement levels based on social interactions such as likes, shares and comments on the government website, as well as its awareness and performance aspects, to analyze if the INATUR government website is being successful on its tourism destination marketer role. The research was also done to bring solutions to the current trends of the Covid-19 pandemic that has affected and disrupted the tourism industry.

Keywords Tourism, Strategies, Online presence, Marketing, Government website, INATUR

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Since 1955, the trends in the tourism sector have been enhanced by the advancement in Information Communication Technology (ICT), the search for leisure and the growth of income (purchasing power) which are still considered important factors of changes and opportunities in this industry. The challenges faced in terms of market demand from the side of tourist organizations, comprising the competition among the destinations for tourists, have also grown.

In search of competitive advantages, the marketing tool such as Internet has been started to be used. Therefore, it is important to make sure that the online information for the tourism industry (services and products) are virtually present, available, complete and updated (Costa *et al.*, 2004).

The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2001, 2004, 2005) assumed that tourism and technology (Internet) walk together in providing different information. This allows tourists to make reservations in a fast and easier way, because the information presented online is a precious instrument to attract and retain potential tourists (Mendonça, 2002). In the same way, Zhang *et al.* (2015), defend that tourism websites are a fundamental source to consult about a traveling plan. The information displayed on the official tourism website can create informative content, not only for the promotional purpose of the touristic destination but also in guiding the potential tourists to the reality and decision-making influence. This may help in expanding the levels on consumption of touristic products, services consumption, and tourists flow.

In order to boost, improve and market the tourism environment in Mozambique, the government is in a progressive implementation of a strategic tourism development plan since 2012 and is now in its second phase until 2025 (PEDTM II) [1]. This plan has several government efforts to create facilities that enable the growth of tourism in quality of infrastructures, tourism knowledge, human resources, adequate institutional framework, security and financial resources. These efforts comprise three main processes: (a) integrated development planning, (b) improvement of products and services and (c) improvement of marketing and sales (GovMoz, 2013b).

A survey of the governing body of Tourism in Mozambique INATUR (2012) acknowledged that the presence of online marketing in Mozambique and the strategy was in its embryonic stage and required an optimal improvement of online, social media and marketing activities' presence. Emphasizing that, since 2010, from the total budget of INATUR (USD 4.2 million), only 19% was used for promotional activities or marketing, and it did not include the online world (GovMoz, 2013a).

It is important to point that due to these institutional challenges, the tourism sector in Mozambique has been contributing with small shares to the economy. For example, in 2017, the tourism sector including its broader effects of supply chain investment and induced income contributed to GDP with about 75.2 billion metical (8.8%) and in 2018 accounted with 80 billion metical (9%). There is an optimistic trend in tourism, as the WTO (1999) and World Travel and Tourism Council forecasted an annual increase of 4.9% to reach 125.5 billion metical by 2028.

The factors like open visa policy and natural resources, including safari parks, pristine islands and beaches are mentioned as boosters of tourism sector (WTO, 1999). These facts called our attention because Mozambique is located in Southern Africa, a country with enormous diversity and richness of culture, gastronomy and natural resources which constitute the main tourism attractions. This is the reason why the present study will emphasize the significance of the third key indicator of the PETDM II, 2016–2025 which focuses on strategies for improving marketing and sales. Added to that, the study will benchmark the regional successes and accepted practices from the WTO and different scholars' writings. This will help the development of strategies and the current action plans with great visibility of the government website on the Internet; improve its performance in the virtual world; attract more visitors and have a competitive advantage at international level. This is about "*Making your name appear*", meaning that the government's online presence has to be known by people and among Internet users (GovMoz, 2013b).

1.2 The objectives and significance of the study
The main purpose of the study is to explore DMOs' (Destination marketing organizations) [2] best practices to promote tourist destinations through the government website (INATUR) and strategies that enhance its online visibility. This can be done by (1) exploring the people's awareness about the existence of the government website; (2) understanding the visitors' behaviors as indicators in their searching; (3) exploring if the website features influence the visitors' satisfaction and (4) providing measures to enhance the visibility of the INATUR website.

The study's significance relies on helping the INATUR with best practices and suggestions for an efficient integrated online marketing strategy and encouraging the cooperation with different digital platforms to attract more visitors and potential investors. The INATUR will benefit from this study's contribution to be used as sustainable measures to review and adjust its current website performance, by improving and developing its online marketing activities on the web page, and consequently its online active presence among the Internet users. Most of all, this study would be beneficial for the entire stakeholders' network in the tourism sector.

2. Literature review
2.1 Destination marketing on tourism
Pike (2004) describes tourism destination marketing as a management process through which the tourist enterprises identify a selected group of actual and potential tourists, and communicate with them to ascertain and influence their wishes, needs and motivations, in order to formulate and adapt their tourist products accordingly in achieving the optimal tourist satisfaction thereby fulfilling their business objectives.

Destination marketing is an integral part of developing and retaining a particular location's popularity, and preserving the attributes that are attracted to the tourism

destination (Kotler *et al.*, 2006). Once objectives are identified, the marketing mix (4Ps) is created to promote it.

According to Adeyinka-Ojo *et al.* (2014), the tourism destinations' marketing activities are conducted by DMO which plays a crucial role in promoting the development of destinations and better position in highly competitive tourism markets. The DMO also plays a role in enhancing local economic gains, opportunity to live and work for people in their community (WTO, 2004). The DMOs as the major players in the promotion of the tourism destinations can have crucial roles such as (1) industry coordination, (2) monitoring service and quality standards and (3) enhancing community relations (Paraskevas *et al.*, 2011). Giving emphasis on the aforementioned, Ritchie and Crouch (2013) and Buhalis (2000) said that the DMOs' structures can vary from a government department, a joint public/private agency and private organizations. This is to say that for its successful marketing strategy, the DMOs work with different stakeholders from government bodies, tourist and hospitality firms, residents, NGOs and other institutions, with the aim to coordinate them for best practices in the tourism environment.

From the same perspective, in 2015, the government of Mozambique approved the country's tourism guidelines (PEDTM-II), whereby the INATUR (governing body of tourism) is responsible for the implementation of marketing strategies and plans of activities, with the focus of establishing the local organizations, for a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) on tourism development priorities (GovMoz, 2013b). The country's DMO structure of tourism in the private sector is represented and coordinated by the Confederation of Economic Associations and other agencies (d'Angella, 2007). This cooperative synergy can promote and maintain a successful government website, by providing a complete informative platform (videos, images and photos) from different tourism products and service providers, which facilitates the visitors' searching, as well as influencing decision-making for the destinations (UN World Tourism Organization, 2005). Actually, the literature recognized that images held by visitors influence positively the choice of destinations and also stimulate brand identity and positioning (Morrison, 2018; Zach *et al.*, 2010; Govers and Go, 2003).

In general, the success of any type of marketing communication instrument or channel requires some strategies adoption and a measurement to evaluate the success of its use and to further improve and develop its utility benefits. Some scholars measure the success in and from a more comprehensive business perspective (Hays *et al.*, 2013; Kumar and Mirchandani, 2012) emphasizing the need to be aligned with business strategies and with efforts that bring dividends in form of return on investment.

Besides measuring success based on engagement has become an important indicator for DMOs' online efforts (Zeng, 2013; Lang, 2022), and some researchers go on saying that there are three dimensions of engagement – affective, cognitive and behavioral (Dessart *et al.*, 2015). In the meantime, the Internet monitoring tools measure engagement levels based on different social interactions such as likes, shares and comments (; Hoffman and Fodor, 2010; Kaske *et al.*, 2011; Peters *et al.*, 2013) which correspond to the CEB approach (Gummerus *et al.*, 2012).

In fact, the DMOs need to understand how their marketing efforts are taking effect on their target or potential customers and visitors (Leung *et al.*, 2013). Also, features like measuring the success of marketing channels and activities have been identified as the biggest challenge (Phocuswright Yearbook, 2014), because DMOs are using standardized metrics for evaluation of websites without taking into account the varying structure and funding models of DMOs (Pike and Page, 2014).

After castigating the destination marketing from the above literature background, we will be able to provide recommendations that enhance the popularity vis-à-vis the visibility of the INATUR website, and visitors' satisfaction which requires a vision on tourism promotion from the government.

2.2 The need for government tourism promotion

In a highly fragmented industry like the tourism sector, where issues have different ministerial responsibilities, government intervention is needed to develop a vision, to establish measurable goals and to bring together the main stakeholders toward a sustainable future (OECD, 2010). The government must actively participate in the tourism sector for the following reasons: (1) providing financial support for marketing initiatives; (2) advance the country in global competitions; (3) national interest in guaranteeing benefits to society and (4) improving the country's image (OECD, 2013). Almeida-Santos *et al*. (2014) also added that the main objective of government interventions in the tourism industry is to maintain and increase the competitiveness and sustainability of the sector. Therefore, the Mozambican government recognizes its role in promoting the country's tourism industry. Here, we have the INATUR's marketing responsibility financed by public funds in cooperation with the private sector, and other tourist companies. In terms of sustainability, the government has encouraged green tourism initiatives and practices, by removing trade barriers to environmental goods and services related to climate change, and environmental conservation to ensure a sustainable future for the sector (GovMoz, 2013a).

2.3 Strategies to enhance online traffic to the website

The online traffic represents the first step to turn a website into a lead. Thus, stimulating traffic on a website platform is a daily routine of any institution that wants to survive in the current globalized era of digital marketing (WTO, 2009). Nowadays, public, private and NGOs are working hard to make more people use their websites.

The more people know about the business, the more changes the organizations have in engaging with lead or potential customers. However, for organizations to drive traffic into their website, they can implement free or paid strategies (Walle, 1996), and because there are plenty of them, the present research will focus on destinations' marketing and DMOs.

The literature review has wide and constructive effects in conceptualizing the tourism destinations marketing and DMOs, helping us to know their role and functions. It can also help to understand which strategies can be applied to enhance the traffic on the website use (pay-per-click advertising, search engine optimization, content marketing and social media marketing). Furthermore, the importance of encouraging and restoring the idea of branding, image and positioning, as comprehensive view on government responsibilities in creating sustainable development of tourism destinations, balancing environmental, economic and sociocultural factors.

Researchers have different evaluation criteria for the success of website traffic in tourism destinations marketing. Some adopt the content quality of tourism websites – features and information that a website offers (Law *et al.*, 2010) and behavioral engagement – provided by users' feedback such as likes, shares and comments (Buhalis and Mamalakis, 2015). Some scholars cover the financial dimensions, internal business processes, customers, learning and growth (WTO, 2005), while others focus on web page design, marketing information and technical aspects. It makes harder the process of choosing a suitable model because different researchers are using different criteria. However, the common sense found in the website evaluation criteria is accuracy, authority, objectivity, coverage and the use of the website information (Kaplan and Norton, 1996).

From the literature review, the indicators like customers' behavioral engagement levels based on social interactions such as likes, shares and comments on the government website, including its awareness and performance aspects, can be used to analyze if the INATUR government website is being successful on its virtual tourism destination marketer role (the online presence).

2.4 Sustainable development of tourism destination
The term "sustainable development" was employed first in a report to the Club of Rome entitled "The limit of growth". The report declared that a goal can be sustainable development based on prudent management of available resources and environmental capacities, and the rehabilitation of the environment previously subjected to degradation. This concept meant that sustainability meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of the next generations to meet their goals (WCED, 1987; Esparon *et al.*, 2015).

For the UNWTO (2013), sustainable tourism is an enterprise that achieves a balance between the environmental, economic and sociocultural aspects of tourism development to guarantee long-term benefits to local communities. The study from Nevares and Hayman (2012), WTO (1999), McIntyre *et al.* (1993), McKercher (2013) and Bowers (2016) addressed some pillars that make a sustainable tourism development: (1) Optimized use of environmental resources, ecosystems and biological diversity maintenance, and precaution on building tourism environments without damage; (2) Respect for sociocultural authenticity, conserve built and living cultural heritage, and contribute to cross-cultural understanding and tolerance and (3) Ensure long-term social and economic benefits, fairly distributed to community stakeholders, including decent and stable employment and income-earning opportunities, social services and poverty alleviation.

The local government has responsibilities to address a sustainable development approach within tourism destinations (Beaumont and Dredge, 2010) by establishing and implementing policies for this sector or industry. This approach must also provide an environment that enables and encourages the private sector, local community, tourists and other stakeholders to respond to sustainability, including natural resources management.

3. Research methodology
3.1 Research design
This study involved mixed methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches. The qualitative approach was used to collect information about the role of DMO in promotional activities of tourism destinations from the website page. The research analyzed books, journals, magazines, reports, publications, textbooks, peer-reviewed journal articles and Internet sources discussing these subjects (Baggio and Klobas, 2011; Veal, 2011).

The quantitative method started gathering the primary data with a semi-structured questionnaire survey to explore the visitors' search on government website. It also checked the existence of behavioral factors on website engagement, and explore if this Customer Engagement Behavior (CEB) [3] and website features influenced the users' satisfaction. The online questionnaire survey was shared through the link on social media platforms. The outcome of the data was processed and analyzed through Stata 13, where the answers from the respondents were inputs using a numerical coding technique. Then, a descriptive statistics analysis was made applying the Pearson correlation and ANOVA [Analysis of Variance (an econometric model)] model to come up with findings and conclusions.

3.2 Research ethics considerations
The research was focused on the general tourists and the INATUR staff. So ethical consideration was of major importance to protect the researcher and respondents from any harm that can occur concerned with moral principles, values and actions regarding honesty, integrity, transparency, obligations to other responsibilities, and trust (Traianou, 2014). The research has been conducted with ethical consideration, to guarantee the study of high standard integrity and respect for various participants involved in the research process.

The participants were informed well on the objectives and purpose of the study, so they participated voluntarily and could choose to withdraw at any point in the questionnaire and

interview. The privacy and confidentiality of every participant were respected and also permission from the institution to interview the staff was asked and an e-mail request with a credential letter.

4. Research results and analysis

4.1 Respondents' profile

The study targets a population of tourists who voluntarily and freely answered the online questionnaire. After the online survey was randomly answered, the results gave us a sample size comprising 269 respondents whose characteristics are described in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that the majority of the tourists or respondents are degree holders and most of them are males from African continent. The gap between Africans (mostly national) and international tourists is visible and probably caused by the huge fall in international tourism demand amid world travel restrictions, and lockdown measures, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the latest issue of the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (2020), Africa registered a 69% decrease in international tourist arrivals from January to October 2020.

Besides, the online questionnaire survey was drawn to be both online and face-to-face (physical presence), but by that time to find an international tourist in Mozambique was somehow challenging. The few international tourists who accepted to answer our questionnaire were recommended by friends. Moreover, the responses pointed that these tourists had opportunity to enjoy the touristic destinations in Mozambique because some of them were working in the country. Other respondents went on adding that with the pandemic issues they had no desire for tourist trips.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

This technique was applied to estimate the number of frequencies of observations in each category of interesting variable.

Table 2 is clear that most of the respondents confirmed that they searched about the destinations before their travel (91.08%) against only 8.92% of them who said did not search. And among them, 33.83% did the searching for destinations in social media platforms, 18.59% used the helps of travel agents and 14.87% were recommendations by family, friends

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Probability %
Gender	Female	83	30.86
	Male	186	69.14
Age	18–34	214	79.55
	35–54	52	19.33
	55 and above	3	1.11
Educational background	Secondary and Diploma level	69	25.65
	Degree level (Bachelor, Master, PhD)	200	74.35
Marital status	Single	175	65.06
	Married	92	34.20
	Divorced	2	0.74
Continent of residence	Africa	264	98.14
	America	2	0.74
	Europe	3	1.11
Total		269	
Source(s): Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020			

Table 1.
The profiles of respondents

Variables and features	Frequency	Valid probability %
V1-Destinations' searching frequency		
No	24	8.92
Yes	245	91.08
V2-Destinations' information channel		
Travel agent	50	18.59
Newspaper/Magazine/Radio/TV	53	19.70
Government website	35	13.01
Social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, WeChat, Twitter, Instagram)	91	33.83
Recommended by others	40	14.87
Total	269	
Source(s): Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020		

Table 2.
Destinations'
searching and
information channel

or colleagues, while the rest 13.01 and 19.70% did the searching through the government website and newspaper/Magazine/Radio/TV, respectively.

The study will continue to analyze other features of variables in Tables 3 and 4.

The results of Table 3 indicate that the majority of tourists (49.07%) searched on the website for information purpose, while 17.84% of the respondents' search was for other different motives than the ones mentioned in the survey. The last fraction can be compared with the others of almost the same portion (17.10%) who used the websites to purchase online travel products and services. A few answers were to order information brochure (8.92%) and 7.06% searched to contact the organization running the website.

This is to say that after the world has experienced the dynamic of digital and technology era, the consumers' behaviors are changing, and the Internet is teaching people to go online and quickly search and find out about their interests. The same in the tourism industry, the potential tourists are no longer satisfied with requesting information or waiting for their arrival to obtain information about the destination. The tourists are conscious that the

Variables and features	Frequency	Valid probability %
V3-Main searching objectives		
Contact the organization running the gov. website	19	7.06
For information purpose	132	49.07
Buy travelling products and services online	46	17.10
Order the guideline brochure online	24	8.92
Others	48	17.84
V4-Motives for the searching		
Let them know the ways that they can better serve the customers' needs	118	43.87
Make constructive suggestions on the improvement of products or services	56	20.82
Let them know the problems faced on website for help	17	6.32
Let them know my satisfaction with their services	52	19.33
Others	26	9.67
V5-Customers' interaction attitude		
Like and subscribe on the gov. website page	76	28.25
Write comments on the website page	141	52.41
Share the website link with other users	52	19.33
Total	269	
Source(s): Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020		

Table 3.
Objectives, motives
and customers' attitude
in searching the
government website

Internet can satisfy this need and that is why in our case they have been using different channels to obtain a variety of information and compare them. Thus, the decision to purchase a destination site is mostly based on the information made available on the Internet, mainly in official tourism websites.

In Table 3, it is clear that 43.87% of tourists and respondents informed the customer center services what they want, and almost 21% make constructive suggestions for the improvement of services, 6.32% gave their feedback after experiencing a problem and 19.33% demonstrated satisfaction for the good services provided by the government website.

The table also showed the visitors' interaction on the government website, with the highest number (52.41%) corresponding to those who comment on the website, followed by 28.25% of those who like or subscribe to the website page and 19.33% by those who could share the government website links and information with other users/visitors.

Regarding the features related to the destination perception and mouth-to-mouth marketing, the detailed results are given in Table 4.

Table 4 shows that for feature V6, the majority (82.16%) of respondents agreed that their search on the government website helped to understand what to expect on the interesting tourism destinations, while 17.84% of respondents disagreed.

In the same table, the V7 represents the word-of-mouth level of visitors to the INATUR website, where 22.30% spoke good things to others, 53.53% remained as neutral, 12.27% were pessimistic and 11.89% had never spoken to anyone about the government website.

Furthermore, with the current trends in the use of social media platforms, the respondents have also shown their preferences of channels from which they wanted to receive information. These preferences are related to the satisfaction level for their expectation about the travel destinations as illustrated in Figures 1 and 2.

The features in Figure 1 indicate that 60% of the respondents preferred to receive information about travel destinations through e-mail, about 19% got the information straight from the website, 7% received information through mobile phone messaging and only 14% of respondents acquired from social media.

The outcomes illustrated in Figure 2 suggest that 19% of the respondents were extremely satisfied with the expectation created by the government website and what they experienced on the ground. A fraction of about 64.7% were satisfied with what they experienced because it was in line with their expectation, 15.6% were neutral, while 0.7% of respondents were unsatisfied with the tourism destination.

4.3 Correlations

The study conducted the Pearson correlation analysis to establish the relationship between the government website awareness with gender, and the tourism destinations searching process by

Variables and features	Frequency	Valid probability %
V6-Searching helps destination perception		
Yes	221	82.16
No	48	17.84
V7-Word-of-mouth about government website		
Speak positively to others about the gov. website	60	22.30
Neutral speaker	144	53.53
Speak negatively to others about the gov. website	33	12.27
Never speak to someone	32	11.89
Total	269	

Table 4.
Destination perception and word-of-mouth from government website

E-mail **Website** **Phone number** **Social Media**

Source(s): Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020
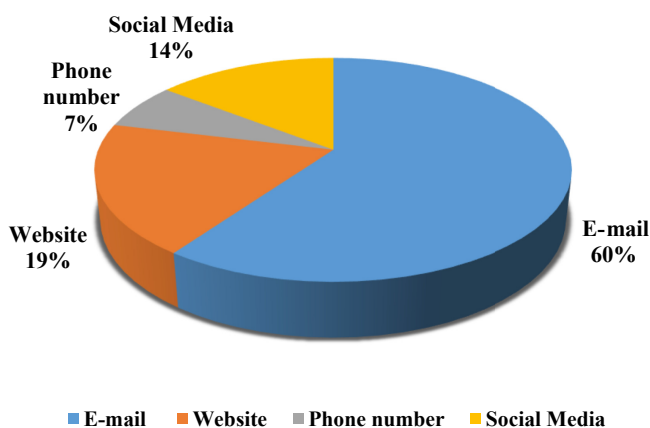
Figure 1.
Tourist information
reception channel

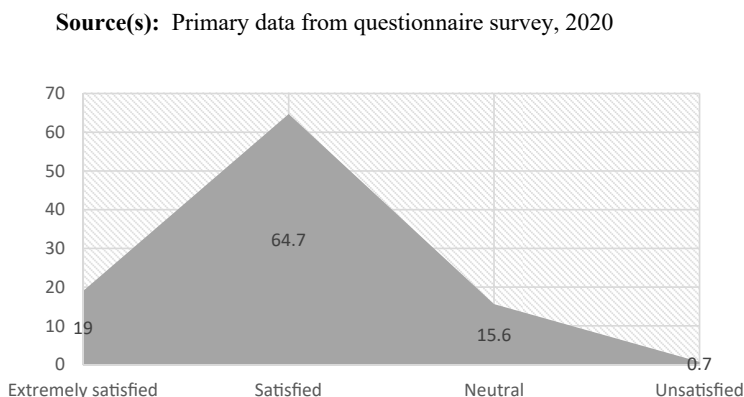**Source(s):** Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020

Figure 2.
Satisfaction level on
what to expect in the
touristic destination

visitors before their travels, and this nexus included other different website features (variables). This test will be done by checking and proving the conformity of the hypothesis used to perform the interaction of the features for the government website awareness that define the correlation variables (V8, V9, V10, V11 and V12) as described in Table 5.

Variable features	Variable denotation	Possible correlation
Do you have any idea about the Mozambican government's tourism destination website?	V8	
What's your gender?	V9	
Do you search about your tourism destination before the travel?	V10	
Are the government website's contents and images regarding tourism destinations favorable?	V11	
Does the government website have to provide destination maps and itinerates?	V12	
Does the government tourism destination website easily navigable and user-friendly?	V13	

Table 5.
Features that define the
correlation variables

4.3.1 Hypotheses on website awareness to gender, and the tourism destinations search.

$$H_0 : \rho = 0$$

H0. There is no relationship between the website awareness with gender, and the tourism destinations search in the population.

$$H_1 : \rho \neq 0$$

H1. There is a relationship between the website awareness with gender, and the tourism destinations search in the population.

First, we define the features that will perform our Pearson correlation test to be analyzed thereafter from the outcomes. If the test produces results that occur $\rho \leq 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected, and if the results occur $\rho > 0.05$, then the null hypothesis is not rejected (Yockey, 2016).

From Table 6, the 1st correlation indicates a strong negative relationship between "V8" and "V9", with $r(269) = -0.184^{**}$, $p < 0.003$, at the level 1% of significance.

The 2nd correlationTable 6 also shows a strong negative relationship between "V8" and "V10" confirmed with having $r(269) = -0.107$, $p > 0.079$.

Again, the 3rd correlation obtained $r(269) = 0.170^{**}$, $p \leq 0.005$ (at the level 1% of significance) which means a significant positive relationship between the two featured variables "V11" and "V12".

Finally, our 4th correlation in Table 6 indicates again that there is a significant positive relationship between the last two featured variables "V11" and "V13", with $r(269) = 0.240^{**}$, $p < 0.001$, at the level 1% of significance.

The strong negative relationship between the featured variables aforementioned (V8 vs. V9 and V8 vs. V10) lies in the weakness of marketing activities, which currently constitutes one of the barriers of the government website in promoting tourist destinations and their

| | | Correlation-I | | | | Correlation-II | | |
		V8	V9				V8	V10
V8	PearsonCorrelation	1	−0.184**	V8	PearsonCorrelation		1	−0.107
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.003		Sig. (2-tailed)			0.079
	N		269	269	N		269	269
V9	PearsonCorrelation	−0.184**	1	V10	PearsonCorrelation		1	−0.107
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003			Sig. (2-tailed)			0.079
	N	269	269		N		269	269

| | | Correlation-III | | | | Correlation-IV | | |
		V11	V12				V11	V13
V11	PearsonCorrelation	1	0.170**	V11	PearsonCorrelation		1	0.240**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.005		Sig. (2-tailed)			0.000
	N		269	V13	N		269	269
V12	PearsonCorrelation	0.170**	1	V13	PearsonCorrelation		0.240**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005			Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	
	N	269	269		N		269	269

Table 6.
Possible correlations

Note(s): **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

respective products and online services. This requires an improvement of the government website's online presence associated with social media platforms.

The results also indicated a positive relationship between the variables V11, V12 and V13, from the website features, meaning that the government website development took into account the "AIDA" concept [4] (Oertel *et al.*, 2002), where the appearance and information focus on its users.

= "Attention", the website provides an overview navigation structure, site maps and attractive photos, which emphasize the uniqueness of the destinations and ways to communicate with different tourist suppliers on its homepage.

= From an "Interest" perspective, on the website, it's possible to find attractive descriptions of the region like weather, natural, historical and cultural attractions, or other practical tips (banking services, food and beverage places, and accommodation within the destination).

= In terms of "Desire", the website gives several descriptions of activities, things to do and see in the tourist destinations.

= Lastly, from the angle of "Action", the website offers options for interaction (FAQ and information center or services), booking possibilities (online reservation), secure payment facilities, etc.

4.4 The ANOVA analysis
Once again, to castigate the outcomes from the questionnaire survey, the ANOVA was performed to test whether the displayed features of government website influence significantly the level of satisfaction of its users and visitors. This test is applied based on the principles of awareness, accessibility and readability. The assumption is that the website is known by people interested in Mozambican tourist destinations, and has unrestricted access to everyone. The website is also friendly and easy to read (contents, images, maps, terms and procedures), allowing access and viewing through different technological devices using Internet. Therefore, the hypotheses will be tested not only from the awareness level but also from the "AIDA" perspective which is summarized in satisfaction.

4.4.1 Hypotheses on the mean for the visitors' level of satisfaction (tourists' feelings).

$$H_0: \mu_{\text{Strongly agree}} = \mu_{\text{Agree}} = \mu_{\text{Neutral}} = \mu_{\text{Disagree}}$$

H0. The satisfaction level for all the users and visitors in their four groups is equal.

$$H_1: \mu_{\text{Strongly agree}} \neq \mu_{\text{Agree}} \neq \mu_{\text{Neutral}} \neq \mu_{\text{Disagree}}$$

H1. There is at least one satisfaction level for the users and visitors which is different from the others.

Tables 7 and 8 will give the outputs of the test One-way and analyses of variance regarding the feelings of the tourists after searching tourist destinations on government website.

Table 7 displays the outputs of the descriptive statistics for each group and for the sample. By examining the variance of means from different feelings, we can see that the "Neutral" had a high number of feelings 1mean = 15.63 not far from "Agree" 1mean = 15.01, "Strongly agree" 1mean = 14.07 and "Disagree" 1mean = 11.33, the lowest number of feeling on average of the four groups. The neutral satisfaction is behind the weak engagement in

	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error	95% confidence interval for mean		Min.	Max.
					Lower bound	Upper bound		
Strongly agree	6	1.50	0.548	0.224	0.93	2.07	1	2
1.33	22	1.73	0.550	0.117	1.48	1.97	1	3
1.67	31	1.84	0.454	0.082	1.67	2.01	1	3
Agree	56	1.84	0.532	0.071	1.7	1.98	1	3
2.33	59	2.03	0.642	0.084	1.87	2.2	1	3
2.67	44	2.14	0.554	0.083	1.97	2.3	1	3
Neutral	27	2.30	0.775	0.149	1.99	2.6	1	4
3.33	18	2.00	0.686	0.162	1.66	2.34	1	3
3.67	3	2.33	0.577	0.333	0.90	3.77	2	3
Disagree	3	2.33	0.577	0.333	0.90	3.77	2	3
Total	269	1.98	0.614	0.037	1.91	2.06	1	4

Table 7.
One-way (descriptive) on feeling after searching tourist destinations on government website

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	9.219	9	1.024	2.894	0.003
Within groups	91.688	259	0.354		
Total	100.907	268			

Source(s): Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020
On feeling after searching tourist destinations on government website

Table 8.
The ANOVA

publicizing the government website. Another reason for the high neutral satisfaction rate is because most of the respondents were unaware of the government website's existence, so they had to search for the government website page.

The results of ANOVA in Table 8 produced a p-value = 0.003 of whether the means are equal in the population, and this value is less than 0.05, so the H_0 that says the means are equal for the four groups is rejected. This is to say that at least one of the feelings is different from the others.

The ANOVA also tested the homogeneity of variances with hypotheses considering the factors influencing the changes in the tourists' satisfaction level in Table 9.

4.4.2 Hypotheses of the factors influencing the variances of visitors' satisfaction level.

$$H_0 = \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Strongly agree}} = \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Agree}} = \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Neutral}} = \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Disagree}}$$

H0. The factors influencing the variances of the visitors' satisfaction level are equal for the four groups.

$$H_1 = \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Strongly agree}} \neq \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Agree}} \neq \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Neutral}} \neq \partial^2 \mu_{\text{Disagree}}$$

Levene statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.048	9	259	0.402

Source(s): Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020
On feeling after searching tourist destinations on government website

Table 9.
Test of homogeneity of variances

H1. There is at least one factor influencing the variances of visitors' satisfaction level in the four groups which is different from the others.

The result of Levene's test shown in Table 9 produced an F of 1.048 and a $p < 0.402$, and since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the H_0 is not rejected. It is assumed that the population variances are equal for all groups.

From the outputs of Tables 7 and 8, it may take us to think that the factors which influenced the results in showing a higher neutral satisfaction level on the government website search performance is because the majority of respondents have used social media platforms, travel agents or recommendations to search and book tourist destinations of their interest in Mozambique. Some factors are likely to be related to

(1) Weak engagement in advertising the government website page: due to limited national and local initiatives to promote the government website. Thus, efforts are needed to disseminate the existence of the government website among communities.

(2) Little understanding of the power of technologies and use of collaborative platforms (social networks, newsletters and others) to connect with the government website during the process of implementing online marketing and promoting tourist destinations.

(3) Underutilization of marketing intelligence: the Big data plans to be maximized for marketing purposes. The statistical data produced by the Ministry of Tourism and the Statistics Institute (i.e. the survey of outbound visitors) can be used in the decision of strategic and tactical marketing plan to reach a wider audience.

(4) Inexistence of government website analytics: in terms of tracking user behavior. It allows the analysis of website traffic data to determine the website's effectiveness and understand the visitors' behavior of their actual usage and to optimize the website performance in accomplishing its objectives of tourism destinations marketing.

4.5 The INATUR (tourism governing body) SWOT analysis

The INATUR was established in 2001 as a national DMO with the name of "FUTUR". In 2010, the designation was changed to INATUR (Ministry of Tourism of Mozambique, 2014). This shift was aimed to bring a new dynamic for the tourism sector with a proactive and investment promotional strategy to expand its role and actions. INATUR works closely with the private sector, all stakeholders, and its counterparts globally to ensure the development of tourism as well as the satisfaction of visitors in a sustainable way. Therefore, the mandate of INATUR is to collaborate in the implementation of initiatives plans and programs (both from public and private sectors), and also as consulting teams for the development of the tourism industry in the country.

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis in Table 10 was obtained after the interview with the INATUR director to identify internal and external factors that eventually are affecting the government website promoter (INATUR). The SWOT represents a way to understand the institution and environment by examining it (Sarah and Otu-Nyarko, 2014).

5. Summary of the main findings

The main findings extracted from the research analysis data resulted in the following aspects:

Internal factors	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Government support	Slowness in preparing an online marketing plan
Partnership with different sector stakeholders	Delays in implementing marketing strategies
Use of diverse social media platforms	Insufficiency of financial resources for promotion activities
Existence of the digital marketing department	Lack of professional human resources with digital or online marketing knowledge
Market segmentation	Poor online presence
Existence of proactive and interactive web pages and follow-up activities	Long site maintenance time
Participation in international tourism expos/conferences (mainly in Africa and Europe)	
External factors	
Opportunities	Threats
Increase in Internet users, electronic devices and technology	Political instability
Possibility of strengthening the website awareness and use	High regional competitiveness
Increase in national demand for tourism products and services	Stagnation of external capital investment
	Closure of some tourist resorts and enterprises due to uncertainty over the Covid-19

Table 10.
SWOT analysis of
INATUR

Source(s): Primary data from questionnaire survey, 2020

(1) The findings indicated that the government website is interactive and presents relevant information and somehow satisfactorily responds to the needs of visitors and their expectations; however, its online propagation (presence) is under development.

(2) The results indicated that there is little knowledge about the government website for tourism destinations marketing. Although most respondents had searched before their travel to Mozambican destinations, only 13.01% use the government website page. The majority of tourists (Africans) were the most surprised about the website's existence, but recognized the website as a reliable channel for providing tourist information.

(3) The findings in descriptive statistics analysis showed an optimistic side of the government website, when 82% of those who used the website agreed that the government website helped them to create their expectation through the information provided online. This is collaborated with the 64.7% of satisfaction level on the tourists' expectations created by the website, because it was the same experienced on-site.

(4) The Pearson correlation showed a significant positive relationship between the government website features and the visitors' searching satisfaction level, somehow confirming the "AIDA" concept on the government website.

(5) The findings indicate that those who before used other channels than the government website to plan their trip showed a neutral satisfaction demonstrated by ANOVA and only after or through the survey they were able to obtain information on the website.

(6) The interview findings noted that the lack of INATUR staff with knowledge and techniques of digital marketing engagement plays a medical role in solving the problem. And this can be done by designing and implementing strategies to enhance the visibility and popularity of the government website.

6. Conclusion

The goal was to scrutinize whether the government website (INATUR) is well known or not and used as an online marketing channel in promoting Mozambican tourist destinations.

The study explored the tourists' and website users' searches on the government website for tourism destination marketing. The results are conclusive that there is a lack of awareness and information about the government website existence among the surveyed people. And only 13% of them used government website page and the high number used social media platforms. This figure was followed by those using travel agents, and others recommended by friends, family or colleagues.

The study also investigated the indicators related to the government website visitors' engagement behavior (CEB) in their search. The statistics pointed that the interactive attitude of website visitors and the word-of-mouth engagement were present in those who searched on the government website by letting the information services know their concerns (difficulties faced), satisfaction of their needs (likes, comments and sharing the website link with others), making constructing suggestions and giving products or services feedback. Some of them were pessimistic and neutral to speak due to the lack of awareness on the government website's existence.

The study went on castigating more about the influence of the government website's features on the website visitors' or potential tourists' satisfaction. Considering the visitor engagement behavior on the website, it is confirmed from the correlations and ANOVA analysis that there is a positive impact of contents, images, maps and other information displayed on the website page. The features influenced the website visitors' satisfaction at different levels from each other.

In general, the answers and responses obtained from the online questionnaire survey were given by three main features of the study: awareness x performance x behavior engagement, which were combined, analyzed and concluded that the government website is less effective in its role of tourism destinations marketing in Mozambique. This is related to a poor online presence, weak or ineffective online marketing activities probably due to limited resources, and consequently, its low visibility at country, region and global levels.

This is to conclude by saying that government website (INATUR) still has a long way to go for its online traffic, visibility and tourism destinations marketing message to reach a wide audience among Internet users or by word-of-mouth engagement.

6.1 Recommendations for policy and decision-making

One of the objectives of the study was to recommend measures for a successful tourism destination marketing website to the tourism governing body INATUR. The recommendations will be combined from the INATUR's environment SWOT analysis and the results made for the government website on tourism DMO.

The governing body INATUR should use the internal capacities and strengths to take advantage of the opportunities, by eliminating the weaknesses and minimizing threats. It is important to note that internal reforms and improvements of the activities (like marketing and management) affect the performance of any institution (Kozinets *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, the study suggests implementation of a directory strategy that enables the government website links, joint networks (connections with other marketing web pages), and the engagement of word-of-mouth information among Internet users, which is a powerful approach for a government website traffic and visibility. To boost the popularization of its website, INATUR should proceed by implementing the following:

(1) Enhance the advantage of the digital world, new technologies and the Internet (i.e. *Internet Service Provider*) to analyze the traffic of its website and the production of

the website reports. It will help in the coordination, for example, of online information, products and services offered to tourists.

(2) Use the social media marketing networks (Facebook, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, and YouTube, among others) to reinforce the government website awareness and online presence, promote its products and services, and stimulate traffic to the website page.

(3) Register the government website in different search engines optimization or with PPC advertising links to boost the website popularity vis-à-vis visibility which can direct Internet users and visitors to the INATUR website through search queries and keywords creation. It will allow amplifying the distribution channels, making Mozambican tourist destinations information available to more potential tourists.

(4) Make use of digital marketing in designing and implementing a cost-effective, promotional mix, with innovative and specialized tourism products. Or else, imitate and copy what other successful DMOs are doing to speed up the online marketing plan and promotional activities.

(5) Take advantage of the government support to request a brief resolution of the issue of political instability and Covid-19 pandemic that negatively affects the tourism sector in the country, given that tourist safety is a key factor in attracting more visits. Added to this, with the current trend of Covid-19, INATUR could start using the digital technologies for visa application.

(6) Improvement of the government website with maintenance timing frequently update the contents and information to avoid government website offline services, and frustration for website visitors, causing loss of confidence in using the website among the potential visitors.

Notes

1. Mozambique Strategic Plan for the Development of Tourism (https://www.tourism-review.com/mozambique-is-proud-of-the-booming-tourism-sector-news10791)

2. Pike and Page (2014) Destination Marketing Organizations and Destination Marketing: A Narrative Analysis of the Literature. Tour Manag 41

3. Customer Engagement Behavior: Theoretical Foundations and Research Directions https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240281625_Customer_Engagement_Behavior_Theoretical_Foundations_and_Research_Directions

4. AIDA = Attention, Interest, Desire and Action

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