THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE AND EVENT ATTENDEES SATISFACTION AT CARNIVAL EVENT

Ayu Rohaidah Ghazali 1, Nurakmal Ramli 2,
Faculty of Business Management
Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM)
FSK 6 Building, Puncak Alam Campus
ayuroh2956@puncakalam.uitm.edu.my, nurakm2956@puncakalam.uitm.edu.my

Nurul Jannah Abd Kadir 3
Bachelor of Event Management Programme
Faculty of Business Management, UiTM Puncak Alam
nuruljannah712@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Social media is important as marketing tools and play an important role to market an event. This study was conducted to determine the relationship between social media usage and event attendee satisfaction. Three variables were identified in this study. The variables are information, self-belonging and communication, and socialization. The study consisted of 97 usable questionnaires that had been collected randomly from event attendees. The finding showed that information is the most important in social media usage in determining event attendee satisfaction. The research also indicated that there is relationship between the social media usages and event attendee satisfaction. Discussion and conclusions are detailed. In addition, the recommendation contained are put forward and presented.

Keywords: Social Media, Event Management, Attendee Satisfaction

1 INTRODUCTION

The advance in technology has changed the ways of people in handling their everyday life. It includes the ways of people communicate with others. In the event industry, the new rises of the technologies should be taken utterly as it has lots of benefits. Since the events field has transformed into an industry (Bowdin et al., 2006), several issues had been taken into consideration. For instance, effective communication methods should be developed to attract event attendees, as their attendance is considered to be a key element in an event’s success or failure (Ghazal, 2011). Social media is a platform that offers fast connection to anyone through internet access. In promoting an event, the traditional mass media used is printed materials, radio and television, but the new phenomenon of the social media is becoming more precise, personal, interesting, interactive and social (Jothi et al., 2011). Due to the global technology, online advertising and social media communication became one of the most effective communication strategies, and thus it became the marketers preferred choice to communicate through (Moran & Gossieaux, 2010). Social media such as social networking sites, blogs, microblogs, photo sharing, discussion forums, podcasts, video, wikis and etc. have been a great advantage for people to communicate around the world. Most of users utilize social media to share new knowledge and information from all over the world. According to Trusov et al. (2010) social network websites are considered to be a place where members share and consume information, pictures, music, blogs and messages through their
registered profiles. One of the strongest social network websites, which has been developing very fast, is Facebook (Foster et al., 2010). Moreover, most of businesses focused on directing most of their online marketing efforts to the social networks, which attracts vast amount of the potential target market. As the event industry getting bigger, the promotional tools must also get advance and implies new social media in order to attract people attending an event. Besides, the online communities help providing powerful competitive advantages, through exposing product images, spreading word of mouth about brand, increase in demand, identifying consumer needs and wants, and raising awareness (Moran & Gossieaux, 2010). In addition, social media is platforms as an event communication such as provide information about real events. The concern is whether the use of social media as marketing and communication has an empirical effect on the event attendee satisfaction. Hence, this research is conducted in order to explore the extent of which online social networks would have an effect on the attendee satisfaction, and to examine whether social media usage effect event attendees’ satisfaction which is an essential measure of an event’s success.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Media Usage

In the new age of technology, things used in handling daily life also waver to become better so that technology will always help human in making life easier. In event management, the field also have to adapt with the new rise of technology, especially in the new way of promoting an event. For an instant, in promoting an event, the traditional ways will always be used such as the newspapers, magazine and etc. However the new phenomenon of the social media will help in order to improve the promotional tools, communication techniques and also the effect of the event towards the attendees (Ghazal, 2011). The use of social media will affect event attendees in terms of their satisfaction. Social media differs fundamentally from traditional mass media, whereas traditional media services focus on the one-to-many distribution of content created by professionals to a rather passive audience, social software establishes many-to-many networks of active users who share their own content among themselves (Killian et.al., 2012).

2.2 Information.

Social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Blog and YouTube have been a great advantage for people to communicate around the world. People used social media to obtain new information and knowledge from all over the world. Social media, which have a large base of communication will help to spread the information faster than the old traditional media and results to more effective way in promoting an event (Killian et al., 2012). In addition, the social media have its own group which consists of people with the same interest and this will help the event organizer to use it in order to identify their target market. When using social media, there often are people who are “friends” or are sharing information/opinions with others whom have never met face-to-face, and may never interact with each other in the traditional way that friends would have prior to the explosion of social media usage (Olson et al., 2012). It proves that using social media, the information spread faster and accurate by only ‘sharing’ the information through the right site. A previous study by public relation firm Burson-Marsteller shows that 86% of the 100 largest companies on the Fortune 500 list use at least one of the social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube or blogs, and 28% of them use all four platforms (Pradiptarini, 2011). It proves that every businesses company needs at least one social media in order to communicate with their
potential clients, customers and consumers in order to improve their branding to the people. On top of that, social media is used to promote events, or any activities related to event companies or products. These findings show that many companies are becoming actively involved in social media, which also shows the merging of social media sites as the new marketing/promotion platform that is also known as social media marketing (Pradiptarini, 2011). The companies or event organizers realize the needs to communicate with customers as communication is vital to increase the brand awareness.

### 2.3 Sense of Belonging and Communication

Research has shown that positive social relationships help individuals cope with a variety of stresses that they face (Olson et al., 2012). Therefore, social media is a good medium to escape from the stress. Social media helps people increase relationship with other people in the same interest without face-to-face communication. Normally, people will use the event that suits their taste as a medium to get to know new people and establish new relationships and networking (Olson et al., 2012). Besides, many event attendees are connected by the same interest in the event by using the social media. In fact, event attendees are able to reconnect for the next similar event and will lead to the new relationship and satisfaction. Moreover, the satisfaction derives from the accurate and sufficient information about the product is accessible through social media (Samantha, 2013). For example, by using Facebook, people can create a group with the same interest and they can share new information about the new upcoming event. By using social media, there often people who are “friends” or are sharing information/opinions with others whom have never met face-to face, and may never interact with each other in the traditional way that friends would have prior to the explosion of social media usage (Olson et al., 2012). Social media helps connecting them so that both parties gain the benefit from one another. Social media indeed a need for an event organizer in order to have right information flow to their target market. As the industry gets bigger, the promotional tools must also get advance and implies the new social media in order to attract people to come to the event. Furthermore, social media also are one of the factors that will improve the attendee satisfaction in terms of new information. Therefore, social media is indeed an important tool in the usage to increase the attendee satisfaction.

### 2.4 Socialization

Previously, there are many articles from the researcher that related to social media as a communication and information medium. According to Scott (2010), social media consists of tools that enable open online exchange of information through conversation and interaction. It means that social media manage the content of the conversation or interaction as an information artifact in the online environment. People can communicate easily with people they never see but can still be friends with and they also can exchange information regarding whatever topic that they want to share with. This is the easiest way to encourage the conversation and interaction between both parties. Besides, in previous research conducted by Pradiptarini (2011), social media sites are claimed to enable businesses to build closer relationships with their customers, as well as to expand the market to the customers that they could not reach before. In the other study conducted by Raacke (2008), it is found that gratification theory is applied, which is concerned with how individuals use the media, specifically friend network sites, and thus highlighting the importance of individuals. Many reasons why people are using social media and one of the reasons is the desire to keep in
contact with current and old friends. Other than that, the information sharing about social and other events is also the reason why people always use social media.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1 below shows the conceptual model based on literature review. This model can graphically depict the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The independent variable is the social media usage. The dependent variable in this conceptual framework is event attendees satisfaction.

Table 1 Conceptual Framework for Social Media Usage and Attendees Satisfaction at Festival Event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Media Usage:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Attendees Satisfaction</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Informative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sense of Belonging &amp; Communication</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Socialization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1: The source of conceptual framework is adapted from Ahmed Ghazal (2011), “Motivation to Attend to a Cultural Event and the Role of Social Network on Attendees Satisfaction at Asian Film Festival”

Thus, this study formulates the following hypotheses:

- H1: There is a significant relationship between information in social media usage and attendee’s satisfaction
- H2: There is a significant relationship between a sense of belonging and communication in social media usage and attendee’s satisfaction
- H2: There is a significant relationship between socialization in social media usage and attendee’s satisfaction.
4. METHODOLOGY

The paper primarily used correlational research where it allowed the researcher to do an actual survey as main procedure to gather data for the study. A self-administered survey was conducted with XX sets of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents at Jom Heboh Putrajaya 2014 Carnival. A convenience sampling technique was used for this study. The response rate for this study was 100% and as a result, total questionnaires analyzed were 100% (n= 97) from the sample size. SPSS software version 21.0 was used to analyze the data.

5. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Demographic Information

Descriptive analysis as indicated in Figure 2 exhibit the respondents’ information focusing on their age, gender, marital status, education level, current occupation and current social media account. The study found that 40.2 percent of the respondents were male and the other 59.8 were female. Most of the respondents were between 18-25 years old (36.1%) followed by the respondent between 26-35 years old (28.9%), 36-45 years old (20.6%), 46-55 years old (11.3%) and only 3.1% respondent were from 56 years old. Most of the respondents were married with 62.6% followed by single persons with 37.1%. The study found that most of the respondents were a bachelor’s degree holder with 40.2%, followed by the diploma holder with 35.1%, master’s degree with 13.4% , secondary school with 9.3% and only 1.0% were Doctoral Degree holder. Majority current occupation were government servant (32.0%) followed by students with 28.9%, business owner (6.2%) and only 5.2% were unemployed. The highest social media account were Facebook account users (62.9%) followed by Twitter account (33.0%), Instagram (3.1%) and Blog (1.0%). Most of the respondents were visiting their social media account every day by 67% followed by twice a week by 17.5% and once a week by 8.2% and lastly once every two weeks 7.2%.
5.2 Reliability Analysis

To access whether the data were reliable and dependable, a Cronbach’s alpha was computed. Cronbach’s alpha values should be above .70 for an internally reliable measure of the concepts. From the findings, the alpha value of the social media usage was found 0.897 which indicated that the items formed reasonable internal consistency reliability.

5.3 The importance of social media usage.

The results show that the respondents agree that the information is important in the usage of the social media where the mean is 3.9196 and the standard deviation is 0.53281. Whereby, men of sense of belonging and communication placed of mean 3.8505 and the standard deviation 0.58925. The mean for socialization is 3.8634 and the standard deviation
is 0.56828. It was found that the highest rate of Information on the questionnaire is “I’m influenced to attend this event based on the information that I received through a social media sites” where the mean is 4.0515 and the standard deviation is 0.79544. This finding is supported by Samantha (2013) mentioned that sufficient and reliable information about the product or event will encourage attendees form a positive attitude about the event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3.9196</td>
<td>0.53281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Belonging and Communication</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3.8505</td>
<td>0.58925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3.8634</td>
<td>0.56828</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.3 Descriptive analysis of Independent Variables

5.4 Correlations

Correlation between variables is a measure of how well the variables are related and Pearson Correlation was used to test the relationship between information of social media usage and event attendee’s satisfaction, sense of belonging and communication and attendee satisfaction and socialization and attendee satisfaction. The test is conducted to determine the degree of coefficient between the variables. Based on the test, the result of the variables was in the moderate relationship.

Based on the finding, it shows there is relationship between social media usage and attendees’ satisfaction. Table 4.13 shows the total score for correlation between social media usage and attendees’ satisfaction on the information with $r = 0.470$, $p < 0.01$ and $n = 97$. The social media usage on sense of belonging and communication is $r = 0.502$, $p < 0.01$ and $n = 97$. Finally, the socialization on social media usage is $r = 0.428$, $p < 0.01$ and $n = 97$. According to Cohen (1988) there is a moderate relationship between social media usage and attendees’ satisfaction.

Based on the result in the table and list of hypotheses above, all three hypotheses were accepted where all variables which are information, sense of belonging and communication and socialization had a moderate relationship with attendee satisfaction. Therefore, $H_0$, $H_1$ and $H_2$ were accepted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Correlation (r)</th>
<th>Significant (p)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>.470**</td>
<td>0.00097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Belonging and Communication</td>
<td>.502**</td>
<td>0.00097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
<td>.428**</td>
<td>0.00097</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Fig.4: The summary of significant relationship between the three social media usage and event attendee satisfaction.
6. RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSIONS

Future recommendations should be taken into consideration for further research on the social media usage and event attendee satisfaction. Research which related to this study should be conducted occasionally in the event industry to ensure the data and trend of social media usage can be made comparison thus add the value of the academic study to the industrial practices. The indication of methods or techniques can be varied such as interview and observation for detailed explanation or finding. Furthermore the respondents can be expanded for the reliability purposes. As a conclusion the information about an event that available through social media sites is important as it influences attendee’s satisfaction. This is proven in the finding of this research where most respondents agree that they are influenced to attend the event based on the information that they received through a social media sites. In addition, the respondents trust the information about the event that they obtain through social media sites. Moreover the respondents also agree that they feel belong to a group by using social media. This research also found that the respondents agree that being connected in the social media let them stay connected with other members of the same interest in this carnival. The researcher founds that there are relationship between the social media usage and the attendees satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that social media usage in promoting event influence event attendees satisfaction.

7. REFERENCES


