

# Informational Resonance and The Formation of Travel Intention: A Critical Review of Travel Vlog Content Quality

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**Abstract.** This study aims to understand how the information quality of travel vlogs would influence travel intention by affecting psychological mechanisms. Due to the rapid development of digital infrastructure, travel vlogs have emerged as important complementary points of reference among tourists, providing them with exposure to real-life experiences that digital marketing fails to supply. Information quality is also translated by usefulness, ease of use, and comprehensiveness with reference to the interaction between viewers' cognitions and emotions. Through the lens of resonance theory, the paper suggests how travel vlogging fosters viewers' aspirations by managing the familiar and new, maximizing engagement. The relationship between information quality and travel intention is mediated by presence (the feeling of "being there"), enjoyment, and flow experience, which further enhance immersion and motivation. This seems in line with empirical results, which point out comprehensiveness as the most powerful predictor of travel intention, and being indicated by cross-cultural validation and a biometric measure of engagement. Practical implications Hint that content creators should use narrative coherence, sensory richness, and contextual depth of language so as to maximize influence over the viewer. Longitudinal intention-action associations should be examined in future studies and machine learning algorithms could be adopted for personalized content strategies. In auscultating travel vlogs, we contextualize them as potent media artifacts that mediate desire and spatial imagination by preparing a scene of informational depth and emotional resonance, which influences travel behavior.

**Keywords:** Information Quality; Travel Intention; Travel Vlogs; Flow Experience; Resonance Theory.

## 1. Introduction

The digital revolution has profoundly reshaped the tourism information environment, altering how prospective travelers seek and evaluate destination-related content. Traditional promotional media, such as printed brochures and official websites, have been increasingly supplemented or replaced by user-generated content (UGC) disseminated through digital platforms [1]. Travel vlogs—with video generating travelers and influencers—who have become an influential source of information and inspiration has been gaining significant attention among them [2]. Travel vlogs distinguish themselves from static text or images through an integrated audiovisual narrative, personal stories as well as enabling immersive experiences that replicate the genuineness of being on the spot [3]. The change disrupts the common-sense belief in the credibility and engagement of tourist information and the influential role assumed by agents of touristic promotion, and encourages one to explore in more detail the traits of travel vlogs that make them effective in the creation of travel intention.

The centrality of information quality to consumer formation of judgements has long been acknowledged by prior tourism studies [4]. The move to digital and interactive media, however, requires a rethinking of the dimensions of information quality—apart from accuracy and objectivity—to encompass, for example, usability, comprehensiveness, and emotional appeal [5]. And in travel vlogs, these dimensions mediate the influences of viewers' cognitive schemas and affective states to promote a high level of immersion that generates more enhanced behavioral intentions [6].

Theoretical frameworks from media psychology and communication studies offer valuable insights into how mediated content resonates with audiences. Resonance theory, that message structures resonate with any predispositions of a target audience; and that travel vlogs may stimulate both cognitive coherence and emotional responses are explained by resonance theory, here aligning travel vlogs with the predispositions of typical psycho-logic [7]. The cognitive-affective resonance, in turn, is reinforced by the vlog's audio-visual and narrative strategies that support a mimetic illusion of perceived presence (the so-called "sense of being there"), that helps to engage the viewer more profoundly [8]. Psychological concepts including presence, enjoyment, and flow have been correlated with motivation and intention in digital tourism in previous research [9].

In spite of their increased relevance in modern-day tourism, studies on the specific mechanisms by which vlog information quality influences travel intention are still divided. Most research focus on the isolated factors, such as credibility or emotional appeal, without integrating the multi-dimensional psychological mechanism [10]. Lastly, cross-cultural variations in information processing and media use remind us that more elaborate models that include social and cultural diversity are necessary [11].

To respond to these gaps, this paper synthesizes interdisciplinary perspectives to develop a an integrative framework which ties travel vlog information quality to travel intention for psychological mediation such as resonance, presence, enjoyment and flow. It aims to contribute to theoretical advancement and practical applications by providing a newcomer perspective of organizational or strategic application on the way travel vlogs are strategically utilized for marketing and content creation for destination managers, marketers, and content creators. In doing so, the review contributes to an emerging literature on the role of digital media in shaping tourist behavior, and it makes explicit the implications for future empirical work and for innovation in travel communication.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1. Dimensions of Information Quality**

Information quality, as defined in this model, is a three-dimensional construct, consisting of the dimensions of usefulness, ease of use, and comprehensive. These measurements are not characteristics in a technical sense, but instead are subjective, as experienced on the level of a subjective horizon framed by previous knowledge, attention and socio-cultural identity. Usefulness is the functional content for travel planning, and ease of use is the cognitive ease and fluency with which information is processed [12]. Completeness suggests the extent to which the coverage of a website is deep and wide, so that the available information is considered to be robust and trustworthy by the audience [5]. These levels combine together with the viewer's cognitive schemas in response to promote an atmosphere that is indirectly favorable to psychological absorption.

### **2.2. Resonance Theory in Media Interpretation**

The use of resonance theory as a framework provides a point of view from which to process the inter-relation between travel vlog content and audience response. Resonance As conceived in the sociology of culture and media, resonance refers to a commensuration between message form and audience predispositions, producing systems congruence and affective arousal [7]. Among the travel vlogs, that alignment expresses itself as the internalization of destination imagery and narrative as real, personal potential. The structural offer of vlogs (audio-visual narration, point-of-view frames, contextual details) is conducive to resonance by matching the symbolic representations with viewers' aspirational schemas. This converging synthesis of idea is what facilitates the cognitive and emotional resonances [11]. Cognitive resonance is the criteria that the informational elements be valued as coherent and relevant to the context and emotional resonance aesthetic and emotionally appealing.

What's more, the emotional immediacy that a vlog's resonance provides is often based on a dynamic between the familiar and the strange--a kind of mixed-media literacy in which viewers want to be reminded of what seems right at the same time they feel compelled to see or hear something

previously unimagined. This dual emphasis boosts engagement, making the material more than simply interesting but behaviorally impacting. The validity of this mechanism has also been empirically supported by showing that the degree of resonance has a positive influence on behavioral intention in digital tourism contexts.

### **3. Psychological Mechanisms**

#### **3.1. Presence and Experiential Engagement**

The psychological route from resonance to real intention does not run linearly but is mediated by a complex triad of preconditions presence, enjoyment, and flow. Presence, or the experience of “being there” in the mediated environment, is a fundamental concept in media psychology and is particularly applicable to immersive forms of media, including travel vlogs. It derives from high-quality audiovisual material which creates a perception illusion of spatial and sensory co-presence with the virtual environment [8]. This perceptual realism goes beyond the act of seeing, encouraging viewers to mentally simulate bodily presence, drawing into play various sensory modes and cognitive processes.

In tourism studies, presence is particularly relevant as it serves to connect anticipated imagination and lived experiences [13]. The similitude of the information transmitted by immersive travel vlogs generates not only perceptual immersion but also emotional engagement with the destination. Empirically, presence has been found to be positively related to a higher amount of emotional involvement and a stronger motivational value. This suggests that presence acts as a mechanism in transforming abstract knowledge of the destination into psychologically perceived knowledge of destination, which has the effect on intention generation.

Presence goes beyond mere perceptual immersion to usher in cognitive and affective identification processes. Viewers who experience a sense of presence in a destination setting are prompted to bring the complete travel scenario inwards, as something relevant at a personal level, casting the destination in their self-image and personal stories for the future. This identity dimension intensifies affective involvement and raises the probability for travel intention to end up in the active planning stage instead of being just in the passive contemplation stage. Another benefit of presence is that it can reduce uncertainty and perceived risk by offering a quasi-firsthand preview, which lowers the psychological barrier to make the decision of travelling [14]. As such, psychological process of presence function at both experiential and motivational level, making it a key mediating factor in the more general scheme between informational quality and travel behavior.

#### **3.2. Enjoyment as Affective Catalyst**

Parallel to presence, enjoyment emerges as a distinct yet interrelated affective response that significantly shapes motivational dynamics in travel vlog consumption. Enjoyment refers to the hedonic pleasure and intrinsic satisfaction derived from engaging with content, encompassing both emotional valence and intensity [9]. Although presence provides cognitive veracity to the artificial experience, realism punctuates the experience with affective density, greatly increasing the motivational significance.

The joint effect of presence and enjoyment highlights the complementary relationship between them. Presence reinforces a cognitive immersion in the system that makes you sensitive to the aesthetic and narrative features that make you enjoy the system; that feedback loop increases your engagement with the system as a whole. This implication suggests that if a travel vlog were to be successful, the content must balance its level of information with that of emotion impact.

Furthermore, pleasure is not uniform for listeners, but instead highly dependent upon various psychological and environmental concerns. Prior travel history affects affective responses through expectations and schema activation, such that seasoned travelers may take more pleasure from subtle cultural references while first timers may be more responsive to visual scene beauty. The degree of

familiarity with a destination also influences its enjoyment; familiarity can be a source of nostalgic pleasure, but also a damper of novelty-related excitement [12]. Cultural similarity becomes a significant variable, as culturally similar information contributes to affective resonance and hedonic appeal [11].

Crucially, enjoyment is not merely an immediate affective emotion; rather, it acts as a motivational enhancer that primes audiences for behavioral intentions. Greater perceived intrinsic motivation to travel is associated with increased openness to hedonic consumption, rendering enjoyment a driver in predictive models of travel intentions. This illustrates the need for content producers to strategically include affective cues (humor, beauty, or suspense, etc.) in the way to create enjoyment experience and finally enhance the relationship between media exposure and travel intention.

### **3.3. Flow Experience and Motivational Continuity**

Flow experience represents the psychological apex of informational and emotional alignment in media consumption. Defined as a state of complete absorption where individuals lose self-consciousness and experience intrinsic reward, flow is widely recognized as a key driver of sustained engagement and behavioral motivation [14]. In the context of travel vlogs, flow emerges when the viewer transitions from passive reception of content to active internalization and cognitive-emotional integration.

Not only is flow an experience but it is also a pre-behavior that links subjective experience and behavior. As the viewers enter flow, they have intense absorption in the cognition and time distortion which enhances the processing of the information and story presented in this vlog. This immersion integrates the separate psychological consequences by information quality, presence and enjoyment into one unified path based on motivations, which highly increases the likelihood of travel intention.

The predictive nature of flow in digital tourism contexts is backed up by research which associates flow states with higher recall after the exposure and superior likelihood of follow-up behavior such as looking up information on a destination or booking. The dynamic nature of flow means that travel vlog content should not only be created to be informative and comprehensive, but also to be aesthetically and narratively complex enough to hold users' attention and cognitive engagement.

In addition, flow experience acts as a mediator to promote the transformation of intention in to behavior. Flow-related intrinsic reward can encourage viewers to behave upon reflection on their intentions and alleviate the intention-behavior gap that prevails in tourism literature. Hence, flow experience serves as an engagement indicator as well as a call for action and such serves to highlight the strategic role played by flow experience in travel media design.

## **4. Empirical Synthesis**

To denote such information quality-driven intention formation mechanism is supported fully, if theory is, by an extensive and sound empirical case. Several studies have used more sophisticated analysis methods such as structural equation modeling (SEM) to confirm the mediating sequence of presence, enjoyment, magic flow as important mediators which connect information quality to web intention. This approach allows for the separation of the direct and indirect influences of major constructs, pointing out complex processes that have important theoretical and practical implications.

The one of most robust results from a wide array of empirical studies is the ubiquitous dominance of comprehensiveness over the remaining two information quality dimension—usefulness, ease of use, and comprehensiveness. Consequently, while digital marketing paradigms are focused on usability and ease, travel-related media consumption is favoring depth, context and volume of content. Aesthetic credibility is a crucial factor in the formation of credibility for comprehensive travel vlogs and facilitating their cognitive and affective resonance. This contrasts with current “minimalist” online content production trends that encourage brevity and succinctness and that this instead favors

a more elaborate, narrative-driven form of information that satisfies the cognitive and affective needs of potential travelers.

Cross-cultural research also contributes to the enrichment of our knowledge base by showing that these mechanisms are robust and generalize well across linguistic, geographic and socio-cultural backgrounds. However, cross-national research shows substantial moderating effects of cultural values such as uncertainty avoidance and collectivism on the relative importance of dimensions of information quality. For instance, in high uncertainty avoidance culture—where the preference for predictability and the minimizing of risks is more pronounced—the audience present higher sensitivity on comprehensiveness and credibility in order to de-trigger travel-related anxiety through more detailed, verifiable, and controllable information. On the other hand, in individualist societies viewers may be more concerned for narrative novelty, for appearance and for identification, which are the things that satisfy the motivations for self-expression [9]. Such conclusions highlight the importance for destination marketers to customize travel vlog contents to cultures when considering engaging drivers, incorporating universal and culture specific factors for engagement.

Finally, methodological progress is playing a substantial role in the empirical verification of these psychological mechanisms. This harmonizes biometric measures (i.e., eye tracking, electroencephalography [EEG], and GSR) with more traditional self-report questionnaire data, resulting in convergent measures of the associations at the physiological level between immersion and emotional resonance when engaging in vlog consumption. Such objective indices help researchers measure unconscious affective and attentional processes allowing for more valid results and reducing potential bias in self-reported data [11, 14]. For example, low pupil dilation and low skin conductance have been associated with lower presence and enjoyment, which in turn are related to weaker travel intentions.

What's more, longitudinal and experimental studies are now exploring the temporal stability and the causal direction of these associations. Although cross-sectional surveys only establish correlational relationships, evidence from experimental manipulations of the information quality constructs support more casual distinctions, with improvements in content richness and narrative presence being directly associated with an increase in the belief that one is present in a destination, the enjoyment and flow of the game, and therefore the travel intention [10]. Longitudinal studies are particularly useful in measuring how these travel intentions persist over time and whether they are eventually transformed into travel behavior, which is still under-researched context in the digital tourism literature.

## **5. Conclusion**

The practical importance of this analytical model goes beyond academic contemplation to tourism image promotion. Writers, advertisers and travel promoters should understand that the informational infrastructure for effective motivational forms of communication is not subordinate but is archetypical. The potential for travel vlogs to bring about behavioral outcomes depends on their ability to supply compelling, affective and emotionally rewarding experiences. This demands a paradigm change on content production: serving narrative coherency, sensorial fidelity, and contextual deepens. What's more, with the proliferation of content creation on digital channels, we need quality indicators that go beyond influencer status to those that speak to substantive engagement.

Longitudinal research is needed to measure the stability of the intention-to-action hierarchies in follow-up studies. Another important avenue is the modeling of interactions between media variables (for example narrative structure and production quality) and viewer psychographics (for example travel motivations and media literacy) in predictive models. Machine learning methods offer the potential to identify the complex patterns of interactions across these dimensions which can be utilized for more refined targeting and content personalization.

The theoretical and empirical synthesis presented in our review can help theorists and researchers to better understand how digital content works within the affective economies of tourism. And it views travel vlogs as media artifacts in which within the micro-aesthetic utterance the personal desire is mediated by spatial imagination, based on quality of the information they impart. Through emphasizing the psychological processes of resonance and flow, this paper presents a holistic model for research and practical innovation in travel media. The results suggest that communication strategies in tourism should be turned from information-based approaches into content-centric models benefiting from informational density, emotional resonance and experiential authenticity as behavioral triggers.

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