

Youth and Branding Egypt Using “Snapchat” Publishing

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Abstract: Recent technological advancements have a drastic impact on the way individuals communicate. Internet and social media have changed youth trends and the market environment for tourism destinations. This research studies the impact of "Snapchat" as a new medium in social media for communicating and publishing ideas, its influence on youth, and ways to drive the maximum benefit of utilising it as a promotional and editorial content tool for branding Egypt. It will take a discursive approach to understanding how "Snapchat" is represented and marketed to youth to create sustainable tourism using resident and visitor experience. The created framework for branding Egypt using "Snapchat" functions will enable youth to capture spontaneous cultural moments and produce Egyptian self-images for display worldwide to project cultural and political identities to both domestic and international audiences.

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Key words: Snapchat, Destination Branding, Tourism Publishing, Egypt, Youth, Social media

1. Introduction

There were frequent claims that technology is the main modern threat to social relationships worldwide. Although, digital social networking has emerged as an important communication channel used by individual consumers, especially youth, to create content, distribute materials, share ideas, express opinions and use information and knowledge, technology for many older people hasn't resulted in a dramatic change of lifestyle. The opposite could be said for the youth of today in that technology has actually succeeded in shaping their culture.

This new channel has resulted in a power shift between consumers and traditional producers of messages and information. Ultimately, these advances in technology and personal growth changes youth's internet use over time and have a great impact in transforming social relationships among youth, not to mention the tremendous impact on the economy and vast areas of public and private life. Youth uses these technologies and social networks frequently as a part of their lives on their smart phones, PDAs and different digital communication means. One of these emerging technologies is "Snapchat App" which offers a different approach for youth to express their identity and reshape technology to suit their purpose; even it has become one of the main communications multi-tasking for youth. Although the youth is seen and addressed as a pleasure-seeking and self – indulgent consumer group with few ambitions beyond social posturing and entertainment, this paper perceive them as consumers rather than as individuals after trying to understand their lifestyle and the worldview towards it.

During the last decade, it was obvious that Egypt was, and still suffering financially especially after the so called "Arabic spring". Egyptian tourism is widely acknowledged as one of the main sources of revenue for Egypt's economy. This changed due to the Middle East economic crisis. Taking cognizance of the importance of consumer attachment to a brand and emotional links to the tourism destination, this paper presents the interaction of Egyptian youth with the world differently as they now get the benefit of Social Network mobile apps such as “Snapchat” to establish a new image of Egypt both verbally and non-verbally. Their perception of Egypt can now be streamed to the rest of the world through sharing their videos and cultural live stories. The Egypt that is now presented to the world is the Egypt that is imagined and seen through the eyes and the image of its youth. This way of rebranding Egypt, as a touristic destination, will be based on creating a different workflow to encourage young Egyptians to explore their country and transfer the real image to the world at large. This initiative is whole heartedly supported by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism which in its turn is facing considerable challenges in a very tough operating environment. Because the concept of digital tourism is intertwined with social structures and dynamics, its analysis must consider other variables not strictly linked to tourism. The main goal is to build customer emotional attachment based on youth's perceptions that will create travel motivations and automate tourism business, thus restructuring businesses, advertising and other tourism infrastructure.

In order to achieve these aims, this paper analysed and discussed the youth and their interests,

problems, trends, etc., to find the appropriate way to direct them in rebranding Egypt as a tourist destination. The Egyptian tourist industry currently faces a serious economic crisis. In addition to showing the importance of rebranding Egypt as a tourist destination "Snapchat", as a communication tool, has special characteristics support effectively the research goals of this study.

In this context the aims of the current study are to:

- Understand the perceptions of youth;
- Explore Egypt as a tourist Destination;
- Analyse the concept of branding and how it relates to Egyptian tourism; and
- Elucidate communication types and influences and in particular "Snapchat" as a social network channel.

The causal analysis used in this research allows for the creation of a different workflow for branding Egyptian tourism digitally, as will be explained in the following sections.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Youth and their culture

Nowadays, youth has been portrayed as a figure with a cell phone in one hand, a computer mouse in the other and earphones plugged firmly into both ears. Before talking about immersing youth with their digital tools in an adult vocation, we should know something about this particular age group and have an overview about youth and youth culture.

The term 'Youth' and their way of living which we refer to here as "Youth Culture" have been categorised socially after the industrial revolution in Europe between 19th and early 20th centuries. Before that, children were a part of the working community which hadn't created a clear distinction between children, youth and adults. There was more control over children when they were part of the workforce. During that time, youngsters had been understood as a different cohort who developed differently through a liminal stage of education, thereby paving the way for the arrival of the 'adolescent'. [18]

The term "Adolescent" was used after 1904 to describe a group which church ministries had given specific attention to. Industrialization led the labour market to develop the Youth (teenagers or adolescents) which was later described as a 'Cultural Invention'. Ultimately, the labour market separated the children and adolescents from the adult category and from that era, a new subculture emerged to represent the most visible aspect of youth experience known as 'Youth Culture'. [13]

Today, the boundaries between teens and children are blurred and adults seem out of the loop altogether as youth live in their own "space". On the

other hand, the gap between youth subculture and adult culture has widened over time considering that teenagers have been perceived as the 'other'. The main social concern in any community is to find a way to integrate young people socially and avoid the juvenile delinquency.

The term "Youth culture" has been sometimes referred to as an "anti-culture" which is against adult culture. Youth subculture has given a different perspective to young people as it offers a sense of identity which is ascribed by school, work and class environments [6]. It offers them the opportunity to experience a sense of social reality which is different if compared to the adult world and the culture in which they were born.

In terms of chronological age, the term 'Youth' can describe people between (12:18 years). Sometimes, the term 'Youth' is used interchangeably with the term 'transition'. Others believe that we should not try to understand and interact with youth on the basis of age [14]. If we would like to have a better conceptual understanding of youth, we shouldn't focus on the characteristics of young people of a particular age, but rather conceptualize youth as a 'way of life' which is constructed through such social processes and different cultural environments such as family, school, labour market, etc. Because of their different progressive activities, we should describe youth culture retrospectively because this is always dynamic. Young people are making statements of one form or another in different shapes according to their environment, traditions, religions and historical conditions. It is useful to point out at this stage that this part of research focuses on the understanding of youth culture as a way of living and on their behaviour. As youth became a recognized group in modern communities, their way of living and ideas were seen as sources of social change as well as being a potential threat to the existing social order.

Considering the concept of engaging youth culture in the current social environment, we have to keep in mind the following three factors:

a. Culture is part of a person's being as it shows how people understand themselves, what they believe and how they choose to live their lives. Culture can be presented as the surface medium through which all youth and the rest of society express their convictions and identities.

b. Culture can be categorized into two levels: the empirical level which can be observed (e.g. language including slang, body marks and tattoos, clothing style, music, films and TV shows, art, heroes and role models) and underlying worldview level [6]. Understanding beliefs and value systems behind the empirical actions we observe is crucial in any engagement with youth culture. To engage youth,

some kind of understanding of and relationships with youth are required to grasp the underlying worldview behind their lifestyle and their non-judgemental attitudes.

c. Culture is learned and shared, so the context in which culture develops and lived should be considered, for example, youth culture portraying some social values and norms.

2.2. Youth influencers

2.2.1. Youth and family as educators in the technological era

The family unit is where development in self-identity, personal maturity including moral values and spiritual development take place. Technology in itself is not a negative phenomenon, but how it's used can be cause for concern. Currently, the media influences youth even though family life still has its own great impact on the life of the young. Family is the primary context where youth is reared thus giving the young an identity and character, as well as an understanding of the world around them. On the other hand, a drawback of the invented communication technologies is that youth and their parents are speaking different languages, one analogue and one digital; as parents are not speaking digitally, the dinner table talk can suddenly be like someone speaking Malayalam to someone who speaks French. This technology has resulted in a rapid reformation and transformation of language. Finally, we can say that technology is here to stay while parents have to sacrifice their time and really try to understand their youth's behaviour.

2.2.2. Youth and Media impact

The youth of today live in such complex media-saturated environments influenced by TV, video recorders, computers and Internet, smart phones and PDAs, printed media, etc. It has become a part of their daily life. Information comes from everywhere as dispersed multimedia has forced youth to be influenced in various ways. In the contemporary world, media shapes the basis of participation in culture and society as it is a source and context through which traditional symbols, ideas and values are transmitted. We must admit that the media is a great source of information on almost everything. Internet accessibility opens a new world of information to users (32.7% of the world population) [12]. Currently, children can access different sources of media starting from TV. When they grow older they access a wider variety of media. In Egypt, between 2003 and 2014 there was a 700% growth in internet users which ranked the second among the top internet-using countries in Africa after Nigeria [12].

Practically, media has changed the way it transfers the message. There are different channels starting from radio and TV to multimedia and social

network applications. Hence, over time, the media and youth have become dependent on each other resulting in 'a symbiotic relationship'. To distribute and survive in the market, the media requires the youth market and the youth themselves require the media for their guidance especially if they are missing the powerful way they have been guided by other societal institutions like the family and school. Sometimes, media see themselves as 'Quasi parents' who aid youth in finding their proper path and guide them through to support society or change it. Youth media can be divided into different areas such as: youth voice/social change, career and youth development, media literacy and academic enhancement [19]. Youth use the media to build their lifestyles and cope with life's uncertainties. Media as a main part in youth life becomes the primary point which reflects their lives and often changes it. Media has created a different approach to youth culture which is called 'Consumer-Media Culture'.

From the above discussion, media in its different forms has got its own spirit and pervasive presence in youth lives which we can identify by their reactions and feedback. Although some societies think of youth as merely passive media consumers, others consider their capability in reasoning and abstract thinking.

2.2.3. Youth and mobile phones

Communication technologies are instrumental in transforming social relationships. There are frequent claims that technology threatens established social relationships, particularly among young people. The telephone is a clear example, as it has been initially celebrated for the way it facilitates business activities and emphasizes the democratic forms of social life. But many critics point out that it is a reason for disruption of intimate relationships and unsettled social hierarchy. Despite this negative picture of face to face communication and the decrease of our awareness of it, more than 62% of individuals continue to use mobile devices in the presence of others [11]. In the Middle East, Egypt is considered one of the most highly mediatized countries, so we find that mobile phone ownership is ongoing and the use of mobile media devices particularly the mobile phone is intense among youth. Mobile phone subscription in Egypt has risen from 6.37 million per 63 million residents in 2003 to 103.2 million per 86 million residents in 2014 [22]. Telecommunication companies in Egypt are trying different package strategies to represent and market mobile phones and other technologies to youth. Mobile media devices such as mobile phones are marketed as an extension of one's body, a manifestation of youth personality, and an integral part of their complete image.

As mobile media is consistently positioned as indispensable in their lives, youth has created their

own gender script which has been turned into a socio-technical script. This socio-script lingo is a means of transmitting their conceptions, attitudes and values relating to them which has been supported by different multinational companies and can be seen somehow in emoticons and readymade texting templates. This new youth dimensions guided the design and marketing of technological products and services to develop different mobile phone application software to be a unique method in connecting this generation. From these concepts, we can think of mobile media as a social bridge for youth; without it they won't be able to manage their relationships with their peers and significant others.

2.2.4. Youth tendencies in social media networks

In some communities, youth is isolated. Some social media application software are trying to get them within a different stereotype, providing them with the facilities and new technologies they prefer. Considering their tendency to change their mode on a daily basis, these programs have tried to update their informatics and encourage them to do the same such as "Snapchat" mobile app. This gives them the opportunity to come together in different networks to learn about each other, provide support and define the way to improve their application through their updated feedback. Youth are working with different adults' approaches, and some of them have found difficulties in communicating with them. Some have realized that whatever they are saying, they won't be listened to. Within youth mobile social networks there is a great amount of passion and excitement, as they have much to say among themselves. The question is: how can we communicate with them so they can communicate with the world and impact their community positively?

2.3. Digital social interaction

Many studies have been conducted regarding technology's influence in social interaction and different ways of communication since the rise of mobile phones and social media usage in the late 2000s. Communication could be defined as a process of exchanging information, ideas, beliefs, feelings and emotions through speech, signals, writing, or behaviour. The basic process begins with a fact or idea which is observed by one person (sender) who may decide to transmit it in a message through means of a communication medium to another person (receiver) who interprets the received message and provides feedback to the sender indicating that it has been received and understood and then after an appropriate action has been taken. Technology changed the way people communicate. As it changed the way we conduct businesses, it has changed the way we communicate socially. We can talk, text, or e-mail and even visit places virtually using the internet

connection wired or wireless. It has changed, to some extent, social and psychological contexts.

Marshall McLuhan (1911:1980) used the term "Global Village" to describe the impact of internet on world communication since the 1970's. The new means of communication saved time and money in people correspondence as there was now an almost instantaneous response. Gradually, it opened up direct face-to-face communication from anywhere in the world using video-conferencing, social networking applications and websites. Online communication has brought families and friends together in the same environment across distances. Modern communication means has not only brought countries and people together and bridged the culture gap, but also allowed the world's economy to become a single interdependent system. Some mobile apps have brought down barriers of linguistic and geographical boundaries by getting the users, especially youth together to express their own identities differently through a different means of communication (verbal or non-verbal) to exchange views and ideas thus increasing awareness and reducing prejudice:

a- Verbal communication.

Refers to the type of communication in which the intended message is transmitted verbally either orally or in a written format.

b- Non-verbal communication.

Refers to the form of communication in which the intended message is transmitted in a wordless manner using body language skills of the speaker, such as gesture, art, design, appearance, posture, sound and tone of voice or facial expression.

Considering both communication types, they can be interpreted differently in both formal and informal environments. The former is the youth favourite while usage of the latter is generally avoided in the media around them. In the mobile phone market, different communication application software has been developed to meet communication requirements while simultaneously receiving the benefit of the different communication types. The informal type is the youth's most favourite channel to support their casual talk. It has been established for societal affiliations of members in this global village that youth communicate using slang, catalogued emotions and different language with very little restriction or reservation. These applications have taken some advantages from the written communication types in that they have given not only an opportunity for the communication message to be reviewed interactively but also have given some opportunity in recording the message permanently. Meanwhile they have also benefited from oral communication types where impressions and reactions are exchanged

instantaneously through video conferencing and recording.

2.4. Identity

Identity is an ambiguous and slippery term. This term has been overused – in different contexts and for many different purposes, particularly in recent years. The term "identity" has been derived from the Latin word "idem", meaning "the same" which implies both similarity and difference [3]. One can conceive of identity as a process, rather than a fixed possession or label. From this perspective, identity is not something that can ever be achieved once and for all, but it is fluid and open to negotiation and subject to many communication constraints. This term also represents something unique to all of us that we assume is more or less consistent over time. In the contemporary world, the views of identity have changed several times. These changes could be evidence of youth's intentions and relation with new technologies.

2.5. Brand, branding and brand identity

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defined 'Brand' as a "name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them used to identify goods and services of seller/sellers used, with some unique dimensions, to differentiate him/them from their competitors who meet the same buyers' need" and create a connection between the buyer and brand [21]. More than an identifier, a brand is a visual representation of an organization itself, its reputation and core values. In companies, brand architectures exist on in three basic levels: corporate, business unit and product/service level, whereas from the customer's point of view, brand is considered a holder for all the information, feelings and experience they have with a product. Since brands are clusters of emotional and functional "intellectual" values which promise a unique experience between buyer and seller, it can be divided into technical capability and personality dimensions where we use both our 'brain' and our 'heart'. A successful brand can be defined as an identifiable product, place, service, or person, augmented in a way that the customer perceives as relevant, unique, sustainable with added values and satisfying needs.

Branding is a process that includes designing, planning and communicating the name and identity as an attempt to build or manage the brand reputation based on the main four elements which are: identity, image, purpose and equity. Branding has become one of the most powerful tools in marketing strategies especially in tourism publishing procedure, as travel and tourism has become a global industry and is considered one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Branding Identity is a tangible process which appeals to the human sense. Brand identity fuels recognition, amplifies differentiation, and makes big

ideas and meaning accessible. It takes disparate elements and unifies them into whole systems.

2.5.1. Product and Place branding differences

The differences between branding a place and branding a product are as follows:

a. The place is multi-dimensional and more highly experiential than a product. For a tourist, it is a composite of many different products such as staying at a hotel, eating at different restaurants', visiting certain attractions and participating in different activities. The tourist interacts with locals and observes the appearance and cleanliness of the area around.

b. The aim of product branding is profit while the aim of place branding is connected with political success.

c. Activities that are used for product branding are placement of product on the market, while rebranding of the place images exists even in the absence of branding trials.

d. Product brand is a property of some organization/s whereas place property is unknown.

e. Many of place's attributes as a product are beyond a marketer's direct control such as geography, climate and demography that meet the tourist's psychological needs as shown in **Table "1"** [1]

Table "1": Place Brand: personality / psychological dimensions and related keywords

Competence	Excitement	Ruggedness	Sincerity	Sophistication
Reliable	Daring	Outdoorsy	Down-to-earth	Upper-class
Hard-working	Trendy	Masculine	Family-oriented	Good-looking
Secure	Spirited	Tough	Small-town	Charming
Intelligent	Cool	Rugged	Honest	Feminine
Technical	Young	Western	Sincere	Smooth
Corporate	Imaginative		Wholesome	Glamorous
Successful	Unique		Original	
Leader			Cheerful	
Confident			Sentimental	
			Friendly	
			Real	

2.6. Tourism Destination Marketing

Whereas some people think of tourism as simply a leisure activity, the tourism industry in Egypt is considered one of the most important business sectors in the economy. This industry provides thousands of jobs to Egyptians in different cities and towns within Egypt. It generated 12.5 billion US\$ (11.3% of the total income) in economic terms to the Egyptian economy in 2010 [22].

The product of tourism is more complex than other products. It is considered an intangible experience with culture, customs and history rather than a tangible product which could include geographical features, historical sites and attractions.

To avoid the conflict between the international presence of the country and political events that may change different parts of the country's overall identity, we will refer to destination marketing as the image of a nation in general. Countries are functionally diverse as they are perceived in terms of the representational parts of their brand identity, while regions or cities are perceived in terms of their functionality.

Destination branding is a new marketing concept that deals with the destination as if it is a product in the tourism industry. It is defined in some references as a 'name, logo, symbol, word or any other related graphics that identifies and differentiates the destination. In another meaning, destination branding could be the way to communicate a destination identity and personality uniquely by differentiating a destination from its competitors to lower the costs and change visitors' type and behaviours. Risitano identified six different elements that destination brand identity is based on: **brand culture, character, personality, name, logo and slogan** [17]. All of them share in conveying the promise of a memorable travel experience that is uniquely associated with the destination; furthermore, it serves to consolidate and reinforce the recollection of pleasurable memories of destination experience'. It is of significant importance nowadays because of the need for a particular destination repositioning of the customers' and stakeholders' awareness in the tourism market. According to Morgan, Pritchard and Piggott, young people look for new experiences and are keen on traveling to new destinations. Such consumers are often very web-wise, complementing other advertising and public relations media activity [15]. Destination Branding enables the management of the intangible tourism product in an efficient way by analysing the 6Ps destination branding checklist: **Purpose, People, Performance, Product, Positioning and Process**.

In addition to increases in consumer power, internet and e-commerce development has its own influence in transforming the world into a smaller place with international travel more accessible than ever, as well as establishing different pro-active strategies by Destination Management Organizations (DMOs). These DMOs can treat social spaces as new opportunity to reach out to the market. Meanwhile, network platforms changed the interface between destinations, brands and tourism (Blain). They succeeded in giving the tourist the opportunity to control the destination's content and context.

Today's tourists are concerned about who they can be on holiday with, not the common means of things that they can do on holiday. They want to escape and to discover a new world and culture which will ultimately create a basis for emotional connection. So practically, branding a destination is a

process of branding the image of a place which represents a simplification of a large number of associations and pieces of information connected with the place. Not to mention branding the personality of this place which is a connection with a touristic destination in one way or another. Geographical location is understood by its visitors as a unique entity, with political legislative framework for tourism marketing. These locations describe 'country, region, or city' treated like products or people that could be branded. In this case, the branding power will lie in making people aware of the location, then link desirable associations with it.

The place's image can be influenced by three information sources which are: organic image, induced image and modified-induced image. Organic image is what others know about your country from books or hear about from friends/news, but the induced image is the result of promotional material and marketing efforts. Modified-induced image is the result of personal experience with the destination. Currently, because of high product similarity and destination suitability, the functional attributes of tourist destination are not capable of helping destinations like Egypt to attract tourists. Therefore, the advantage of youth's new mobile apps favourite software like "Snapchat" can help to provide different reasons for travellers to start considering Egypt as a tourist destination in the Middle East by repositioning it around the feeling it generates, and its ability to offer the potential visitor unique experiences. From the above, we can conclude that the battle for tourists in tomorrow's destination marketing will be fought not over price but rather over hearts and mind and the ability to create an emotional connection to the destination. One of the main variables that must be considered during the destination branding process is the target audience's demographic attributes. Some regions create their image on the basis of images of particular companies and products. The process of mutually transferring image between two objects provides support for the place-product co-branding strategy, which has decreased marketing costs and opened new opportunities for transferring positive images of the country. Tourism marketing typically involves 'mass marketing' approaches such as websites, brochures, promotional CD/DVD/flash memory/ memory cards, road map & guide, magazines, dining guides, etc., used by government and their stakeholders.

2.7. Egyptian Tourism Status and digital infrastructure

Egypt traditionally presented special travel offers and competed with the Mediterranean countries. In 2010, Egypt received 1.56% of international tourist arrivals with 14.7 million tourists [23]. Egypt is

considered one of the leading tourist destinations in the world well known for its ancient monuments, temples, museums and art treasures in addition to its unique history, cultural identity and seaside summer holidays. The question arises: does Egypt as a tourist destination get the reputation it deserves nowadays? The answer is not always, as it is incredibly difficult to persuade people to change their perception about any region even though it may be an attractive place to live, work, study, holiday, or even travel to for medical care. In order to re-enact an identified touristic journeys, the destinations are most often promoted by multinational tour operators, travel agencies, and other intermediaries with origins in the First World. The Third World is limited within their marketing context in one of the three 'Un' Myths in Third World tourism marketing which are: *The Myth of Unchanged*, *The Myth of Unrestrained*, and *The Myth of Uncivilized*. Some efforts are being made to place Egypt in different categories rather than being imprisoned in only one of these Myths. In more general terms, post-colonial theory suggests the representation of Egypt in any context (literature, media, tourism promotional items, etc.), cannot be separated from the colonial discourse [5].



Figure "1": The Myth of Unchanged (Egypt)

The current political and economic crisis is influencing different countries in the Middle East especially the 'Egyptian brand' and ultimately the tourism industry. In 2010 the international tourist industry recorded and estimated figure of 940 million tourists, and the estimated value of their spending was around 919 billion US\$. The decline in tourism can be attributed to the economic crisis in 2010 and different others reasons [7]. **Figure "1"**. The period between 2011 and 2015 experienced negative growth in international tourism in Egypt (-61%) [23]. In addition to different factors, the media played a big role in influencing tourists' decision; for example, Sinai

attack occurred on 5 August 2012, the 2014 Taba bus bombing by terrorist attack, and the Russian plane crash over Sinai October 2015, have had negative impact on potential travellers which ultimately affected Egyptian tourism during the last six years [9].

Figure "2"

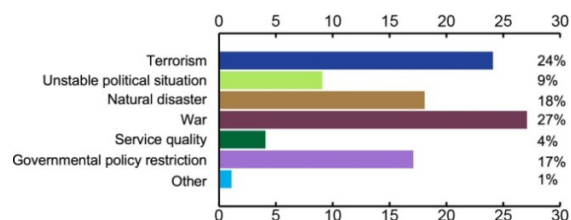
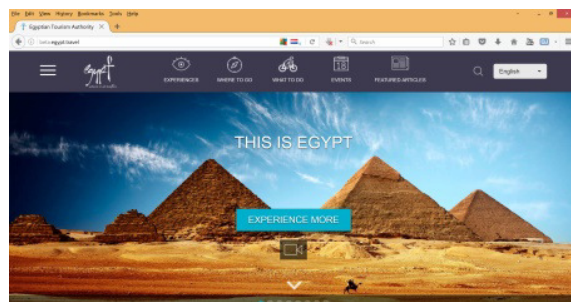


Figure "2": Factors influencing place attraction

The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism, responsible for marketing tourist sites, faces considerable challenges today. It is a very tough operating environment. Consumer confidence is fragile with Egypt's economy having seen market failures, recession, and weak economic confidence, while threats to political stability, peace, and the environment are continuing concerns in the global market. The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism has few official channels and social media platforms such as:

- Webpage;
- Facebook account;
- Twitter account.



Figure"3": Egyptian Ministry of Tourism official website – beta version



Figure "4": Egyptian Ministry of Tourism: Facebook account



Figure "5": Egyptian Ministry of Tourism: Twitter account

There are some personal efforts by tourism officials and companies to create some Travel blogs such as: websites and talks about Egypt: (Ex. touregypt.net, thevoyageur.net, oneikathetraveller.com, breakawaybackpacker.com, pausethemoment.com, thevintagepostcard.com, gotellitonthemountain.net, uncorneredmarket.com).



Figure "6": Unofficial Travel blog sample

2.8. "Snapchat"

Methods of digital communication are emerging rapidly all the time. For example, the first digital chat room was developed at the University of Illinois in 1973 using a computer system called PLATO. In 1992, the first mobile text message was sent. By 2010, the world was sending almost 193,000 texts per second [4]. Under the motto of "Technology should make communication easier when it's appropriate", the Web 2.0 applications and their social media tools turned out to be an important development in different fields such as the travel and tourism industry. Potential tourists can interact with their selected destination virtually before their physical visit. The promotional materials used in this study will be the "Snapchat" mobile application software. "Snapchat" is a mobile application where users share snaps (Images and Videos) among each other, but unlike other social network apps, the snaps disappear daily. It offers ways for youth to express their identity and reshape the image of their country by directing the usage of the social network over the internet technology. "Snapchat" application software gives the option to post a profile that is visible to other "Snapchat" users, and may be accessible to the world at large. With millions of Snapcodes being scanned weekly, "Snapchat" became one of the youth's favourite online

platforms for destination branding especially in MENA, as well as one of the first option that travellers choose for information about their upcoming destinations. It attracts millions of users daily. It has also been one of the promising marketing channels for various types of products, services and people. The advantages in adopting "Snapchat" are that they empower tourism destination to enhance its efficiency, and tourist operators to re-plan their communication strategies.

2.8.1. Snaptags

2.8.1.1. Idea

"Snapchat" users are usually able to see a special Snaptag (Snapcode). The ghost icon with its random black dots represents some stored data. It is a developed Quick Response (QR) code; the former QR code failed miserably in the digital market and became a frustrating symbol of over-engineering, though some efforts were expanded by Apple and Facebook to retain it among their digital products. The QR symbol used to be represented in square bar codes on posters, magazine pages and packages, etc, and used to open URLs or different bonus content. In 1994, Denso Wave invented QR to track cars manufactured and assembled on Japanese assembly lines [16]. When camera was used in the pre-smartphone era, it was used everywhere with the ability to read codes and automate ways in opening URL instead of typing it with old limited keyboards. Following the smartphone era, URL shorteners invention for Microsites together with the help of different mobile OSs, enabled users to use the full keyboard. The QR code became obsolete. In September 2014, "Snapchat" secretly adopted a QR code start-up named "Scan.me", which was the beginning of Snapcode launching in January 2015. Users acquired this Snapcode-branded QR code to represent their "Snapchat" identification on their profile which could be opened by pressing the yellow ghost icon. **Figure "7"**.

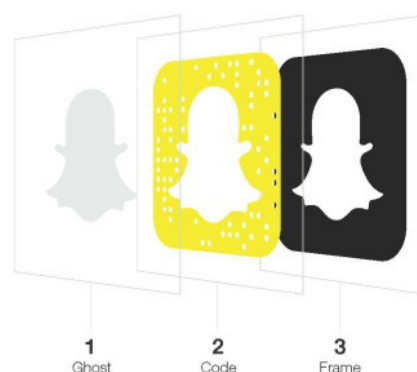


Figure "7": Snapcode structure

When started commercially, many non-profit organizations were hesitant to experiment with a mobile social network where content disappears and where no functional "common follow button" exists. Nowadays, "Snapchat's" live stories draw 20 million audiences in 24-hour window with 100 million active users daily. In April 2016 one of these live stories generated 40 million viewers [20].

"Snapchat" app has a special feature which detects your location, and if you are at the same location where the live story is occurring, "Snapchat" will automatically add the snap to live feed which can be personalized.

2.8.2. Purposes

In the land of social media, we can use "Snapchat" as a social communication network to share experiences, ideas, concepts, live chat sessions, pictures, personal feed and videos after adding friends to a personal list. Snaptags are essentially a follow button with the identification of the friend's username. Alternatively, one can scan the unique yellow coded icon live using one's camera, Spectacles glasses Technology, or a captured stored image to decode the Snaptag.

"Snapchat" introduces more privacy in the social network, as it helps users to keep their identity hidden until they allow known users to be listed as friends. "Snapchat" allows celebrities to publish stories about their everyday life which is a new conversational tool used to broadcast their personalities to their fans and/or listed friends. **Figure "8"**

"Snapchat" gives another window on the world's best publishers such as CNN, Dailymail, National Geographic, People, Yahoo news, Warner music, etc.

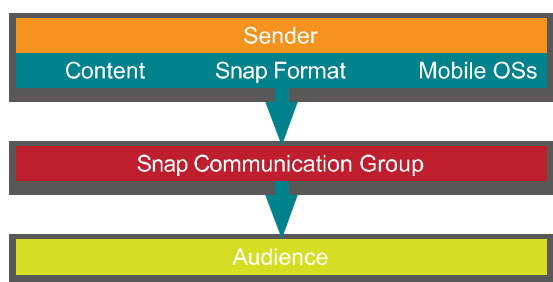


Figure "8": Snap communication workflow

2.8.3. "Snapchat" unique identification

Some young users prefer to use the plain coded "Snapchat" yellow icon for their identification, while others download special images from the "Snapchat" official website. Many of them prefer to create their own coded ghost with the guided limitations in coding it. Users can customize their own Snapcode by adding graphics or text inside the white ghost area only as the yellow background and black dots code must remain clear. **Figure "9"**

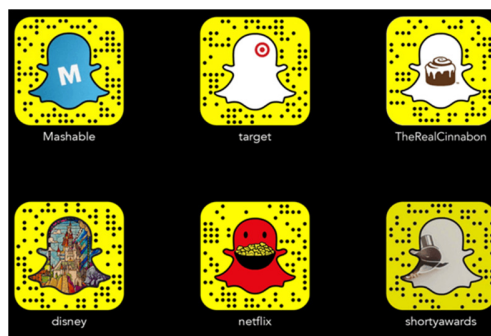


Figure "9": Snapchat icon customization

2.8.4. "Snapchat" appeal for youth

There are different reasons for youth and millennial users to use "Snapchat" as part of their daily activities:

1. It is new, fun and "cool" for most people between 18:35 years.

2. It can be installed in different mobile OSs.

3. As a communication tool, it is considered cheap, suits quick response, easily stored digitally, ease in presenting complex data clearly, visuals represented by simple words, informal posture, supports creativity by being the message's initiator, and supports immediate feedback.

4. It makes possible youth migration from other social networks such as "Twitter", "Facebook", "Instagram", etc., to a new messaging way which is hidden from monitoring parents.

5. There is easiness in downloading vector Snapcode identification for later publishing in different sizes such as billboards, T-Shirts, websites, huge HD digital screens, etc.

6. Under the "Snapchat" motto "this is your app, not ours", the privacy it gives for one-to-one communication is very unique compared to other options in social mobile applications. For example, with a single click on a follow button others can connect to "Facebook" profile, but with "Snapchat" it requires its own unique manual solution in adding friends as it has no website and no links.

7. It facilitates integrating images with scalable captions or videos, and optional text and frames in one platform with their special effects, sharing or saving them easily and listing them chronologically.

8. One can zoom in and out while filming and editing video on the fly, and sharing it immediately especially while using Spectacles Glasses.

9. It enables filming live action in two perspectives by switching between front and rear cameras almost simultaneously or using Spectacles glasses technology which results in a lot of fun, live narration possibilities, live filters like "the temperature or your speed", as well as some real feedback such as in first person/third person games.

10. It is a flattering way for some young users in open areas through the "adding nearby" function.

11. The "self-destruct" option supports the youth's tendency to create new live stories about themselves on a daily basis.

12. It gives the possibility to monitor shared live stories.

13. One can save the created "Snapchat" short videos (10 Seconds long) with its functionality to be broadcast by different means or stored for personal use.

2.8.5. "Snapchat" as a tourism marketing tool

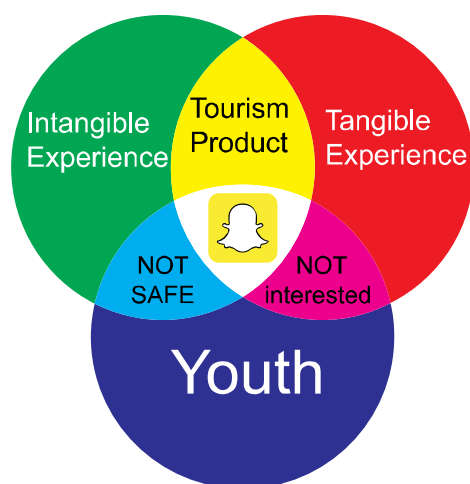


Figure "10": "Snapchat" as a tourism marketing tool for youth

"Snapchat" has multi benefits. As we have seen, it influences youth behaviours, trends and daily activities. It has power to push different marketers to redirect some of its functionality in the tourism field for the following reasons:

- Saving time and cost.
- The "Snapchat" icon's good appeal that includes fun content.
- Changing the way that travellers hear and learn about destinations.
- Supporting viral marketing.
- Tightening travellers' relationships.
- Gathering large groups for the same destination.
- Helping in developing destination images interactively.
- Consumers are losing trust with posters, brochures, advertising programs and TV ads.
- Bridging the gap between online marketing tools and search engine marketing.
- Good medium for sharing travelling and residency experiences using videos, images, texting, etc.

- Ability to combine the traditional marketing approaches within the digital environment.

- To promote the country's culture, users who have many listed friends can interchange a lots of different live stories daily from different locations and events.

- Exploring cultural events from different perspective.

3. Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

- Explore the Egyptian brand personality expressed by tourists and non-tourists using social media and conventional surveys.

- Harnessing the resources of different stakeholder groups (locals, entrepreneurs and visitors) to assist Egyptian tourism to attract potential travellers.

- Create a modified-induced image through formulating a strategy for positioning Egypt as a tourist destination for young people between 15 to 25 years.

- Recommend a workflow to engage youth with the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism as a main destination Marketing Organization (DMO) with the view to turning myths into positive emotional attachment to Egyptian culture in an informal manner.

4. Methodology (Research model and hypothesis)

Previous studies of this nature have encountered difficulties in branding Egypt as a tourist destination, hence this study collected digital promotional content "advertorials in tourism websites". The target readerships for this content are young adolescents from 15 to 25. This Qualitative exploratory study adapts a new Egyptian tourism workflow using a mobile phone application "Snapchat". This research classifies some of the most important Egyptian cultural touristic approaches according to the importance of places and timing to use them in marketing. The prioritization could be planned according to the ministry from the listed examples:

- Sham Al-Naseem (Spring Feast).
- Wedding in Churches, villages, modern and classic.
- Ramadan Month preparation.
- Celebration the sun passes over the face of Ramses II in Aswan.
- Ramdan month preparation within suburban and Ramdan activities in different cities.
- Lesser & Greater Bairam (Eid al-Fitr & Eid al-Adha) activities.
- Christmas preparation.
- A day in the north coast during summer and winter.
- A winter day in saint catherine of siena camping.

- Residing in the mosque for worship (I'tikaaf).
- A day in any profession, etc.

5. Results and Discussion

Findings from surveys usually lead to the establishment of new theory. Feedback from two target groups of different young people between 15 to 25 years of age with strong interest in travelling was obtained. **Figure "11", "12"**.

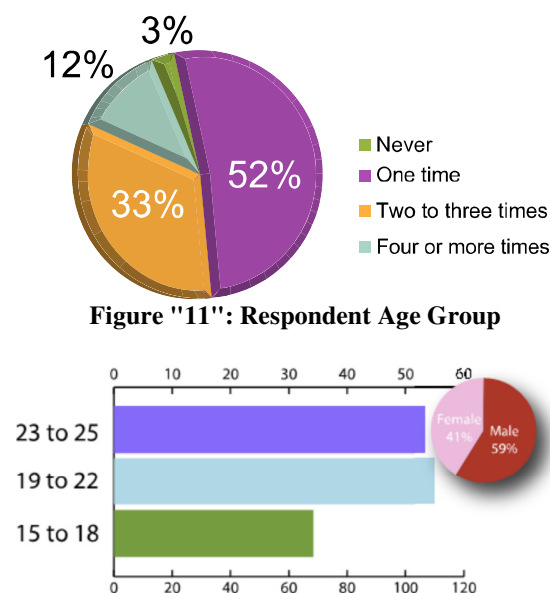


Figure "12": International Respondents' Travel Frequency

These groups were enthusiastic about using mobile application software more than other devices, and didn't mind taking risks in navigating different destinations in an unconventional way. **Table "2", "3"**.

The first group (**118**) was a sample of international young teens who were questioned and

registered their opinions online; the second group (**167**) consisted of local teen within the same age range. When looking at patterns of Internet, broadcasting personal moments and "Snapchat" usage among different users, youth continue to show different phases of their usage styles as they grow older and became exposed to the vast updating technologies around them. **Figure "13", "14", Table "4"**.

Table "2": Media Devices Ownership Percentage

	All Youth	Boys	Girls	Teens Aged 15-17	Teens Aged 18-25
Owning the following media devices:					
Desktop computer	74%	72%	28%	69%	31%
Laptop computer	18%	54%	46%	45.5%	54.5%
Cell phone	88%	45%	55%	42%	58%
Number of media devices:					
None	8%	77%	23%	63%	27%
One or more types of media device	92%	50.6%	50.4%	47%	53%
Two or more types of media devices	36%	52.7%	47.3%	40.4%	59.6%
Three or more types of media devices	17%	51%	49%	34.7%	65.3%
All four types of media devices	2%	50%	50%	50%	50%

Table "3": Respondents' Information Travelling Sources

Travelling Informative Source	First	Second	Third
Internet	56	23	0
Printed Publications	13	17	3
Television Commercials and Programs	8	12	2
Travel Agencies	3	38	0
Word of Mouth	26	51	3
Tourism and Trade Exhibitions	0	0	2
Others	0	0	1

Table "4": "Snapchat" Usage Styles percentage

Using any of Live-Streaming Video SW for recording personal moments	Age: 15:20 (n=183)	Age: 21:25 (n=102)
Vine - Snapchat - Instagram - YouNow - Facebook Live -Periscope - Viddy - Montaj - Bloop it - YouTube Connect - Livestream - Justin.tv - Ustream - Stringwire - Hang w/ - Streamup - Nom - Meerkat - Mogulus	93.9%	91.2%
Have you...?		
Used "Snapchat" to send photos or documents	45%	66%
Included a link to a funny article or website in a "Snapchat" message	50%	31%
Shot/Sent video files through "Snapchat"	81%	79%

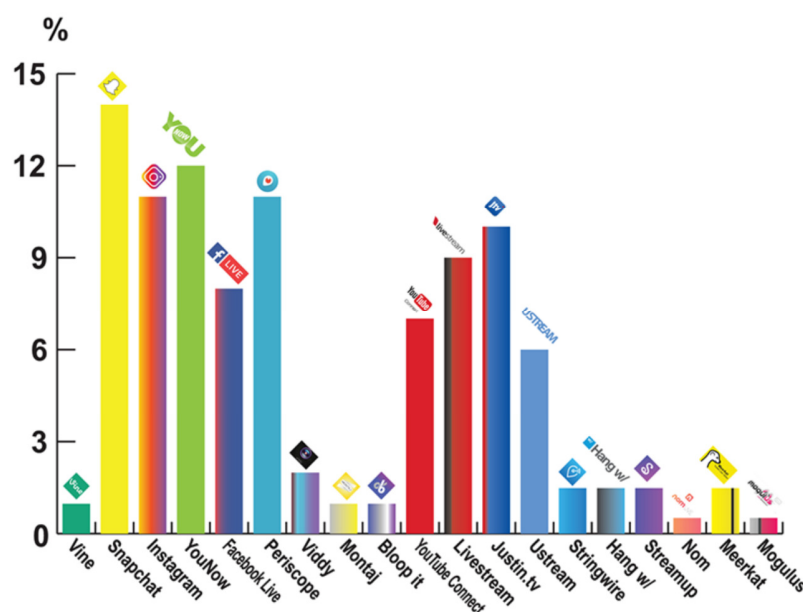


Figure "13": Respondents' Live-Streaming Video preference percentage

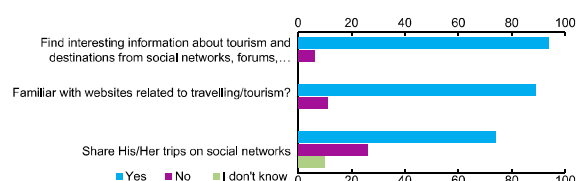


Figure "14": Social media importance for teens in travelling destination decision

5.1. International group

Some data has been collected from reviewers in websites such as "TripAdvisor", "booking.com", and "hotels.com". This is in addition to a questionnaire to describe the actual perceptions that young people between 15 to 25 years have of Egypt. By counting the number of words used in the users' sentences, results have helped in assessing the Egyptian personality dimensions in social media.

Table "5": Comparison of Egyptian brand personality dimensions in social media and the respondents' feedback

Egyptian brand personality dimensions	Social media (%)	Respondents' (%)
Sincerity	39.9	56.1
Sophistication	20.6	17.0
Excitement	18.8	16.4
Competence	12.7	10.6
Ruggedness	7.9	0.2

Some of them had the stereotype about Egypt as being the land of camels and Pyramids. Others saw it as a land in the Middle East and associated it with terrorism. Still others related it to the so called "Arab Spring". Very few had either visited Hurghada and Sharm-Sheikh or learnt about them from their relatives. Most of them agreed that the destination branding impact the country's reputation somehow. Figure "15".

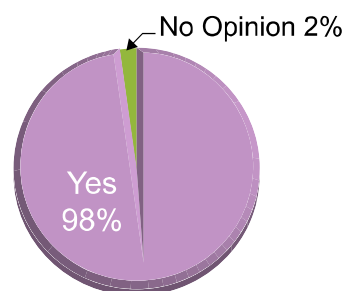


Figure "15": Respondents' Opinion about Brand impact on the reputation

While 34.3% of respondents were interested in the historical sites of Egypt, 18.4 % focused on religious/spiritual aspects. The remainder looked for places of entertainment. It was interesting to note that 45.2% of consumers choose destination brand that suits their personal style, while 36.9% searched online for destination that complement their status. Table "6".

Table "6": Respondents' view on search engines in making a travelling decision

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fair	Agree	Strongly Agree
Search engines help in getting travel's destination information quickly	1	7	18	48	44
Appropriate and pertinent information results from search engine	0	2	27	33	56
Preference in accessing the governmental results from the search engine	11	18	42	39	8

Boys between 15-19 years reported keeping in touch with an average of 22 friends outside school. On the other hand, girls maintained ties with 17 friends. Girls spent 10.26 hours per week on online social activities (median 6 hours/week) and boys meanwhile averaged 11.29 hours.

5.2. Local group

In Egypt today, youth between 15:25 years have regular access to an average of 5 different screens at home such as the TV, Laptops, game console "eg, Xbox, PlayStation", portable handheld computer for gaming, mobile phones, tablet and the family's Desktop computer. Sometimes we find them engaged in two or more forms of screen viewing at the same time such as mobile phones and TV.

The vast majority of youth in Egypt now use the internet. Youth are using the internet very frequently, and in different ways than they did before 2000. In 2013, there are approximately 5.35 million young adults between 15:25 who go online daily [10].

The data collected for this study is based on youth responses to a carefully designed questionnaire which yielded 167 respondents.

a. Number of youth who use internet.

87% of young Egyptians aged 15 to 25 use the internet.

b. Frequent access to the internet.

52% of youth internet users say they go online on a daily basis.

The scope of youth online has increased as one out of every three teens who use the internet lives in a home with a broadband connection. Youth are more frequent wireless users of surfing online activities such as games, news and seeking unpublished information and gossip.

26% of the youth sampled go online from home, and are connecting from a private area like a bedroom. 73% of them go online in an open area from a computer or their own mobile. 54% of the online sample say that they have gone online from a café, market, gym, etc.

c. An overwhelming number of youth (84%) reported that they had at least one of the four main internet connection devices: "desktop computers, laptop computers, mobile phone and PDA". 44% of them have two of these devices, 12% have three and 2% possess all four.

d. 76% of the sample access news online.

e. The most remarkable point is that older girls in the sample have a much higher level of engagement with more internet activities than boys of the same age.

f. 43% of the sample access unpublished news through their communities.

Despite few of the sample do not use the internet. About half (45%) of them have been online with their friends. Those youth who remain offline are from families with lower levels of income and thus have limited technological accessibility. They are likely to be from villages and small towns in lower or Upper Egypt far away from the large cities like Cairo, Alexandria, Giza, etc.

g. The majority of participants (83%) reported owning at least one personal mobile device with main internet functionality for accessing different multimedia sources such as smart phones or PDAs. Some of them (22%) had other means of personal media devices such as a desktop or laptop.

h. 83% of the sample of youth surveyed stated that 'most' of the people they know either locally or globally use the internet.

i. Instant messaging "IM" is a multichannel space for youth personal expressions as well as for sharing links, photos, music, and videos. 79% of the sample preferred texting rather than calling.

34% of IM-users included a video, while 83% used their mobile application software to send photos or other documents via their IM.

j. Despite the great affection for computers and mobile technology, youth, on average, are still spending more physical contact time with their friends (10.3Hours). About 7.8 hours are spent connecting with each other using the mobile technology.

k. 37% of the sample downloaded "Snapchat" and more than half (63%) of them are using it. They reported creating their profile and posting their live stories. 45% of them played with "Snapchat" features to customise privacy such as changing the snap icon to represent them online.

l. 93% of respondents are on family packages where someone else pays the bill.

m. A segment of youth felt that their parents were limiting their internet usage. More than half (63%) reported that their software was always

monitored or controlled by their parents. This was the reason for frequently updating software that was not easily accessible by their parents and whose data is 'volatile' like "Snapchat". In fact "Snapchat" was the most appropriate for 87% of them in exchanging their information especially their live stories as it would disappear after 24 hours.

5.3. Proposed workflow

Youth are rich technological being enveloped by a wired and wireless world, the research findings has shown that the majority have accessibility to surf the internet from their wireless mobile phones and their wired/wireless home broadband. Most of them share their information locally and internationally and the rate of data exchange is increasing steadily. This sharing gives Egyptian youth the opportunity to create and edit content, and encourages them to use their mobile media and software technology for social interaction. In one of their daily live stories they will have a regular clip entitled 'In love with Egypt snaps'. The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism will invite youth to a promotional campaign with the designed "Geofilter asset": 'Send a message with your camera phone now, Don't wait! Just SNAP away today!, let's have a relli day's outgoing fun!'. This campaign is intended to influence their friends on their list and guide their perceptions towards Egyptian land and culture positively. The Ministry of Tourism will work as a Destination Management Organization (DMO) in a semi-formal way to keep control, monitor and regulate the online reputation of the generated content that will be displayed. Moreover, the DMO can convert these largely unstructured content into strategic knowledge

and potential advertising assets by examining, selecting, classifying, monitoring and evaluating. **Figure "16", "17".**

The main activities within Egypt during the whole year will be classified into the following categories: Event, Festival, Carnival, Concert, Campus event, Eid, Sports Match tournament, City-Based Story, etc.

The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism can obtain different random friends from all over the world from <http://getsnapchatusernames.altervista.org>.

The publishing of these snaps will enable them to capture spontaneous and serendipitous moments and allow these private encounters to be reproduced globally for public display. Through a proposed advertising campaign by the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism, youth can choose the proposed topics from the promoted username and Snaptag, then cover it from their own perspective to their listed friends in their "Snapchat" application.

The main factor in this research is that youth decided the topics to be covered using "Snapchat" and an approach that took into account different perspectives. The Ministry had to choose from among all the streamed videos the winner of their competition after deciding whether it was appropriate enough to promote Egypt in the related advertisement campaign according to the psychological dimensions of Brand Personality Scale (BPS), and whether it measured tourism destination brand personality (TDBP) which are: competence, excitement, ruggedness, sincerity and sophistication [8].

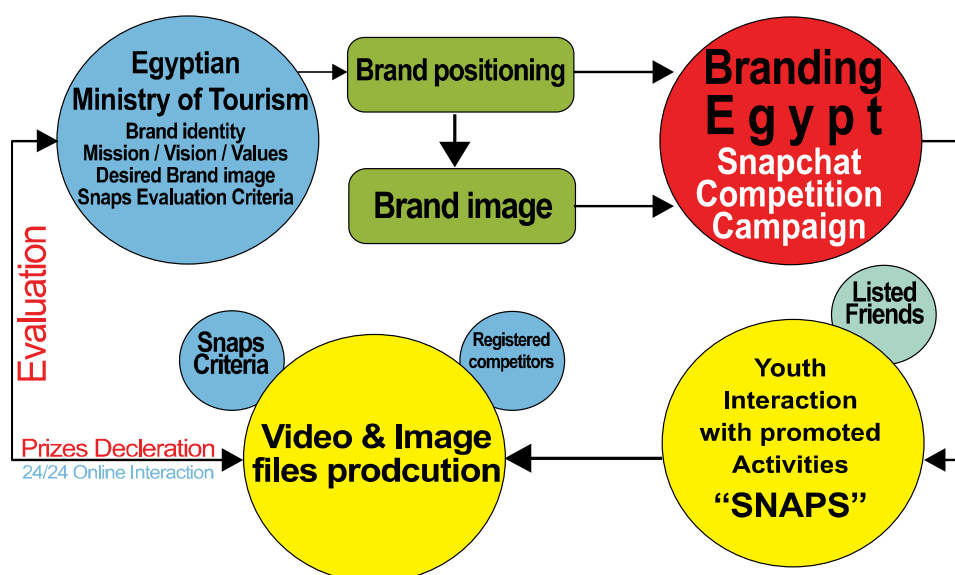


Figure "16": Proposed "Snapchat" Competition Workflow

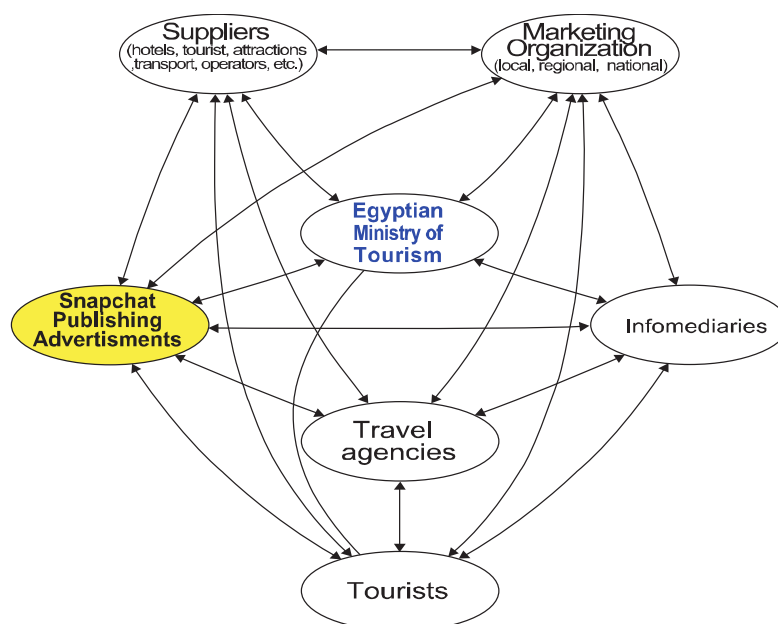


Figure "17": Proposed Marketing "Snapchat" Promotion

5.3.1. Creation of Egyptian identity's Snapcode and Geofilters

To avoid similarities among other Snapcodes, a new Snapcode will be developed to represent the Egyptian identity. The new Snapcode image produced will be used in the printed and digital publications taking into consideration the "Snapchat" design rules. Figure "18".

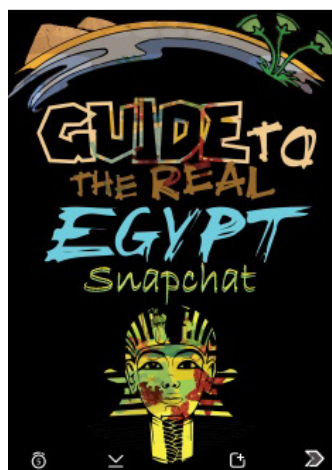


Figure "18": Egyptian Snapcode sample

If there is a live event in any geographical region within Egypt captured within a short time range, it will be and broadcasted in a new label marked "Live". Ultimately, anyone in the world using a "Snapchat" mobile application software can watch a tagged collection of many snaps from the same captured

event as a single "Snapchat" story with its special "Geofilter created design" techniques.

5.3.2. Branding Egypt

The process of branding Egypt starts with choosing one or more Egyptian brand elements and attaching an identifiable logo to the "Snapchat" to serve as a trade makeable device to identify the destination distinctly. Figure "19".



Figure "19": Egyptian Snapchat User Interface sample

A strong format and consistent brand association reflecting the Egyptian attributes and amplifying the desired image captures the real perceptions of young people, this avoiding any kind of fabrication.

The preparation of streaming videos establish an Egyptian brand association that creates symbolic effects and links in the tourist's and Non-tourist's memory in such a way as to increase the familiarity

with this destination through planned repeated exposure and strong associations.

To make the associations between the different places of attraction, service, and agglomeration we have to find the differences in Egyptian places and culture. This will help in reducing visitor's search costs and ensure a quality experience to satisfy the tourist's expectations. Attaching a logo to the snap, creating a slogan and taglines will help in providing a link between the brand identity and actual brand image (Ex. Close on Egypt, Eye on..., cool young... create your own Egypt). **Figure "20"**.



Figure "20": Snapchat Branding Application samples

With joint resources and partnerships mobile application software like "Snapchat" the backbone of communication multi-tasking for youth to promote tourism will be strengthened by engaging others in different live conversations and stories about the nation. The Egyptian Ministry of Tourism will receive the Snaps as a listed friend and can be e-mailed after editing to (ex.mail@egyptsnachatteam). The Jury team will check them frequently for relevancy, and whether it/they add value to the Egyptian identity criteria or not. The team will select the most appropriate Snap/s and add them to the Ministry's story which will be seen by millions of snapchatters around the world.

The team will save the most appropriate videos to use in promoting Egypt by informing and engaging different categories of audiences using different digital media rather than just mobile apps. The winner for the seasonal competition will be announced in an official function. The team will assess audiences and potential travellers' awareness and knowledge of Egypt periodically using different digital means to initiate different marketing strategies.

5.3.3. Snaps Selection Criteria

Selected snaps should meet the following criteria:

- a. Snap messages must be short and simple, concise, clear, relevant, and appeal to audience interests;
- b. The snap content must be factually accurate and have a solid goal;
- c. Snap message can be a mix of factual and psychological aspects for maximum impact;
- d. Snap language should be appropriate to the audience and match the mobile sound output;
- e. The snapper must respect cultural differences and subtle implications especially in non-verbal communication and gesture expressions;
- f. The snap should encourage the audience to participate and engage when and where appropriate;
- g. The snap must be taken at the announced time and place;
- h. At the end of each snap, snappers must include the main proposed slogan or tag in either written or narrated form;
- i. The snap message should match the selected subject's nature and attitude; and
- j. There must be structured content showing constructive dialogues and/or actions.

5.3.4. Application Workflow deficiencies

- Budgetary constraints, time-pressures and literacy challenges.
- Parents believe that the internet is not beneficial to social lives of youth.
- Uncontrollable factors when people's initial perceptions about a country are changed due to publishing videos via "Snapchat".
- How youth use their mobile media to vest themselves with required information, skills, and abilities for self-advancement.
- Youth are not conceived by innovators as having specific information needs except with regard to entertainment.

6. Conclusion

This paper outlines the correlation between the power of "Snapchat" as a motivational and digital communication tool and its impact on Egyptian tourism especially in MENA region.

a. This research has come to certain conclusions. Firstly, there are positive brand associations when we call or read the word "Egypt" on the internet websites.

b. As unsatisfied tourists share their experiences in Web 2.0 platforms, advances in these technologies can help youth in supporting it over time.

c. Mobile phones are not just a way of calling or texting. They have been turned into multimedia recording devices in pocket-sized internet connected computers.

d. Because tourism embodies services and experiences designed for travellers that cannot be

evaluated prior to purchase, word of mouth becomes an important factor when deciding which destinations to choose. In trying to find a social communication channel that is trustworthy of portraying Egypt as a potential destination for international travellers, this research has proposed a new approach of mobile phone application software's "Virtual Video Tour" that supports tourism marketing and suggests a workflow of branding Egypt in different economic times. The way that Egyptians imagine themselves and wish to be perceived by others, was the catalyst for giving potential visitor to Egypt experiences of this destination via the lens of Egyptian youth. This Virtual Tour gives the potential tourist a pre-visit experience.

e. Egyptian self-images will be able to project cultural and political identities to both domestic and international audiences. Thus, the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism need to enhance its skills and competencies related to the Egyptian e-culture personality reflected in online user generated content and which is influenced by the media.

f. Shared videos through "Snapchat" can provide knowledge of certain aspects of the country such as the activities based on geographical locations and cultural aspects which will result in the construction of attitudes towards the country.

g. Marketers have to develop different digital campaigns about Egypt for youth to emphasize the distinctive characteristics and attractive elements of real Egyptian tourism, taking into account visitors initial thoughts and perceptions of the country.

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