THE USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN SMALL-TO-MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESSES IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

BY

ELANDRE COETZER
KIRSTY LAUREN DE WET

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PORT ELIZABETH

STUDY LEADER:

Ms. S Beck

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DECLARATION

I, Coetzer, E. and I, de Wet, K.L. declare that "The usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry" is our own work, that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references, and that this study was not submitted by either one of us for a degree at another university.

COETZER, E.   DE WET, K.L.

Port Elizabeth

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ABSTRACT

After facing a significantly positive financial year in 2010 as a result of South Africa hosting the FIFA Soccer World cup, the country faced a few concerns in the coming years. This included South Africa having an excess amount of supply in terms of accommodation. In 2007 it was reported that there was 48 500 hotel rooms available. However, after the 2010 Soccer World cup, that number increased to 58 800. (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2011:16). This oversupply of accommodation left many smaller guest houses and bed and breakfasts at a loss, and they suffered tremendously (Van Huyssteen, Strydom & Rudansky-Kloppers, 2015:313). According to Gillham and Parfitt (2018:1), the effects were major for Nelson Mandela Bay, who suffered a decline of 8.69% in 2018 alone, within the hospitality industry.

In South Africa it is evident that small-to-medium sized businesses are the major driving forces for the country's economy as they allow for job creation and decrease poverty levels (Oji, Iwu & Haydam, 2017:2). Small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses in Nelson Mandela Bay therefore need to give considerable attention as to how they can possibly influence the industry in a positive light, so that the industry is not at a financial. Small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses can no longer solely rely on traditional media to connect with their consumers and should utilise social networks, to provide a platform for their business in the virtual world. (Lim, 2010:2). Small-to-medium sized businesses are the biggest beneficiaries of social media marketing strategies, because of the minimal costs associated with them and the wide range of consumer's social media can reach. (Neti, 2011:11).

Primarily, social media can also be used to identify new markets and grow closer relationships with its consumers (Rudloff & Frey, 2010:4). According to Cragg and Mills (2011:697), small-to-medium sized businesses have limited resources and a smaller number of employees, which often contributes to why small-to-medium sized businesses are failing to make good use of information technology, or specifically, social media platforms. Matikiti, *et al.*, (2016:743) argues that, although the number of hotels and guest houses using social media marketing is increasing daily, the main challenge that these businesses are facing, is how to engage consumers effectively.

According to Matikiti, *et al.* (2016:743) studies, many hospitality businesses were not using social media to its full potential or effectively.

In an attempt to understand how the decline in the hospitality industry in NMB can perhaps be overcome, the purpose of this study and the primary objective thereof, is to investigate the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses. In order to achieve this objective, data was gathered from 90 owners/managers from small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses in NMB. These respondents were asked multiple questions in terms of their business, social media and the intention to use social media within their business. A measuring instrument was developed and assessed for the validity and reliability when undertaking a factor analysis and calculating the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The data was then analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

After evaluating the empirical results, it was found that most of the small-to- medium sized hospitality businesses in NMB made use of a combination of social media platforms (more than three). To be more specific, the businesses were mostly found making use of websites and Facebook. Literature that is stated in the study, validates that Facebook is considered to be the most important social media platform in terms of reaching consumers and being the most effective and used social media platform in the world. After also analysing intention and adoption based models that were applied in this study, it was found that Perceived behavioural control was not reliable or valid for this study. However, most respondents were found to strongly agree or strongly disagree with items measuring Social norms. Furthermore, the study found a significant relationship between the dependent variable (*intention to use social media*) and the independent variable of *Perceived ease of use of social media platforms*. All other variables were not found to have a significant effect on the intention to use social media.

Recommendations made with regards to the study concluded, were that since Perceived ease of use was found to have a significant relationship to the intention to use social media businesses should make their social media experiences easy and user friendly as possible to their consumers and for their employees. It was also recommended that businesses make use of a variety of social media platforms and

not just a Website or Facebook. This will help small-to-medium sized businesses gain more exposure so that potential consumers have the opportunity to see their business on multiple platforms and can target a wider audience.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

According to the Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism (NMBT), cited in Gillham and Parfitt (2018:1), the average accommodation occupancy for the 2016-2017 season showed a decline, from 77.47% to 68.78%, reflecting a massive 8.69% shortfall. Due to the fuel price hike, ratings downgrades and water worries, the small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in the Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) have suffered immensely (Gillham & Parfitt, 2018:1).

In South Africa, there was a large increase in available hotel rooms, from 48 500 in 2007 to 58 800 in 2010, with the supply significantly exceeding the level of demand (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2011:16). However, after the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup held in South Africa, there was an excess of accommodation available, particularly small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry, thus following a period of oversupply (Mhlanga, 2013:1). The smaller guest houses and bed and breakfasts in the country, with a low star-grading, seemed to suffer the most from this oversupply (Van Huyssteen, Strydom & Rudansky-Kloppers, 2015:313). Furthermore, contributing towards NMB's declining hospitality industry.

Hospitality can be defined as an industry that provides an essential place for tourists to stay and sleep in a specific destination of their choice, either for work or leisure purposes. This study will specifically focus on small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses, including: hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, guest houses and guest farms. (Matikiti, Kruger, & Saayman, 2016:741). Small-to-medium sized businesses are seen as a major driver of a country's economy, as they are connected to job creation, improved poverty levels and a society's socio-economic status (Oji, Iwu & Haydam, 2017:2). Hospitality businesses today, especially those small-to-medium sized businesses, can no longer rely exclusively on traditional media to connect with their consumers. Small-to-medium sized businesses must utilise social networks, to provide a platform for their business in the virtual world. (Lim, 2010:2). According to Neti (2011:11), small-to-medium sized businesses were the biggest beneficiaries from

social media marketing strategies. Social media marketing strategies are cost-effective, simple, and fast way to communicate with customers and stakeholders in a business. Fundamentally, social media can be used to identify a market, analyse that market, and grow its interactions with customers. (Rudloff & Frey, 2010:4).

With the ever changing-dynamic hospitality industry, small-to-medium sized businesses must acknowledge that technology is becoming a vital tool of communication (Rudloff & Frey, 2010:4). In terms of the South African population, consisting of 55, 21 million people, an estimation of 28, 6 million people (52%) utilise the internet in some format from multiple devices. More than half of these South African internet users make use of social media platforms, with this number continuously increasing. (Qwerty, 2017:5). Tourists interact daily, with social networking sites to make informed decisions about their work and leisure travel needs. Furthermore, tourists share their accommodation experiences and products used on their travels, with their family and friends via social media platforms. This important sharing philosophy is a feature that social media possess and can now determine a firm's reputation, sales, and even the survival of the firm itself. (Capatina, Bouzaabia, Bouzaabia, Micu & Micu, 2017:1).

Social media can be defined as an entity that involves online technologies, practices, or groups that people make to generate content and share opinions, perceptions, experiences and views with each other (He, *et al.*, 2015:150). Although social media was created as an instrument that people could use to interact with family and friends, it was later implemented and utilised by businesses that sought to take advantage of a popular innovative communication technique to reach consumers (Staff, 2018:1). A few examples of popular social media platforms include; Facebook, Wikipedia, Twitter, Youtube and Whatsapp (He, *et al.*, 2015:150). According to Mangold & Faulds (2009:358), research needs to be conducted on social media's impact on businesses. Therefore, this study will investigate the use of social media by small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry. The research proposal covers the following topics: an introduction and background to the study; a problem statement; research objectives; literature review; research methodology; scope and demarcation of the study and structure of the study. The topic that is covered in the following section to come is the problem statement.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

Research shows a decline in the occupancy within the hospitality industry in NMB, with an 8.69% shortfall. According to Coyle Hospitality Group (2012:5), 93.8% of hospitality businesses that have been explored said that they were making use of social media to communicate with consumers and were arranging to assign more resources (time and budget) to social media marketing. However, Oji, *et al.* (2017:2) highlighted that research on the use of social media marketing strategies to support the growth of small-to-medium sized businesses, specifically in South Africa, has been lacking. In agreement, Van Scheers (2011:5048) also found that a lack of marketing strategies and skills were the very reason why small-to-medium sized businesses were failing, hence the decline in occupancy in NMB's hospitality industry.

In South Africa, it was found that 65% of small-to-medium sized businesses were faced with the challenge of lacking an understanding in terms of information technology. An information technology challenge often faced, is that 69% of small-to-medium sized businesses do not have a functioning website to allow for two-way communication to take place, which would improve client's communication with the business, and potentially build customer loyalty. (Tsele, 2016:5). Matikiti*, et al.* (2016:743) argues that, although the number of hotels and guest houses using social media marketing is increasing daily, the main challenge that these businesses are facing, is how to engage consumers effectively. According to Matikiti, *et al.* (2016:743) studies, many hospitality businesses were not using social media to its full potential or effectively. The lack of social media use could be a contributing factor as to why NMB's hospitality industry's occupancy is declining (Gillham & Parfitt, 2018:1).

The above statements implies that small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry are making use of social media platforms, however, lack the commitment to sustaining social media marketing efforts, whilst not using the platforms to their full potential, or even the right platforms that suit the industry (Matikiti, *et al.*, 2016:742). Therefore, due to the important role that social media plays in the marketing of small-to-medium sized businesses, this study will investigate the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the declining hospitality industry in NMB.

1.3   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In this section to follow, the research objectives will include the primary, secondary and methodological objectives of the study will be outlined.

1.3.1   PRIMARY STUDY OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to investigate and empirically assess the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay.

1.3.2   SECONDARY STUDY OBJECTIVES

In order to address the primary objective of this study, the following secondary objectives have been formulated:

SO[1]:   To identify which social media platforms small-to-medium size businesses make use of within the hospitality industry in NMB.

SO[2]:   To investigate the relationship between the independent variables (*Perceived usefulness; Perceived ease of use; Attitude; Social norms;* and *Perceived behavioural control*), and the dependent variable (*Intention to use social media*).

1.3.3   METHODOLOGICAL OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve the primary and secondary objectives, the following methodological objectives are put forth:

MO[1]:   To conduct a literature review on the nature and characteristics of social media and the hospitality industry, the different types, usage and influence of social media, the benefits and limitations of social media, and contextualise the importance thereof, into small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry.

MO[2]:   To determine the appropriate research methodology that will be used to conduct this study.

MO^3: To propose hypotheses to investigate the relationships between the independent variable, social media, and the dependent variable, the occupancy within the hospitality industry in NMB.

MO^4: To develop an appropriate measuring instrument that will be used to empirically test the hypothesised relationships.

MO^5: To report the findings and make appropriate recommendations regarding the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry in NMB.

1.3.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Which social media platforms do small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry make use of?
- Do the factors of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Theory of Planned Behaviour model (TPB) influence the usage of social media within the hospitality industry in NMB?

1.3.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following research hypotheses are put forth in order to further the study:

H^1: The business perception of perceived usefulness has a positive relationship with the businesses intention to use social media.

H^2: The business perception of perceived ease of use has a positive relationship with the businesses intention to use social media.

H^3: The business perception of social norms has a positive relationship with the businesses intention to purchase a product.

H^4: The business perception of perceived behavioural control has a positive relationship with the businesses intention to purchase a product.

H^5: The business perception of attitude has a positive relationship with the businesses intention to purchase a product.

1.4   SCOPE AND DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

This study will be carried out in the NMB by one male and one female Bachelor of Commerce, Business Management honours students in the year 2018. The study will include 90 small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay. The focus will be on small-to-medium sized businesses, due to the increasingly important role they play in the South African economy. It will also focus on the decline within the hospitality industry in the NMB. This geographical area was chosen by the researchers as it is convenient and in close proximity for them to collect primary data.

1.5   CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

Small-to-medium sized businesses play a crucial role within the South African economy and has been recognised as positively contributing to issues such as unemployment, inequality, poverty and economic growth (Fiseha & Oyelana, 2015:280). Therefore, the success of small-to-medium sized businesses is of major significance to the country.

This study aims to expand the theoretical and empirical views of social media used in the hospitality industry, by investigating how social media influences small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry of NMB. This will establish whether social media itself, as well as specific types of social media platforms can rectify the decline in small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB. This study will provide small-to-medium sized business owners/managers with greater insights regarding the social media platforms use within the hospitality industry. From these insights provided, managers/owners of small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry can take the necessary steps and measures to adapt and improve their marketing processes, practices and feedback systems to increase their success rates and longevity, as well as improve the decline NMB is facing within their hospitality industry.

1.6   DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

This study focuses on social media platforms of small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry. The definitions of key terms are given below:

1.6.1   DEFINITION OF SMALL-TO-MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESSES

A definition for small-to-medium sized businesses varies across the world, due to the economy and the type of economic sector that the small-to-medium sized businesses operates in (Hall, 2003:173-174). Buculescu (2013:105) and Hall (2003:175) both define small-to-medium sized businesses, however, differ as one believes it to be a qualitative definition, while the other believes it to be a quantitative definition. Buculescu (2013:105) firmly states that it is impossible to have a universal quantitative definition for small-to-medium sized businesses, whereas Hall (2003:175) stated that, based on his research, he believes that there is a common quantitative definition for small-to-medium sized businesses. According to Underhill Corporate Solutions (2011:24-25) South African small-to-medium sized businesses are defined according to the number of employees employed by the business, their annual turnover, as well as their gross assets. This definition is outlined in Table 2.1.

1.6.2   DEFINITION OF HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is described as commercial service delivery in bars, hotels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, and other catering activities. Hospitality has a profound cultural significance across the world and indicates altruistic giving, welcoming of outsiders and a feeling of safety and security. (Lee-Ross & Lashley 2009:170-171). The term, as well as the concept of hospitality, can also be defined as offering and giving food and drinks and providing accommodation to individuals who are not the regular members of the household or place of stay (Lashley & Morrison, 2000:250). According to Hepple, Kipps and Thomson (1990:305) hospitality today, (modern view), recognized four characteristics of hospitality in its modern sense. Firstly, "it is conferred by a host on a guest who is away from home", secondly, "it is interactive, involving the coming together of a provider and receiver". Thirdly, "it is comprised of a blend of tangible and intangible factors, and lastly, "the host provides for the guest's security, psychological and physiological comfort".

1.6.3 DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) refers to social media as internet-based technological applications, that follow the principles of Web 2.0 and provides users with formation and exchange of content, while enabling interaction and collaboration between users. According to The Republic of Canada (2010:1), social media is defined as a wide range of applications that allows users to partake in online exchanges, participate in online communities, or upload user-generated content. Furthermore, Neti (2011:2) stated that, in a more simplified definition, social media can be seen as communication/publication platforms, generated and sustained by interpersonal collaboration of individuals through a specific channel.

1.6.4 DEFINITION OF SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Neti (2011:3) stated that social media marketing refers to the application of marketing philosophies, tools and methods to social media platforms to distinguish and place the brand as superior to their competitors. Social media marketing can also be referred to as "a broad category of advertising, spending, including advertising using social networks, virtual worlds, user generated product reviews, blogger endorsement, games, and consumer generated advertising" (Tuten, 2008:9).

1.7   STRCUTURE OF THE STUDY

This section of the study will provide what each chapter will entail throughout the study. The structure of the research will be as follows:

Chapter One is the introductory chapter of this study. It consisted of a detailed introduction and background of the topic that is under investigation, followed by the problem statement and research objectives. The second and primary research methodology was introduced in this chapter. The scope and demarcation of the study, contributions to the study, as well as definitions of the key concepts was also highlighted in this chapter. It will then finish with an overview of the content to follow.

Chapter Two will provide a literature review which will include an overview of small-to-medium sized businesses, such as the characteristics, size and nature thereof. It will

also include the nature of the hospitality industry and reasons as to why there is a decline in NMB. Furthermore, it will include the influence social media has on small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry, the different types of social media platforms and the influence that specific variables in the TAM and TPB model has on individuals intention to use social media in the hospitality industry.

Chapter Three will discuss the research methodology that will be implemented in this study. It will elaborate on the research design, data collection and data analysis.

Chapter Four will provide the relevant empirical findings of the study and an overview of the sample, by discussing the description thereof.

Chapter Five will provide a concise summary of the research objectives, the research methodology and the main literature and empirical findings thereof. This chapter will then provide a conclusion, followed by appropriate recommendations and limitations of the research. Lastly, it will discuss the researcher's self-reflection from what they learnt from the study itself.

1.8   STUDY TIME FRAME

A detailed proposed time schedule for the completion of this study is as follows:

Activities	Dates undertaken
Theoretical investigation	February – May 2018
Writing up of theory chapters	April – May 2018
Finalising the methodology	May 2018
Finalising the data base	May 2018
Empirical investigation	June – July 2018
Data analysis	August 2018
Writing up the final report	September – October 2018
Proposed completion	26 October 2018

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY, SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter One an introduction of the study and problem statement were provided, along with the primary and secondary objectives of this study. Furthermore, the methodological objectives, research questions and research hypothesis of this study were provided. An outline of the scope and demarcation of this study were presented, followed by the contribution to and key concepts of the study. Lastly, the structure and time frame of the study was estimated and stated.

In Chapter Two an overview of the tourism sector in South Africa and the relationship between the tourism sector and the hospitality industry will be discussed. The overall nature of the hospitality industry in terms of South Africa, and specifically, Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) will also be provided. Moreover, small-to-medium sized businesses and their importance in the South African economy will be discussed. Social media will then be elaborated on, followed by social media marketing, social media marketing strategies and various types of social media. Using social media to promote small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses will then be discussed. Furthermore, an overview of theoretical intention and adoption models will be provided.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF THE TOURISM SECTOR

This section to follow provides a theoretical overview of the tourism sector with particular focus on discussing the relationship between the tourism sector and the hospitality industry.

2.2.1 DEFINITION OF TOURISM

According to Scorțe, Dragolea and Paschia (2013:703), tourism is the act and desire of travelling for an individual's own liking. Tourism is seen as a leisure activity that

consists of physically travelling or residing far away from an individual's place of residence, either for enjoyment, rest or elevating their experiences and culture. This is done by exploring new aspects of human activity and unidentified landscapes in unfamiliar places. Tourism can also be seen as "the business of attracting visitors and catering to their needs and expectations". (Verma, 2018:1).

2.2.2 TOURISM SECTOR IN SOUTH AFRICA

Tourism is becoming increasingly important and is seen as a common theme amongst developing countries. Many countries regard tourism as a "passport to development". South Africa is a developing country, therefore tourism is seen as a key promotional strategy that can lead to economic upliftment, development of communities and decrease poverty levels. It has also emerged as an option to significantly change and develop South Africa. (Binns & Nelt, 2002:235). South Africa is seen to have major tourism assets and attractions which tourists want to experience. These include South Africa's impressive beaches, whale watching, festivals, botanical gardens, as well as the diverse cultures. (Binns & Nelt, 2002:242). When a country hosts activities such as festivals, they become more known to the wider public of tourists and become an option as a holiday destination or a country to invest in. South Africa saw this when they hosted the 2010 soccer World Cup. (Boyle, 1997:1975).

In South Africa the government is looking to capitalise on the country's natural and cultural resources, to bring in more tourism which has the potential to improve the quality of life of all South Africans. It was found that after the first year of Apartheid coming to an end in 1995, an estimated amount of 4.5 million new tourists entered the country and in 2002 that amount nearly double. (Gibson, Trail, Steyn & Tyson, 2011:123). In April 2017, South Africa had a total of 3 841 519 people travelling in and out of the country. Of this, 72.2 percent (2 773 454) were foreign travellers. However, in 2018 there was a 0.6 percent decline in the amount of travellers. In April 2018, it was revealed that 3 582 842 people travelled in and out of the country. According to the above mentioned statistics, it is evident that fewer people are entering South Africa; therefore the South African Tourism Sector could be experiencing an economic loss. (Statistics South Africa, 2018:9).

According to Ma (2009:13) the tourism industry is made up of multiple components, which include hotels and accommodation, transportation, entertainment services, information services, government agencies, attraction services, and education institutions. The hospitality industry is a component part of the tourism industry, together with other relevant activities. The two areas are independent, but the existence of a common ground is accepted. (Scorțe, *et al.,* 2013:705).

2.3   THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

This section discusses the nature of the hospitality industry and discusses the hospitality industry, specifically, within Nelson Mandela Bay.

2.3.1   NATURE OF THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Hospitality is described as commercial service delivery in bars, hotels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, and other catering activities. Hospitality has a profound cultural significance across the world and indicates altruistic giving, welcoming of outsiders and a feeling of safety and security. (Lee-Ross & Lashley 2009:170-171). The term, as well as the concept of hospitality, can also be defined as offering and giving food and drinks and providing accommodation to individuals who are not the regular members of the household or place of residence (Lashley & Morrison, 2000:250).

Social scientists also specified that hospitality is used for considering societal interactions between host businesses and the guests who visit as tourists, foreign workers or migrants (Lee-Ross & Lashley, 2009:170). The hospitality sector can be defined as all commercial businesses where employers and employees unite for the purpose of creating any or all of a number of establishments in order to obtain financial reward. Some examples are hotels and guesthouses, restaurants and cafés, pubs, snack bars and taverns, coffee shops and tearooms, fast food outlets, industrial or commercial caterers, and function or contract caterers. (Lashley & Morrison, 2000:251). According to Hepple, et *al.* (1990:305) hospitality today (modern view) has four characteristics. Firstly, hospitality is put forward by a host to a guest who is away from home; secondly, hospitality is viewed as being very interactive, involving a provider and a receiver. Thirdly, hospitality involves a combination of tangible and

intangible factors, and lastly, the host is known to provide security, physiological and psychological comfort to the guests. (Hepple, *et al.*, 1990:305).

2.3.2 THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA AND NELSON MANDELA BAY

South Africa's tourism and hospitality industry is currently thriving and brings in millions of Rands to the country and its communities. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers (2017:11), the available 61 200 rooms in South Africa in 2016 accounted for R15 892 000 (12.2 percent of the South Africa's overall revenue), a 10.3 percent increase from the previous year. This increase could be contributed to the increased relaxation of visa requirements from the country on foreign tourists (especially tourists from China and India) and an increase in direct flights (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2017:1-4).

The hospitality industry in NMB consists of 15 000 beds including accommodation types ranging from hotels, guest houses and bed and breakfasts, to 4-star and 5-star luxury hotels (Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism, 2018:1). The NMB is a 1 959km^2 area, Category A municipality Metropolitan, and consists of various collaborative cities including Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Despatch, Motherwell, Bethelsdorp, Bloemendal, Claredon Marine, Blue Horizon Bay, and KwaNobuhle. The main source of economic stability for this municipality is found in the manufacturing, finance, transport, trade and community services sectors. Thus, suggesting that accommodation is not one of NMB's major economic contributors. (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 2017:2).

2.4   SMALL-TO-MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESSES

This section provides a definition of small-to-medium sized businesses and a discussion on the role of small-to-medium sized businesses in South Africa's economy is undertaken.

2.4.1 SMALL-TO-MEDIUM SIZED BUSINESSES

A definition for small-to-medium sized businesses varies across the world, due to the economy and the type of economic sector that the small-to-medium sized businesses

operates in (Hall, 2003:173-174). Buculescu (2013:105) and Hall (2003:175) both define small-to-medium sized businesses; however, they differ as one believes it to be a qualitative definition, while the other believes it to be a quantitative definition. According to Underhill Corporate Solutions (2011:24-25) South African small-to-medium sized businesses are defined according to the number of employees employed by the business, their annual turnover, as well as their gross assets.

Table 2.1:   Broad definition of small-to-medium sized businesses

Enterprise Size	Number of Employees	Annual Turnover (ZAR)	Gross Assets (Excluding Fixed Property)
Medium	Fewer than 100 to 200, depending on industry	Less than R4 million to R50 million depending on industry	Less than R2 million to R18 million industry dependant
Small	Fewer than 50	Less than R2 million to R25 million depending on industry	Less than R2 million to R4.5 million industry dependant
Very Small	Fewer than 10 to 20 depending on industry	Less than R200 000 to R500 000 depending on industry	Less than R150 000 to R500 000 industry dependant
Micro	Fewer than 5	Less than R150 000	Less than R100 000

[Source: Underhill Corporate Solutions (2011: 24-25)].

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, small-to-medium sized businesses are defined as employing fewer than 200 employees. As a result of this, businesses who meet this requirement will therefore be empirically accessed.

In numerous countries, small-to-medium sized businesses lead the number of firms and play a vital role in promoting and sustaining economic growth. Small-to-medium sized businesses contribute to a large percentage of the majority of the economy's gross domestic profit (GDP). (Asah, Fatoki & Rungani, 2015:310). According to Fosso-Wamba and Carter (2014:792), small-to-medium sized businesses can be seen as "the engines of the economies of many countries". Fiseha and Oyelana (2015:280) stated that, throughout the world, small-to-medium sized businesses play a vital part in countries' economies and can help address many challenges they face as well as contribute positively to the economic, political and socio-cultural environments of a country.

In terms of South Africa, Lekhanya (2015:412) agrees with Fiseha and Oyelana (2015:280) and also indicates that small-to-medium sized businesses have a significant role to play in the economy. Small-to-medium sized businesses can play a crucial role is rectifying the 26.7 percent unemployment rate that South Africa is currently facing, particularly for women, low skill workers and the youth (Fiseha & Oyelana, 2015:280). Rectifying the unemployment rate can be done by small-to-medium sized businesses promoting economic growth and employment creation (Lekhanya, 2015:413). Small-to-medium sized businesses can increase competitive forces in the South African economy, which influences the position of the business in their specific industry, through innovation stimulation. Furthermore, small-to-medium sized businesses can also address poverty and inequality issues, create innovation, generate income, and improve technological advancement. The aforementioned aspects can be achieved by small-to-medium sized businesses boosting their productivity levels, thus, increasing employment and competition, which can then revitalise communities and society as a whole. (Lekhanya, 2015:412).

Lekhanya (2015:412) agrees and highlights that small-to medium sized businesses are crucial for the establishment of South Africa's economy, more specifically for NMB. Consequently, owing to creating jobs and addressing concerning issues leading to an increase in tourists wanting to visit NMB (Lekhanya, 2015:412). Businesses within the hospitality industry are usually established by entrepreneurs who have a significant impact in modifying the supply of leisure, accommodation and recreational opportunities through their creation of small-to-medium sized businesses (Chang, 2011:467). Chang (2011:468) also stated that the establishment of small-to-medium sized businesses play a crucial role within the early stages of tourism development in rural and ethnic communities, where international investments are usually very unlikely because of their small size.

Small-to-medium sized businesses in NMB could be lacking funds, marketing their businesses unsuccessfully, and need assistance in the areas of marketing and increasing sales (National Small Business Chamber, 2016:2). Therefore, it is important to implement ways and make use of tools to ensure the growth and success of these small-to-medium sized businesses that will ultimately affect the country. With the attraction that social media has obtained since 2003 when it was first introduced, it could be a vital tool to be utilised by small-to-medium sized businesses. Social media

networking sites increase daily in terms of the number of users and could have a major effect on the economy of any country. More specifically, hospitality businesses could use social media as a means of reaching their consumers' needs with the aid of online interaction. (Matikiti, *et al.*, 2016:740).

2.5   SOCIAL MEDIA

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) refer to social media as internet-based technological applications that provides users with formation and exchange of content, while enabling interaction and collaboration between users. According to Republic of Canada (2010:1), social media is defined as a wide range of applications that allows users to partake in online exchanges, participate in online communities, or upload user-generated content. Furthermore, Neti (2011:2) stated that, in a more simplified definition, social media can be seen as communication platforms, generated and sustained by interpersonal collaboration of individuals through a specific channel. Social media is concerned with individuals participating, sharing, interacting, and collaborating using online technology (Boyd & Ellison, 2007:210).

The development of the World Wide Web formed the basis of a networked communication system using technology, known as hypertext, to connect directly to the Internet. This online service was altered from presenting selected channels of communication among individuals, to presenting more interactive platforms where users can share their activities and interests. This shift led to an increase in potential online communications which resulted in online technologies integrating into everyday life and individual's social practices. (Boyd & Ellison, 2007:210). However, originally, the platforms were only used for the exchange of creative ideas or communication amongst friends. Then the platforms were altered, when friends and families started uploading their pictures from their holiday experiences. This led to individuals becoming curious of what activities their friends and families were doing, which they could now see by the pictures that they had uploaded on their profile. (Van Dijck, 2013:6). Over the years MySpace, Facebook, Flckr, YouTube and Twitter developed, which allowed individuals to have a variety of online communication strategies that they could choose from (Van Dijck, 2013:7).

Today, social media is mainly about engaging with people on an ongoing basis and this can be done by ensuring that the content found on social media is recent, refreshed, and relevant (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:59). Businesses use social media platforms to market their business as it provides them with the opportunity to reach a large amount of stakeholders that they would not normally be able to reach (Derham, Cragg & Morrish. 2011: 8). Social media delivers substantial benefits when it is used to market a firm, and this is a method called social media marketing (Erdoğmuş & Cicek, 2012:1358; Neti, 2011:3). McCann and Barlow (2015:276) states that small-to-medium sized businesses can do specific things when implementing social media marketing efforts, if they are wanting to use social media platforms as a way to receive a positive return on investment.

2.5.1 SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Neti (2011:3) stated that social media marketing refers to the application of marketing philosophies, tools and methods to social media platforms to distinguish and place the brand as superior to their competitors. Social media marketing can also be referred to as "a broad category of advertising, spending, including advertising using social networks, virtual worlds, user generated product reviews, blogger endorsement, games, and consumer generated advertising" (Tuten, 2008:9).

Weinberg and Pehlivan (2011:280) stated that some social media platforms are better suited for certain marketing strategies for a specific industry, than others. Small-to-medium sized businesses are far less likely to use emerging technologies than larger businesses (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011:280). The use and adoption of social media by small-to-medium sized businesses can differ substantially from that of larger businesses, as small-to-medium sized businesses face bigger pressures to compete with the larger businesses. Small-to-medium sized businesses are under pressure to be more creative and responsive to local customers' needs and to do a better job in facilitating the consumer's needs. (He, *et al.*, 2014:230). According to Cragg and Mills (2011:697), small-to-medium sized businesses have limited resources and a smaller number of employees, which often contribute to why small-to-medium sized businesses are failing to make good use of information technology, or specifically, social media platforms. However, using social media platforms can deliver a substantial amount of benefits to a business (Neti, 2011:3).

The business should firstly generate ideas and develop a social media marketing strategy. This can be done by establishing how social media fits into the plan that the business desires to accomplish in that specific year (Neti, 2011:13). When establishing how social media fits into the business' plan, small-to-medium sized businesses will be required to determine the objectives they want to reach. Then further using the objectives decided upon to develop specific metrics that will be used to measure the impacts and benefits of social media marketing that the business will experience throughout the year (McCann & Barlow, 2015:276 & 284). The business can then select one or more social media platform(s) to direct their marketing attempts, by deciding which platform(s) will offer the business the best return on their investment. Furthermore, the small-to-medium sized businesses should set up and utilise social media marketing activities and social media tools that are in agreement with the businesses' other marketing actions. (McCann & Barlow, 2015:276).

The benefits and impacts of social media marketing strategies that small-to-medium sized businesses can experience, can be measured through analytical tools that the social media platforms can provide. The benefits include improved customer service, brand awareness, and promotion of products and services. It also reduces costs, increases sales and volume of traffic to websites, as well as builds more relationships and contacts. (McCann & Barlow, 2015:277). Small-to-medium sized businesses who have a difficult time locating their consumers, interacting with their targeted market, and appealing to a large geographical area, domestically and internationally. These benefits include: free exposure of the businesses brand; decrease in their marketing expenses; improved search rankings; brand awareness; brand loyalty; and lastly, extensive market and global reach. (Matikiti, *et al.*, 2016:744).

Social media being the most popular means of communication, social media marketing also provides the benefit of helping the small-to-medium sized businesses' marketing efforts to attain a broad reach (Aguilera, 2013:1). Social media allows small-to-medium sized businesses reach all their stakeholders they would otherwise not be able to reach (Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014:331). This strong relationship between a business and their stakeholders is vital, as it will enable the business to reach their objectives through their reputation and financial performance enhancement, which will provide longevity of the business (Bibri, 2008:14). Using social media to communicate to

stakeholders can also build customer loyalty, as they remain continuously informed about the business (Erdoğmuş & Cicek, 2012:1358). Therefore, small-to-medium sized businesses should use social media platforms in order to increase business. With all the benefits that it brings, hospitality businesses should specifically make use of it and implement it to receive feedback on their service they have offered, their consumers experiences, advertise their room prices and to use it to inform people about the existence of the hospitality business. (Erdoğmuş & Cicek, 2012:1358; Neti, 2011:2-3).

For these previously stated reasons, it is clear that social media marketing can be a solution to failed marketing efforts in small-to-medium sized businesses, particularly within the hospitality industry in NMB that are lacking funds and marketing assistance. The benefit of social media being a low cost, easy-to-use information technology, it can provide small-to-medium sized businesses with other benefits that they would not be experience using traditional marketing methods.

2.5.2 TYPES OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Small-to-medium sized businesses must first identify the objectives they want to achieve and then use those objectives as the foundation to determine which social media marketing platform will be best suited for the business (McCann & Barlow, 2015:276-280). The business must investigate which social media platform will offer the best return on their investment, subsequently, focussing their marketing efforts on that particular platform(s) (McCann & Barlow, 2015:279-284). Types of social media include: blogs, Wikis, social network sites, media sharing sites and virtual world content (Republic of Canada, 2012:1).

According to McCann and Barlow (2015:279), the most commonly used social media platforms are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and blogs. In South Africa specifically, the most commonly used social media platforms are Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn. Facebook sees adoption from 49 percent of the South African population, followed by YouTube with a close 47 percent, Whatsapp with 45 percent, and LinkedIn with just under 30 percent. (Querty, 2017:12). These statistics reveal that Facebook would be the most appropriate social media platform to engage with a business' target audience.

Social media engagement can be defined as the emotional and intuitive experiences that consumers undergo when using a specific social media platform at a specific moment (Voorveld, van Noort, Muntinga & bronner, 2018:40). Small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry need to know how consumers' engagement with different social media platforms drives their engagement with advertising methods that they could potentially then make use of. This would aid businesses to know how the consumers would perceive and evaluate their specific advertising. (Voorveld, *et al.*, 2018:38). In the section to follow, the various social media types most commonly used and accessed by consumers are presented.

2.5.2.1 Facebook

Facebook can broadly be defined as a general social networking site that allows for communication and interaction between users, using more elaborate messages and visual images (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61). Above all other social media platforms, Facebook is considered to be the most important and most used (Bogaert, Ballings & Van den Poel, 2016:506). This free platform provides high interaction and communication between users, allowing users to leave likes and comments on status updates, photos and videos (de Vries, Gensler & Leeflang, 2012:83).

Facebook falls into the relationship category of social media characteristics, which consists mostly of customised messages (Zhu & Chen, 2015:3). It can also be utilised by users as a form of revenge or a venting platform, where customers create pages and posts to praise or criticize companies and illustrate them either in a good or bad light to their friends and families.

2.5.2.2 Twitter

Twitter can broadly be defined as a free micro-blogging application service which allows users to share brief tweets, including hashtags (#), @mentions, photos and videos (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61; Help.twitter.com, 2018). Twitter falls into the self-media category of social media characteristics, which allows users to manage their own social media communication channels. (Zhu & Chen, 2015:4).

Along with Facebook, Twitter also lends itself to being a platform for revenge or venting, allowing users to comment on the actions of companies and social influencers publicly (Obeidat, Xiao, Lyer & Nicholson, 2017:501). Companies can use this opportunity to invoke positive emotions in followers by getting influential accounts to support certain companies or events (Voorveld, *et al.*, 2018:40).

2.5.2.3 LinkedIn

LinkedIn can broadly be defined as a business- and employment-oriented social networking service (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61). LinkedIn is a free service, but a paid upgrade of accounts allows for various additional features, allowing user-specific account types such as business, business plus and business pro (Tillman, 2014).

Just like Facebook, LinkedIn also falls into the relationship category of social media characteristics, which consists mostly of customised messages. (Zhu & Chen, 2015:3). In a study conducted by Voorveld, *et al.* (2018:45), users perceived LinkedIn to be an interactive platform ensuring quick and informed updates and responses when used in communication between employees and employers. In this same study, users believed LinkedIn to be mostly associated with positive emotions relating to content and information, compared to Twitter and Facebook which were found to have negative emotions relating to content (Voorveld, *et al.*, 2018:46).

2.5.2.4 YouTube

YouTube can broadly be defined as a free online video hosting service (Wu, 2016:2). YouTube falls into the creative outlet category of social media characteristics; this is a content based platform allowing users to share interesting and creative content. (Zhu & Chen, 2015:4). YouTube, a platform in the entertainment dimension of social media, was found to make users more relaxed and happy as it gave them a moment to themselves. Companies can use YouTube to post adverts and announcements relating to certain video content in order to ensure the relevant content reaches the appropriate users. (Voorveld,*et al.*, 2018:45).

2.5.2.5 Blogs

Blogs, short for 'Web Blogs' is an online journal offering multimedia resource accessible over the Web. This Web based information sharing technology contains dated entries about particular topics. (Boulos, Maramba & Wheeler, 2006:1). Blogs can be classified as online diaries, personal chronicles, travel blogs and reports containing graphics, images, videos and music files. These blogs can be labelled as personal or private content, and are usually centred around specific topics providing platforms for commentary and feedback on these topics. (Waters, 2018).

2.5.2.6 WhatsApp

WhatsApp is defined as an instant messaging Smartphone application. This instant messenger application is a day-to-day method for individuals via text-based communicate. (O'Hara, Massimi, Harper, Rubens & Morris, 2014:1). After being purchased by Facebook, the platform dropped their annual $0.99 subscription fee and became completely free to users. WhatsApp allows companies to send broadcast messages to communicate relevant content and adverts to large groups of appropriate current and potential customers at little too no costs. (Griffin, 2016).

2.5.2.7 Wikis

Wikis are defined as public websites revolving around certain topics and interests that can be edited and amended by anyone who has general access to these Wikis (which is the main difference between Wikis and Blogs). A good example of a popular wikis is Wikipedia free online encyclopedia. (Boulos, *et al*, 2006:1). The general belief around the editing of content by general public is that the collaborative authorship and power of many resources makes for a greater sum of quality and quantity (Waters, 2018).

Stokes and Lomax (2002:350) stated that the most important sources of gaining new customers for small-to-medium sized businesses, is through recommendations from existing customers. The biggest challenge for small-to-medium sized businesses is to reach their customers with the limited resources that they have. As a result of small-to-medium sized businesses' resource limitations, the use of social media can be an

appealing tool to enhance customer outreach at little-to-no cost. (He, *et al.* (2015:150). Small-to-medium sized businesses should use social media platforms because it is a low-cost and easily accessible marketing tool to achieve brand awareness, as it entices communications with consumers (Neti, 2011:2-3). Therefore, social media marketing can be a solution to improve any small-to-medium sized business, specifically the decline within the hospitality industry in NMB.

Social media platforms have been widely adopted by many industries as well as many other people in many different countries (He, *et al.*, 2015:150). There are a number of theoretical models provided in literature from numerous disciplines that can be applied the intention to adopt a new technology.

2.6   INTENTION-BASED MODELS

Intention becomes the fundamental part towards explaining behaviour. Intention indicates the effort that a person will make to carry out a specific behaviour. It captures the motivational factors that influence a person's behaviour. (Liñána, 2004:11). These models present theoretical frameworks that distinctively expose the nature of processes underlying intentional behaviour. These models can therefore assist in identifying how specific variables can influence the usage of social media platforms. (Krueger, Reilly & Carsrud, 2000:411).

2.6.1 THEORY OF REASONED ACTION (TRA)

The TRA was developed by Fishbein for the purpose of making distingushens between an attitude towards an object and an attitude towards a behaviour in terms of an object (Glanz, Rimer & Viswanath, 2008:68). Ajzen and Fishbein (1980:453) evidently defined fundamental beliefs (behavioural and normative), intentions, and behaviour. They have revealed that it is significantly important to have a high degree of correspondence between the measure of attitude, norms, perceived control, intention, and behaviour. A change in any of these aspects will result in a different behaviour being explained (Glanz, *et al.*, 2008:69).

The TRA constructs was developed from attitude measurement theories embedded in the idea that an attitude (toward an object or an action) is determined by expectations

or beliefs about the attributes (of the object or action) and evaluations of those attributes. The TRA was developed to better understand the relationships between attitudes, intentions, and behaviours. (Glanz, *et al.*, 2008:70). The TRA asserts that the most important determinant of behaviour is the behavioural intention. Direct determinants of individuals' behavioural intention are their attitudes towards performing the behaviour and their subjective norms associated with the behaviour. (Glanz, *et al.,* 2008:71). The success of this theory in explaining behaviour depends on the level to which the behaviour is under volitional control. Literature studies show that it is not clear if the TRA components are sufficient to predict behaviours in which volitional control is reduced. (Glanz, *et al.,* 2008:71-72). Ajzen and Driver (1991:185) stated that perceived behavioural control variable should be accounted for factors that individuals have no control over, which may affect their intentions and behaviours. Due to the lack of the perceived behavioural control variable in the TRA, a new theory was formed which was seen as an extension of the TRA. This theory is called the Theory of Planned Behaviour. (Glanz, *et al.*, 2008:72-73).

Figure 2.1: Theory of Reasoned Action
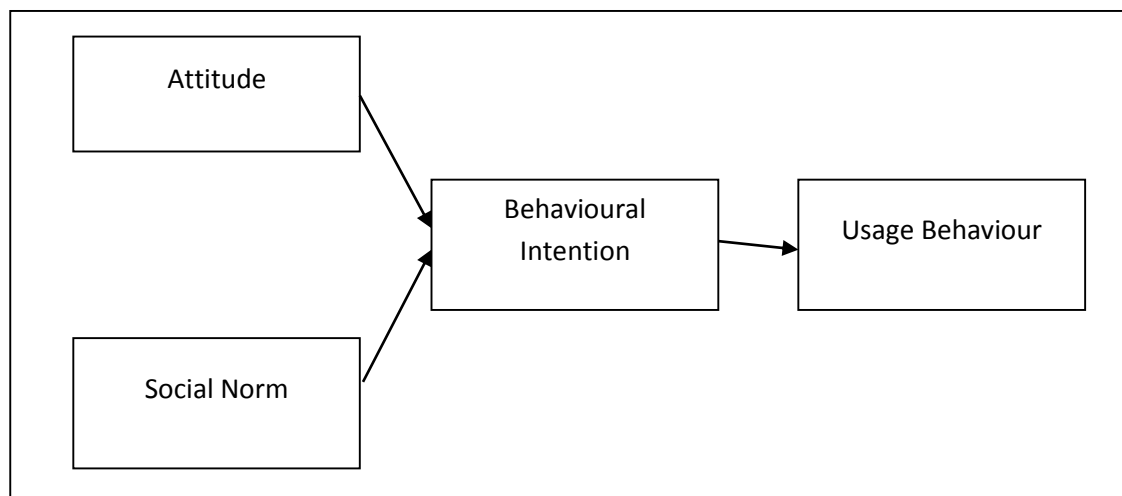
[Source: Taylor & Todd (1995:146)]

2.6.2 THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR (TPB)

The TPB as mentioned above is an extension of the TRA. The model was further extended to include the variable of perceived behavioural control that should be taken into account and this is the variable that the TRA lacks. (Glanz, *et al.*, 2008:68) A brief insight into the TPB model will be discussed and how this added variable is an important aspect in terms of the model.

The Theory of Planned behaviour (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1985:15) proposes that perceived behaviour control is appointed to observe the effects of attitudes and subjective norms on behaviour. Many hospitality and marketing researchers agree that increasing customers' positive pre- and post-purchasing decisions are the key to firms' long-term success. (Ngai, Tao & Moon, 2015:34).

Understanding the social media marketing decision-making process is essential in developing sufficient marketing and service strategies that persuade positive purchasing decisions within the hospitality industry. While customers' decision-making process is very complex, it is believed that their decision development can be evidence in comprehending this process. (Han, Hsu & Sheu, 2010:325). Considering factors affecting customers' decisions may deliver important perceptions regarding their purchasing decision-making process (Lam & Hsu, 2006:589). The TPB identifies three aspects of intention. Two imitate the perceived desirability of performing the behaviour. They are the customer's personal attitude toward outcomes of the behaviour and perceived social norms. The third aspect, perceived behavioural control, emulates perceptions that the behaviour is individually controllable. Perceived behavioral control reveals the perceived feasibility of performing the behaviour and is linked to perceptions of situational competence. (Krueger, *et al.*, 2000:416).

Figure 2.2: The Theory of Planned Behaviour
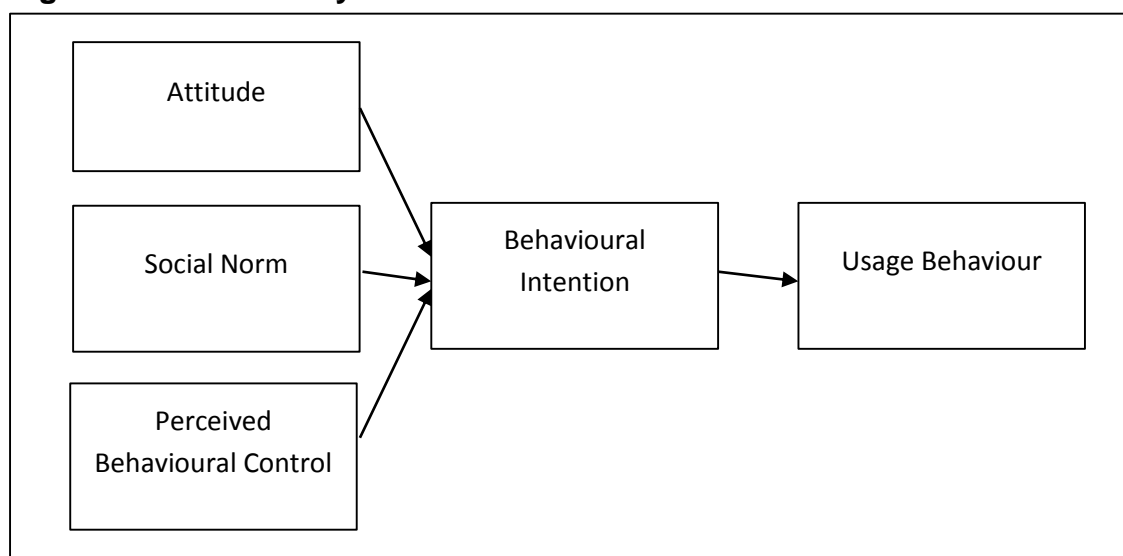
[Source Taylor & Todd (1995:146)]

Throughout the hospitality industry, little is known about the features regarding customer engagement behaviour in social media usage (Bitter & Grabner-Kräuter, 2014:197). The benefits from social media usage within the hospitality industry, has been found to enhance user's perceptions of company attractiveness and thus motivates customer's intention to purchase (Kang, Tang & Fiore, 2014). It was also found that not only consumer-brand relationship, but also the consumer's interaction with society, that plays a crucial role within customer engagement with brands and their products (Bitter & Grabner-Kräuter, 2014:199).

As previously mentioned, the TPB model illustrates relationships between attitude, social norm, and perceived behavioural control towards the intention to purchase a product or service (Hsu & Chiu, 2004:369). These variables play a vital part in the usage of social media by small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses.

The first variable, attitude, pertains to consumers' viewpoint and position towards a specific behaviour or action and reflects an individual's evaluation (positive or negative) about purchasing the company's product or service (Ajzen, 2002:665). The 'brand engagement in self-concept', developed by Escalas and Bettman (2005:378), suggests that consumers would be more motivated to purchase and use a specific brand to express their self-concepts if they spend enough time learning about the brand, thus creating a positive attitude towards purchasing the product or service (Goldsmith, Flynn & Clark, 2011:278).

The second variable, Social norms, refers to the influence of other people on the users' behavioural actions. It revolves around the opinion of and pressure from friends and family and the actions of the general public the individuals associate with. (Ajzen, 2002:666). As social media is one of the primary methods of communication, individuals will communicate their opinions and perceptions about products and services they like and dislike to friends and family over the same platform these small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses are advertising themselves. The knowledge consumers gain from these opinions from friends and family will thus positively or negatively affect the consumer's intentions to purchase the company's product or service. (Bitter & Grabner-Kräuter, 2014:200).

The last variable of the TPB model, perceived bahavioural control, is concerned with perceived control over the performance of a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 2002:666). Intention to purchase a product or service, advertised via social media by these small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses, is subject to consumer's perceived ability to interact and communicate over these social media platforms (Bitter & Grabner-Kräuter, 2014:201).

In addition to intention based models, theory on adoption also provides an explanation as to why small-to-medium sized businesses would make use of social media platforms.

2.7   ADOPTION-BASED MODELS

Oliveira and Martins (2011:110) suggested the following theories regarding technology adoption: The Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT), Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

2.7.1 THE UNIFIED THEORY OF ACCEPTANCE AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The UTAUT model was proposed by Venkatesh, Morris, Davis, and Davis (2003:425) after identifying and evaluating 32 constructs from eight alternative theoretical models, and then developing an integrate established technology theory. This theory was developed to be a better way of understanding user intention with regards to adopting new technologies. The four predictors of user's behaviour intention (which then influence usage) according to the UTAUT are effort expectancy, performance expectancy, facilitating conditions and social influence. (Lai, 2017:31). Wang, Chen & Chen (2017:564) also suggested that the gender, age, willingness and experiences of users play moderating roles when using this model.

Figure 2.3: The unified theory of acceptance and use of technology
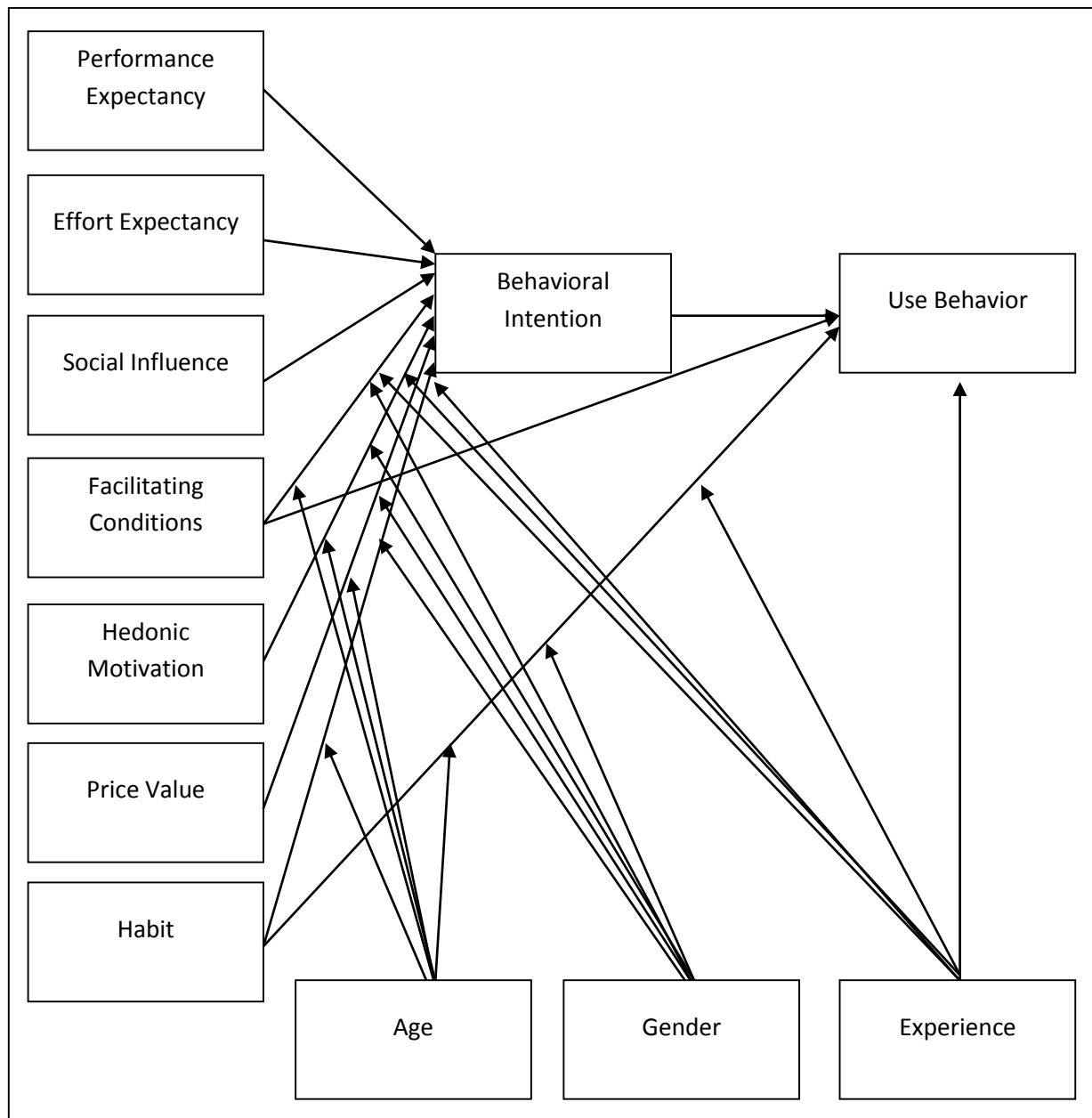
[Source: Venkatesh, Thong & Xu (2012:160)].

2.7.2 TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTANCE MODEL (TAM)

Information technology adoption and the use thereof, in the work place remains a concern within information research and practice. Regardless of there being a remarkable advancement within hardware and software capabilities, the issue of underutilised systems is prevailing. Low usage of technological systems has been recognised as a major issue underlying the organisations investment in information technology. (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000:186). TAM entails, enhances and explains how users come to accept technology. The model proposes that when users are presented

with new technology, two factors will be used, which are the perceived usefulness and usage intentions in terms of social influence and cognitive instrumental processes.

The TAM model explains that an individual's behavioural intention to use a system, which in this study refers to social media platforms, is determined by two beliefs. The first belief being perceived usefulness, defined as the degree to which an individual believes that using the social media platform will enhance their job performance. The second belief being the perceived ease of use, defined as the degree to which an individual believes that utilising the social media platform will be effortless. (Michaelidou, Siamagka & Christodoulides, 2011:1153). Over the last 10 years, TAM has become well-established as a vigorous and powerful model for forecasting user acceptance. Subsequently, perceived usefulness is an important driver of usage and purchase intentions. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the factors of this model and how their influence fluctuates over time with increasing experience using the social media platforms. Hence, perceived ease of use is linked to intention, directly and indirectly, via its impact on perceived usefulness. (Davis, 1989:319).

Figure 2.4: The Technology Acceptance Model
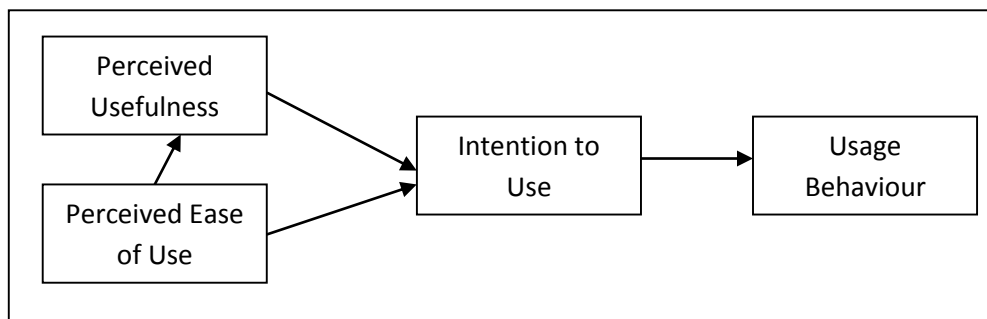
[Source: Venkatesh & Davis (2000:188)].

According to Carlson and Christopher (2015:80), online social media networks are one of the most favourable tools used in advertising. Social media platforms are seen as an effective advertising route that competes well with traditional advertising methods (Nelson-Field, Riebe & Sharp, 2013:186). Sponsored advertising on social network sites can be customized based on the individual users search history, making it more reliable at targeting businesses' consumers that are relevant to the advertisement (Barreto, 2013:119). Sponsored advertising could present an advertisement on a user's news feed, by uploading the individuals experience with the service or product, which could in turn enable other users to be more involved in certain brand

experiences (Cox, 2011) Social media can play a vital role in influencing consumers to state their opinions and experiences, referrals and information about hospitality businesses if it is viewed as more useful and easy to use to consumers (Rese, *et al.*, 2014:869).

The significance in making use of this TAM model is that it could help individuals understand and create the circumstances under which social media platforms will be embraced by individuals in small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000:186). The TAM model proposes that the properties of external variables on the intention to use social media platforms are facilitated by perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Furthermore, perceived ease of use is seen to influence perceived usefulness of the social media platform, ultimately, meaning that the easier the social media platform is to use, the more useful it can be. (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000:187). Davis (1989:319), also states that the TAM was developed to include factors that could explain an individual's decision making process to accept new information technologies in a business setting. The model includes external variables that will influence the perceived use and usefulness of technology, the relationship between the two and how attitude will have an impact on it (Lin & Kim, 2016:710).

External variables from the TAM include demographics and social media-use experience, perceived risk and trust associated with the social media use. These variables can also influence individuals' beliefs when wanting to adopt a new technology (Lin & Kim, 2016:710). Lin and Kim (2016:712) reveal that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use positively relate to customers decisions on whether to adopt the social media site or not. The feeling of customers not being able to touch, taste or feel the hospitality businesses' service provided could however create a lack of trust. Privacy risk was also strongly found to be related to ease of use of social media sites, perceived usefulness of it and the actual adoption of social media sites. Privacy concerns have a negative impact on consumers' perceived usefulness and ease of use of social media advertising, as well as attitude and intentions to purchase the service or product advertised on social media. (Lin & Kim, 2016:712). Davis (1989:320), however, states that the perceived ease of use of social media starts to decrease once the customer or business becomes familiar in using it. In terms of perceived usefulness of social media advertising, it is expected that it will become stronger and have a lasting positive effect and influence on the business and

consumers' attitudes towards social media sites. Perceived usefulness can therefore stabilize or strengthen the consumer's intention to purchase based on the experience and content they receive from the social media sites. Davis (1989:320).

The TAM can explain consumers' active responses to social media when it is used as an advertising technique for any business, specifically for small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses. It conceptualizes whether perceived attributes of social media would influence consumer's attitudes and their intentions to purchase the service or product, and whether external variables would impact the perceived attributes of social media used by small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses. (Lin & Kim, 2016:713). Therefore, the usage of social media can be influenced by the specific variables in the TAM and TPB model, identifying individuals' intentions to purchase, their behaviour and how easy the social media platform is to use (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000:186; Ngai, *et al.*, 2015:34). Thus, indicating that these models are ideal for usage in hospitality businesses.

2.8   CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter started off by defining the tourism sector and the hospitality industry, specifically in South Africa and NMB. It then followed on with a discussion about Small-to-medium sized businesses and indicated what, for this specific study, it will be classified as. The chapter continued by with an overview of social media. This overview contained a broad definition of both social media and social media marketing, explaining the difference between these two concepts. The chapter then elaborated on the different types of social media platforms which included an insight of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs, WhatsApp and wikis. The various intention-based and adoption-based models were then discussed and analysed.

It was found that the hospitality sector plays a crucial part throughout the entire tourism sector and that NMBs small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses consists of 15 000 beds overall. The role of these small-to-medium sized businesses, and their importance within the hospitality industry was found to be crucial for establishing the South African economy and more specifically, for NMB. It also revealed that implementing the right social media platform as a way of advertising or maintaining relationships with the businesses customers is vitally important. The TAM and TPB

models are most relevant in trying to establish the customer's intention to use social media when looking for accommodation and helping business owners understand their behaviours.

The following chapter Three will discuss an overview of the study's research design, data collection and data analysis. This will include the secondary data collection and primary data collection, in terms of the population, sample frame, sampling techniques and research instrument. It will then conclude with a chapter summary.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two an overview of the tourism sector in South Africa and the relationship between the tourism sector and the hospitality industry was discussed. The overall nature of the hospitality industry in South Africa and Nelson Mandela Bay were provided. Moreover, small-to-medium sized businesses and their importance in the economy was discussed. Social media was then elaborated on, which included an outline of social media marketing, social media marketing strategies and various types of social media platforms. The use of social media to promote small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses was discussed as well as an overview of theoretical intention and adoption models were provided.

Chapter Three will provide more detail regarding the research design and methodology. Chapter Three will begin with an overview of the research paradigm and research approach, followed by the research method used to collect the data in this study. More specifically, secondary data collection and primary data collection will be discussed in terms of the population and sample of this study, as well as the sampling techniques and the development of the research instrument that were used. Furthermore, the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument and ethical considerations are discussed. The data analysis of this study is provided, elaborating on descriptive and inferential statistics that was undertaken. The last section in Chapter Three will then conclude with a chapter summary.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

In this section the research paradigm and research approach adopted are discussed and elaborated on. Furthermore, the research method is provided.

3.2.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A paradigm is considered to be an ''accepted model or pattern'' that is an organising structure with a philosophical arrangement relating to social structures. Paradigms relate to research and it directs efforts to emphasize and articulate theories that have been established. (Feilzer, 2010:7). There are two main types of research paradigms in social sciences are positivistic and interpretivistic research paradigms (Struwig & Stead, 2013:6). The first paradigm is the positivistic paradigm, which is objective and observable within a natural science context (du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014:34-35). According to Creswell (2009:7), the positivistic paradigm challenges the generally accepted idea of the absolute truth of knowledge. The positivistic paradigm evaluates the causes that could possibly influence the outcomes of the data, and the research itself. Making use of the positivistic paradigm means that the researcher needs to collect data that supports or disproves theory and then make alterations before more tests are conducted. (Creswell, 2009:7).

The second research paradigm is the interpretivistic paradigm (Struwig & Stead, 2013:6). The interpretivistic paradigm is related to a social reality that is subjective and socially constructed, where there are multiple realities and the knowledge is extracted from evidence from participants (Collis & Hussey, 2014:46). The interpretivistic paradigm acknowledges that 'reality' is conceptualised as individual's experiences that occur within a social, cultural, historical or personal context. Therefore, the interpretivistic paradigm declares that there can be multiple perspectives on reality, rather than one perspective, as suggested by the positivistic paradigm. (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011:15).

In this study a positivistic paradigm was adopted. This is because the researchers collected data to find out whether or not the factors of social media usage influences small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry in NMB.

3.2.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

There are two types of research approaches that a study can follow, depending on the type of the research. The first approach that can be used is a quantitative research approach. Quantitative research arises from a positivistic research paradigm, which

measures, observes, or counts the objective reality of the world. (Seers & Crichton, 2001:487). Quantitative research is when the data is collected and expressed in numbers, the sample size is large, and lastly, the procedure that is followed by the researchers to collect the data is fairly structured (Struwig & Stead, 2013:6). Quantitative research can be conducted in two ways. Firstly, through observational research, that illustrates what is occurring with no attempt to change the outcome. Secondly, through experimental research which attempts to change the outcomes which are made, and then the effectiveness of these changes are considered. (Seers & Crichton, 2001:487). According to Bryman (2012:88), researchers who make use of quantitative research utilise it to seek out the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

The second research approach that can be used is the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is used when there is a need to develop an initial understanding of the field of research, which makes use of an interpretivistic research paradigm and non-numerical data. Qualitative research relates to the characteristics of a language, or research concerned with the study of irregularities. (Struwig & Stead, 2013:10). Qualitative research characteristics include the researcher's and the participant's perspectives; the context in which the research is conducted; the time, which is highly important to avoid any repetition; and past events which could immensely influence individuals thoughts and behaviours (Grbich, 2013:4-5). According to Anderson (2006:376), researchers who make use of the qualitative research approach, employ this approach as it provides valid data that attaches a more in-depth and rich understanding to the state of affairs that is under investigation. Hence, quantitative and qualitative research is very different and is illustrated further in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1:   Differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches

Quantitative approach	Qualitative approach
'Top-down' or confirmatory. Hypotheses and theories are tested with data.	'Bottom-up' or exploratory. New hypotheses and grounded theories are generated from data collected during fieldwork.
Behaviour of humans are seen as predictable and regular.	Behaviour of humans are seen as dynamic, fluid, situational and personal.
Objective (observers agree on what is observed).	Subjective.
Specific variables analysed.	The whole is analysed.
Statistical reporting (with correlations, means, statistical significance of the findings)	Narrative reporting (with contextual description and direct quotations from participants).

[Source: Johnson and Christensen (2008:34)].

For this study, the quantitative research approach was adopted because the data collected was to be expressed in numbers, and the procedure that was to be followed by the researchers to collect the data was fairly structured. Furthermore, this research approach was used to analyse specific variables. (Tuli, 2010:102). The quantitative data in this study was gathered by means of a survey.

3.2.3 RESEARCH METHOD

A research method is an attempt to construct an alternative framework that accommodates the diverse nature of the study being researched (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:26-28). Fowler (2014:4) states that there are a number of research methods that researches could make use of, one being a survey. Surveys can be defined as asking a sample group of people a collection of relevant questions used to obtain answers to describe specific population (Fowler, 2014:5). Moerdyk (2015:333) also defines a survey as the act of obtaining information about the actions, characteristics, or opinions of a population. The type of questions the researcher asks and the procedures that were used to gather the answers could all possibly affect how successful the survey is likely to be. (Fowler, 2014:5).

The use of surveys is popular within social sciences, being mainly associated with deductive research approaches. (Rahi, 2017:406). McIntyre (2005:120) explains that the use of survey's have great benefits, one such benefit is that the researchers using them are able to gather information about variables that cannot be observed directly,

like the attitudes of the population. Using a survey provides a quantitative description of trends, attitudes and opinions of a group or population by analysing the sample of that population (Creswell 2009:145).

According to Babbie (2013:230), a survey can make use of a questionnaire to gather data from respondents. A questionnaire is an instrument or tool that can be used as a method of evaluation which could contain written questions used to gather information from a specific sample for a purpose (Moerdyk, 2015:333). Questionnaires can be structured or unstructured. Structured questionnaires consist of closed-ended questions, whereas unstructured questionnaires consist of open-ended questions. (Struwig & Stead, 2013:94). For the purpose of this study, a survey which made use of a structured questionnaire was utilised to extract information from a representative sample of 90 respondents. These questionnaires were distributed to small-to-medium size businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB.

3.3   DATA COLLECTION

The following section provides an overview of the secondary and primary data collection methods used in this study. This will include the population under investigation and the sample used in this study. In addition, the sampling techniques, as well as the research instrument used in the study are elaborated on.

3.3.1 SECONDARY DATA COLLECTION

Secondary data refers to making use of existing data to investigate new hypotheses or respond to new research questions. Using secondary data usually takes less time and resources, and allows access to large data sets. (Dunn, Arslanian-Engoren, DeKoekkoek, Jadack & Scott, 2015:1295). A comprehensive literature review was conducted, in order to identify factors that could possibly influence the usage of social media for this study, which was then used to undertake a detailed theoretical overview of the usage of social media in small-to-medium size businesses within the hospitality industry. The proposed hypothesised model presented in Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.4 is derived from and based on analysis of relevant secondary sources. Secondary data, for this study, was collected from the library database of Nelson Mandela University, Google Scholar, Emerald Insight, and EBSCOhost.

3.3.2 PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

Primary data can be seen as information that is new and that has been obtained from present sources. An example of present sources would be information collected from completed questionnaires. (Struwig & Stead, 2013:269). Primary data was collected after selecting an appropriate population and sampling technique as well as developing a suitable measuring instrument. Each of the aforementioned is described in the sections that follow.

3.3.2.1 Population and sample

According to Moerdyk (2015:332), a population consists of all objects and people that should be considered when undertaking a specific study. Babbie (2013:134) also suggests that the population is a group or collection of people that researchers would like to investigate. For the purpose of this study, the population comprised of all businesses that operate within the hospitality industry.

Moerdyk (2015:332) states that a sample can be labelled as a small number of objects or people of the whole population, of those objects or people who are chosen to represent the entire study. McIntyre (2005:95) also describes a sample to be a subsection of a population. The sample that was considered when undertaking this specific study was all small-to-medium sized businesses in NMB in the hospitality industry. Small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses include guest houses, bed and breakfasts and hotels that employ fewer than 200 employees (Underhill Corporate Solutions, 2011: 24-25).

The sample size needs to be considered carefully, as statistical techniques used in the study or research can be affected (Rahi, 2017:404). According to Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010:676), if there are six items, then there are 15 unique variances. (Hair *et al.*, 2010:676). Hair, *et al.* (2010:676) states that at least three items per construct is recommended for statistical evaluation. Hair, *et al.* (2010:102) also identifies a general rule that the amount of variables to be analysed needs to have at least five times as many observations. Therefore, 90 [(6 constructs × 5 observations) × 3 items] owners/managers (respondents) of small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB was the sample size for this study.

3.3.2.2 Sampling techniques

The two main sampling techniques to collect data are probability and non-probability sampling (Lombaard, van der Merwe, Kele, & Mouton, 2012:10). The decision to choose either a probability or non-probability sampling method depends on the objective of the study (Latham, 2007:3).

Probability sampling is used when the probability of the items being chosen to make up a sample is known (Lombaard, *et al.,* 2012:10). Probability sampling is seen as being better than non-probability sampling, as the researcher has the ability to generalise with regards to the data that will be collected (Latham, 2007:3). This type of sampling can be categorised as random, systematic, or stratified sampling (Struwig & Stead, 2013:118-120). Random sampling allows for every person in the population the same possibility of being selected (Latham, 2007:5). Lombaard, *et al.* (2012:10) also states that random probability sampling is when the researcher recognises all the respondents within the population and gives each one an equal chance of being part of the sample.

Systematic sampling will stipulates a representative sample, in the case where the sampling frame does not incorporate some sort of bias (McIntyre, 2005:104). The problem with systematic sampling is that a bias sample can occur. This bias occurs when the list of respondents are set up in a continuous pattern which intersects with the sample interval. (Babbie, 2013:136). According to Lombaard, *et al.* (2012:12), stratified sampling takes place when a subsection of the entire population, that has corresponding characteristics as the population, is derived from secondary research regarding the population to then make up a sample.

Non-probability sampling is another sampling technique that can be utilised. Non-probability sampling is a method that is generally subjective when deciding which subjects are going to be used in the sample. (Rahi, 2017:404). Neuman (2014:248) suggests that there are two types of non-probability sampling: quota sampling or convenience sampling.

Quota sampling is done by dividing the population into subgroups (Rahi, 2017:404). According to McIntyre (2005:105), quota sampling is when the researcher has

knowledge that there are differences within the population. This includes characteristics such as age, race and status (McIntyre, 2005:105). However, when using quota sampling, generalisations to the whole population cannot be made (Rahi, 2017:404).

A convenience non-probability sampling technique outlines that the probability of any particular member of the population being chosen, is unknown and that the sample is chosen on the basis of availability. This means that a sample is selected because the members are accessible and co-operative. (Struwig & Stead, 2013:116). When convenience sampling is used, it is prone to being bias and could influence the results of the study, which are out of the researcher's control (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005:70).

A non-probability convenience sampling method was used in this specific study, as the respondents were located within a geographical area that was accessible by the researchers. Convenience sampling also allowed the researchers to obtain responses in a cost effective manner. Thus, will be beneficial when obtaining information from small-to-medium sized businesses that normally have a high failure rate, where an up to date database does not exist. (Rahi, 2017:404).

3.3.2.3 Research instrument design

This section will include a detailed description of the research questionnaire's cover letter, instructions, and formatting thereof. A discussion on the operationalisation of the variables, and the administration of the measuring instrument which will include a summary pertaining to field work, data capturing and preparation used for this study.

(a) Covering letter and instructions

The measuring instrument that was used in this study comprised of a cover letter followed by two sections (See Annexure A). The cover letter comprised of a detailed description concerning the objective of the study and the pre-qualification criteria for participating.

The cover letter contained an introduction of the study, shedding light on previous research on the topic and highlighted to the respondent that the occupancy rates within the hospitality industry of Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) had declined. The research urged hospitality businesses to assign more resources (time and budget) to social media marketing of their business. This was suggested as the usage of social media marketing strategies supporting the growth of small-to-medium sized businesses, specifically in South Africa, was lacking. It was also found that the lack of marketing strategies and skills were the very reason why small-to-medium sized businesses failed, hence the decline in occupancy rates in NMB's hospitality industry (Van Scheers, 2011:5048).

Secondly, the topics covered in the study were presented, more specifically, the topic of investigating the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry. The aim of this study was then to investigate and empirically assess the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay.

The cover page also highlighted the honours students' involvement in this study, stating that they were required to gather the necessary information from small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay. For the purpose of this study, small-to-medium sized businesses were classified as one employing fewer than 200 employees. A deceleration of confidentiality and guidelines on how to complete and return the questionnaire was then provided. This entailed the type of information required from the respondents and the estimated time the questionnaire would take to complete. The deceleration and guidelines of this questionnaire expressed the researcher's gratitude and appreciation to respondents for aiding in the completion of the study. Finally, it stated that all information received will be treated confidential and will only be used for the purpose of this study.

The questionnaire then followed by providing instructions on how to complete the questions and the requirements for respondents of this study. Lastly, the questions (divided into two sections) followed, ending off with a final appreciation message for participating.

(b)   Format of questionnaire and statements

This study made use of a structured questionnaire and comprised of two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A of the questionnaire required general demographic information relating to the respondents as owners of small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses in NMB. The questions asked for information regarding the respondent's business included the type of business, years of operation, number of employees, types of social media currently using and how often these platforms are managed. The questionnaire also gathered personal information about the respondent's, in particular, about their position within the business, gender, age, race, qualification and the duration of the respondent's position within the hospitality business.

Section B of the questionnaire comprised of 35 questions pertaining to the use of social media within small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses. The questionnaire made use of a 5-point Likert-scale to measure the extent of agreement in terms of respondents' perceptions and attitudes regarding the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses in NMB. The Likert-scale ranged from 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Natural, 4 being Agree, and lastly, 5 being Strongly Agree.

(c)   Scale development and operationalisation of variables

For this specific study the demographic variables regarding the respondent and the hospitality business they represent, were required. These demographic questions are located in Section A of the questionnaire. The various demographic content included in this section, is provided in the Table 3.2 and Table 3.3.

Table 3.2:   Demographics of respondent

Demographic section	Categories
Position in the hospitality business	Owner
	Manager
	Other
Gender	Male
	Female
Age (years)	18-25
	26-35
	36-45
	46-55
	56-65
	65+
Population group	Asian
	Black
	Coloured
	White
	Not willing to say
Possession of tertiary qualifications	Yes
	No
Duration of position in the business (years)	0-5
	5-10
	10-15
	15-20
	other

Table 3.3:   Demographics of business

Demographic section	Categories
Employ fewer than 200 employees	Yes
	No
Type of hospitality business	Hotel
	Motel
	Bed and Breakfast
	Guest House
	Guest Farm
	Other
Lifetime of the business (years)	0-5
	5-10
	10-15
	15-20
	20-30
	Other
Number of full-time employees	Less than 5
	5-10
	11-20
	20-50
	50-100
	More than 100
Social media performs used	Facebook
	Twitter
	LinkedIn
	WhatsApp
	YouTube
	Instagram
	Website
	Other
Frequent use of social media platforms	Never
	Once a week
	2-3 times a week
	More than 4 times a week

The variables were operationalised in order to measure the extent of agreement respondents felt towards the variable proposed. Each independent variable was operationalised into a set of items which measured a distinct aspect of that variable. Tables 3.4 to 3.9 captures the various items included in the measuring instrument.

The factor Intentions Intention to use social media was operationalised using a five-item scale. The items used and the operational definition of Intentions are summarised in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4:   Operationalisation - Intentions to use social media

Intentions to use social media refers to the intent to use social media for future communication with customers, obtain feedback and grow the company's market share by making customers aware of specials.		
ITEMS		**SOURCES**
INT1	I intend to use social media in my business to gain immediate customer feedback about my business.	Varol & Tarcan (2009:121)
INT2	I intend to use social media to communicate with my customers.	
INT3	I intend to use social media to make my customers aware of specials the business is having.	
INT4	Social media will become my main source of communication with customers in the future.	(Olivier & Terblanchne, 2018:19)
INT5	I intent to use social media to grow my market share.	Management Dynamics (2018:19)

The factor *Perceived usefulness* was operationalised using a nine-item scale. The items used and the operational definition of Perceived usefulness is summarised in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Operationalisation – Perceived usefulness

Perceived usefulness refers to the belief that using social media can be useful in customising advertising to save time when: gathering information and feedback from customers; aiding in business growth; enhance customer communication; and attracting tourists to the business from a wider geographical area, thus being more beneficial than traditional marketing methods.		
ITEMS		**SOURCES**
USEFUL1	Using social media can be used to help my business growth.	Varol &Tarcan (2009:122)
USEFUL2	Using social media can help my business gain tourists.	
USEFUL3	Using social media can help my business reach a wide geographical area.	
USEFUL4	Social media can be used to enhance my businesses communication with its customers.	
USEFUL5	Using social media within my business can aid in gathering information on my customers.	Abu-Dalbouh (2013:767)
USEFUL6	Using social media within my business allows me to save time.	
USEFUL7	Using social media within my business can increase my customers' feedback.	
USEFUL8	Using social media platforms to be more beneficial than traditional marketing methods.	Mathieson (1991:190)
USEFUL9	Using social media allows me to customise my advertising.	

The factor *Perceived ease of use* was operationalised using a six-item scale. The items used and the operational definition of Perceived ease of use is summarised in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6: Operationalisation – Perceived ease of use

Perceived ease of use refers to the belief that using social media will be easy to learn and understand, thus making it easier to utilise marketing and communication tools.		
ITEMS		**SOURCES**
EASE1	Social media will make it easier to market my business.	Varol & Tarcan (2009:122)
EASE2	It is easy to use social media platforms.	
EASE3	Social media platforms allow for clear marketing messages to be sent to customers.	
EASE4	Social media platforms are easy to learn how to use.	Abu-Dalbouh (2013:768)
EASE5	Social media as a marketing tool, can be easily be understood by my customers.	
EASE6	It's easy for me to become more skilful at using social media for my business.	

The factor *Attitude* was operationalised using a five-item scale. The items used and the operational definition of Attitude is summarised in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7: Operationalisation - Attitude

Attitude refers to the belief that using social media will be good for me and that my employees will find using social media enjoyable and comfortable when using it to make a difference to the business.		
	ITEMS	**SOURCES**
ATT1	I have a desire to use social media platforms within my business.	Bitter & Grabner-Krauter (2014:205)
ATT2	I believe that it is good for me to use social media in my business.	
ATT3	My attitude towards social media is that it can make a difference to my business.	Goh & Scerri (2016:90)
ATT4	My employees feel comfortable using social media platforms.	Ajzen (1991)
ATT5	My employees find using social media platforms within my business as enjoyable.	Nault (2013:17)

The factor *Social norms* was operationalised using a five-item scale. The items used and the operational definition of Social norms are summarised in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8: Operationalisation – Social norms

Social norms refers to the belief that the opinion of family, friends and stakeholders encourage which type of social media the business and customer's use.		
	ITEMS	**SOURCES**
NORM1	My family members think that I should use social media in my business.	Bitter & Grabner-Krauter (2014:205)
NORM2	My friends encourage me to use social media within my business.	
NORM3	Stakeholders who's opinions are valuable to me would prefer me to use social media within my business.	
NORM4	Family and friends of my customers have an influence on whether they utilise social media platforms.	
NORM5	Family and friends of my customers dictate which social media platforms they utilise more frequently.	Park, Kim & Lee (2017:433)

The factor *Perceived behavioural control* was operationalised using a five-item scale. The items used and the operational definition of Perceived behavioural control is summarised in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9: Operationalisation – Perceived behavioural control

Perceived behavioural control refers to the belief that customers are able to use social media platforms and that the usage of resources for social media platforms along with the ability to dictate the content made available is within my control and this allows me to control the behaviour of my customers.		
ITEMS		**SOURCES**
PBC1	My customers are able to use social media platforms.	Bitter and Grabner-Krauter (2014:205)
PBC2	Using social media within my business is entirely within my control.	
PBC3	I have the resources to use social media within my business.	
PBC4	I can fully control what content is made available to my customers via social media platforms.	Mathieson (1991:190)
PBC5	Using social media advertising, I can control the behviour of my customers.	

(d)   Administration of the measuring instrument

The administration of the measuring instrument highlights the researchers' field work, data capture and preparation to follow.

(i)   Field work

The questionnaire was distributed to 90 owners of small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses within the NMB between the period of June and September of the year 2018. As previously mentioned, a non-probability convenience sampling method was used to identify the businesses. The questionnaires were personally distributed and collected upon completion by the researchers undertaking the research.

Upon collection, the questionnaires were evaluated by the researchers for missing data. Missing data is a term used when respondents fail to answer some of the questions in the questionnaire (Martin & Marker, 2007:2263). Any questionnaires found to have any missing data were discarded from the study. In this specific study the questionnaires obtained were first evaluated to see if the respondents met the pre-qualification criteria to participate in the study. The criteria for this study was that the businesses participating have been in operation for at least one year and employ fewer than 200 employees. Those respondents who did not meet the criteria were discarded from the study. However, in this specific study, with regards to missing data and criteria, no questionnaires were discarded.

(ii)   Data capture and preparation

The data was captured in Microsoft Excel and was imported into a statistical program, known as Statistica version 13.3 for analysis. This data was then used to produce desired statistical results. For certain questions, the researchers felt the need to include an option where respondents could present a written answer if the desired option was not provided. The researchers then created codes to represent these written options in order to compute and analyse them to gather a more complete understanding of respondent's perceptions. Groups of options frequently used by multiple respondents were combined to create new codes representing more than one written option.

(e)   Validity of the measuring instrument

Validity can be defined as the extent to which a measuring instrument measures what it claims to measure (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008:2278). There are three different methods used to determine the validity of an intruding instrument. Firstly construct validity, construct validity is the extent to which the instrument measured the theoretical construct it was intended to measure doing an exploratory factor analysis. (Struwig & Stead, 2013:149). An exploratory factor analysis is a statistical method utilised by researchers to discover the main features of a matter to form a theory or model from a practically large set of items (Williams, Onsman & Brown, 2010:798). Scores of 0.5 and higher are accepted as enough proof of an indication of a correlation (Izquierdo, Olea & Abad, 2014:396). Secondly, content validity, which measures how well-developed the items in the measuring instrument provide an acceptable and representative sample of all the items that might measure the construct which is being assessed and is measured using expert judgement (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008:2279; Struwig & Stead, 2013:146). Finally, face validity, which is the degree to which the instrument seems to be valid to those who are carrying out the instrument, by determining at face value whether the instrument is actually measuring what it claims to be measuring (Rossiter, 2011:14). For the purpose of this study, the researchers used all three validity methods.

There are two analytical techniques that can be used to interpret factors within research, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. Exploratory

factor analysis is useful when searching for structure among a group of variables and is used to make empirical assessments regarding dimensionality of a group of items by determining the amount of factors and loadings of each variable on that factor. This allows researchers to take what the data provides, and refrains from setting any prior constraints on the estimation of the components or number of components to be extracted. Researchers using confirmatory factor analysis have pre-conceived thoughts on the actual structure of the data based on secondary research. (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2014:92-123). In contrast to exploratory factor analysis, unidimensionality is used when measuring a single item or variable. (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:123). For the purpose of this study the researchers will be implementing a test for undimensionality using a factor analysis as they need to develop a structure amongst the various variables analysed. Unidimensionality was used to ensure that the items within the study, which were derived from previous research, are measuring the same thing.

(f)   Reliability of the measuring instrument

In terms of the reliability of the measuring instrument, it is assessed to see whether the results are consistent throughout the test and if it is free from any errors, in order to produce the most accurate results (Moerdyk, 2015:333). To assess the reliability of a test, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value was calculated. According to Gleim and Gleim (2003:83-84), Cronbach's alpha is a test technique used to assess the reliability, that requires only a single test administration to provide an exclusive estimation of the reliability for any given test. Cronbach's alpha coefficient can fall within the range between 0.7 and 0.95 to indicate acceptable reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011:54).

(g)   Ethical considerations

The two students, one male and one female, from Nelson Mandela University are currently registered as honours students in the Department of Business Management. Both students are qualified and competent to partake in this study and, in no way discriminated against any individuals during this study. The questionnaire handed out to the respondents was confirmed for ethical consideration by their supervisor, whom works at Nelson Mandela University. The students made it verbally clear to the respondents that they could ask any questions about the questionnaire and that their

privacy would be kept confidential. The students also made it clear that the questionnaire was voluntary and that the data will only be used by the researcher for this specific study. Ethical clearance through Form E was obtained as the sample in this study was not a vulnerable group.

3.4   DATA ANALYSIS

The following section will provide an overview of descriptive analysis and inferential statistics. Specific reference will be made to the Pearson's product moment correlation and multiple regression.

3.4.1   DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics refer to central tendency using, charts, numbers and tables (Rendón-Macías, Villasís-Keever & Miranda-Novales, 2016:397). This statistical method focuses on measures of central tendency such as mean, as well as measures of dispersion such as frequency distribution and standard deviation (Fisher & Marshall, 2009:95). The mean can be defined as the average number in a data collection. It is calculated as the sum of all the data together, divided by the amount of data points. (Wegner, 2012:64). Standard deviation explains the distribution of data, thus expressing how much the group deviates from the mean value (Wegner, 2012:79). Frequency distribution is defined as a pattern of frequencies that observes how frequently specific things occur within a sample of values (Fisher & Marshall, 2009:95).The descriptive statistics that were calculated in this study included the mean, standard deviation and frequency distribution.

3.4.2   INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

Inferential statistics is a descriptive statistic that estimates the value of a corresponding population parameter. Inferential statistics can therefore seek estimation errors that are built into samples. (Gibbs, Shafer & Miles, 2017:215). Inferential statistics make judgments about a population based off of the sample (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2000:367). In this specific study, Pearson's product moment correlation and a multiple regression analysis.

3.4.2.1 Pearson's product moment correlation

Pearson's product moment correlation is used to investigate the strength and direction between two variables (Struwig & Steed, 2013:168). Correlations are therefore used to determine whether there is a relationship between two variables (Welman, *et al.*, 2005:234).

A correlation coefficient is a value that involves both a magnitude and a direction of either a positive or negative, ranging from -1 to +1, where the values are absolute and non-dimensional with no units involved (Taylor 1990:36). Interpreting this, means that the coefficient of -1 depicts a perfect, negative relationship and a coefficient of +1 represents a perfect, positive relationship. Thus, a coefficient close to zero represents no relationship (Welman *et al.* 2005:234). Certain guidelines were adapted from Statistics.laerd.com (2018) to describe how a correlation can be interpreted are as follows:

- -1.0 to -0.7 reflects a strong negative association;
- -0.7 to -0.3 reflects a weak negative association;
- -0.3 to +0.3 reflects a little or no association;
- +0.3 to +0.7 reflects a weak positive association;
- +0.7 to +1.0 reflects a strong positive association.

3.4.2.2 Multiple regression

Multiple regression analysis is a comprised set of statistical techniques that examine the association between the independent variables and one dependant variable (Struwig & Steed, 2013:168). A multiple regression analysis' objective is to make use of the independent variables' values, as they are known, to then further predict the dependent variable (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:195).

To predict the regression, the coefficient of determination (R^2) must be calculated. This measures the proportion of the variance of the dependent variable. The coefficient can vary between 0 and 1. The higher the coefficient is, the better the prediction of the independent variable will be. (Hair, *et al.* 2014:152). Multiple regression also gives coefficients resulting from the analysis of standardised data, the beta coefficient (β).

This coefficient eliminates the problem of having different units of measurements. (Hair, *et al.* 2014:195). A multiple regression analysis was conducted for this specific study, to examine whether there is any relationship between social media usage and the variables of the Technology Acceptance Model and the Theory of Planned Behaviour Model.

3.5   SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research design of this study was explained. The research paradigm, research approach and research method was elaborated on, which included an outline of quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Furthermore, the population, sampling technique and research instrument was discussed. This included details pertaining to the sample size of the study and the validity and the reliability of the research instrument. Lastly, the data analysis was elaborated on and concluded with an outline of descriptive and inferential statistics of this study.

For the purpose of this specific study, a positivistic paradigm was adopted, as a quantitative approach was used. The sampling technique that was utilised is a convenience non-probability sampling and a structured questionnaire will therefore be used to gain the empirical data, which will be elaborated on in Chapter Four.

Validity and reliability was then discussed. The three types of validity were elaborated on, namely face validity, content validity and construct validity. An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) will be done to measure construct validity as this study follows all three validity approaches and will attempt to discover the main features of the matter to form a theory from a large set of items. The types of reliability that was identified and the method used for measuring reliability in this study was discussed, namely the Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Chapter Four will contain the interpretations of the empirical results of this study extracted from the structured questionnaires handed out to respondents. Microsoft Excel and Statistica will be used to record and analyse the data received.

CHAPTER FOUR

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1   INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Three a detailed description regarding the research design and methodology of this study was provided. It included an overview of the research paradigm and research approach, and the research method as well as the data collection process used in this study. More specifically, secondary data collection and primary data collection was discussed and the population and sample of this study was elaborated on. The sampling techniques and the development of the research instrument that was used in this study were also provided. Furthermore, the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument and ethical considerations were discussed. The data analysis of this study was then provided, which elaborated on descriptive and inferential statistics that were undertaken in this study. Chapter Three then ended off with a summary.

Chapter Four, the researchers empirically investigated the owners/managers of small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses usage of social media platforms. This was done by analysing the data collected from the measuring instrument.

4.2   DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

The demographic data collected from the small-to-medium sized hospitality business respondents (owners/managers) are presented in Tables 4.1 and 4.2. The demographic data collected from the respondents business itself, is presented in Tables 4.3 and 4.4.

Table 4.1 comprises of the demographic data collected from 90 Owner/Manager respondents. The data includes the respondent's position in the business, their age, gender and ethnicity.

Table 4.1: Demographics Data – Owner/Manager Respondents

Position	Frequency	Percent
Owner	48	53.33%
Manager	42	46.67%
Total	90	100.00%
Gender	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Male	51	56.67%
Female	39	43.33%
Total	90	100.00%
Age	**Frequency**	**Percent**
18-25	1	1.11%
26-35	16	17.78%
36-45	31	34.44%
46-55	22	24.44%
56-65	19	21.11%
65+	1	1.11%
Total	90	100.00%
Population group	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Asian	2	2.22%
Black	20	22.22%
Coloured	14	15.56%
White	54	60.00%
Total	90	100.00%

From Table 4.1 it can be concluded that more owners (53.33%) participated in this study than managers (46.67%). It was fairly even in terms of gender with 56.67 percent being male and 43.33 percent being female. A large amount of participants are between the ages of 36-45 (34.44%), 46-55 (24.44%) and 56-65 (21.11%). A low percentage of 1.11 percent of respondents was equally represented for both the ages of 18-25 and over 65 with. With regards to ethnicity the vast majority of respondents were white (60.00%) and then black (22.22%), while coloured respondents (15.56%) and Asian respondents (2.22%) were less represented.

Table 4.2 comprises of whether the owner/manager respondents has a tertiary qualification or not. It also indicates the duration of the owner/manager's employment with the small-to-medium sized hospitality business.

Table 4.2: **Owner/Manager Respondents tertiary qualification and duration of position in the business**

Possession of tertiary qualifications	Frequency	Percent
Yes	39	43.33%
No	51	56.67%
Total	90	100.00%
Duration of position in the business	**Frequency**	**Percent**
0-5	25	27.78%
5-10	53	58.89%
10-15	12	13.33%
Total	90	100.00%

From Table 4.2 it is noted that 43.33 percent of the respondents have obtained some type of tertiary education, whereas 56.67 percent have not. In terms of employment, most of the respondents have been employed in their position with the current business for 5-10 years (58.89%), with 27.78 percent of respondents having worked in the business for less than 5 years. However, only 13.33 percent have been with the business for more than 10-15 years.

Table 4.3 provides biographical data based on the small-to-medium sized business, in terms of what type of hospitality business it is, how long the business has been operating for and the amount of employees it employs.

Table 4.3:   The businesses' biographical data

Hospitality industry	Frequency	Percent
Hotel	9	10.00%
Bed and breakfast	44	48.89%
Guest house	31	34.44%
Guest farm	6	6.67%
Total	90	100.00%
Duration of business	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
0-5 years	19	21.11%
5-10 years	38	42.22%
10-15 years	29	32.22%
15-20 years	4	4.44%
Total	90	100.00%
Number of employees	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Less than 5 employees	29	32.22%
5-10 employees	45	50.00%
11-20 employees	8	8.89%
20-50 employees	6	6.67%
50-100 employees	2	2.22%
Total	90	100.00%

From table 4.3 above, it can be seen that most business respondents were Bed and Breakfasts', with a high percentage of 48.89 percent and guest houses with a percentage of 34.44 percent. The lowest type of business respondents to partake in this study was hotels (10.00%) and guest farms (6.67%). In terms of how long the businesses have been in operation for, most businesses have been operating for between 5-10 years (42.22%), with 10-15 years (32.22%) being the second highest life span amongst responding businesses. This duration is then closely followed by businesses operating for 0-5 years (21.11%). Beyond the 4.44 percent that indicated 15-20 years duration, the researchers found zero respondents operating in the 20-30 year duration. The highest percentage of respondents within small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses were found to employ between 5-10 employees (50.00%) and less than 5 employees (32.22%). The three lowest percentages of small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses were employing 11-20 employees (8.89%), 20-50 employees (6.67%), and 50-100 employees (2.22%).

Table 4.4 provides a summary of the combination of social media platforms used by small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses within NMB. The categories range from a combination between Facebook, Websites, WhatsApp, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram and other platforms.

Table 4.4:   The businesses' Social media platforms used

Social media platforms	Frequency	Percent
Facebook	8	8.89%
Websites	16	17.78%
WhatsApp	3	3.33%
Facebook and Websites	16	17.78%
Facebook and WhatsApp	9	10.00%
Websites and WhatsApp	8	8.89%
Facebook, Websites and WhatsApp	9	10.00%
Multiple (more than three options)	21	23.33%
Third party websites	0	0.00%
Total	90	100.00%

From the table above it is evident that most small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses within NMB make use of multiple (a combination of more than three) platform options (23.33%), followed by businesses making use of Websites only (17.78%) and businesses making use of a combination of Websites and Facebook (17.78%). Businesses making use of a combination of only Facebook and WhatsApp amounted to the same as businesses making use of a combination of Facebook, Websites and WhatsApp, both measuring 10.00 percent. Following the above trends, businesses making use of only Facebook and businesses making use of a combination of Websites and WhatsApp, both amounted to 8.89 percent. Finally, a small amount of businesses were found to make use of only WhatsApp (3.33%) and zero percent were found to make use of strictly third party websites only.

4.3   RESULTS OF THE VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ANALYSIS OF   THE MEASURING INSTRUMENT

Validity can be explained as the extent to which a group of measures (items) correctly represent the concept being studied (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:3). Collis and Hussey (2014:15) also define validity as being concerned with how well the concept of the study can be defined by the group of measures.

In this study, the test for unidimensionality using a factor analysis was utilised to test the validity of the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media* and the independent variables, *Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Attitude, Perceived behavioural control, and Social norms*. Thus, unidimensionality is used when measuring a single item or variable. (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:123). Unidimensionality was used for this study to ensure the items within the study, which were derived from previous research, are measuring the same thing. According to Hair, *et al.* (2014:115), based on the given sample size of this study, a factor loading of ±0.62 would be considered to be sufficient. Although, in order for a factor to be satisfactory, its factor loading must be greater than 0.5. However, for the purpose of this study, factor loadings of 0.4 are acceptable for significant interpretation as they would still adhere to the lowest level requirement for interpretation of the structure (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:115).

Reliability can be defined as the extent to which variables being studied are consistent in what they intend to measure (Hair, *et al.,* 2014:2). Collis and Hussey (2014:15) explain that reliability to not concerned with what should be measured, but instead focuses on how it is measured.

In terms of the reliability of this measuring instrument, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value was calculated to assess whether the results are consistent throughout the test, in order to produce the most accurate results (Moerdyk, 2015:333). According to Gleim and Gleim (2003:83-84), Cronbach's alpha is a test technique used to assess reliability that requires only a single test administration to provide an exclusive estimation of the reliability for any given test. For the purpose of this study the Cronbach's alpha coefficient can fall within the range between 0.7 and 0.95 to indicate acceptable unidimensional reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011:54). However, Suhr and Shay

(2008:3) suggested that satisfactory reliability of items developed for research aims, can be as low as 0.6. Hair *et al.* (2014:123) agree with this as they stated that the general lower limit is 0.7, but it may decrease to 0.6 in exploratory research. For the purpose of this study, tests for both validity and reliability of results were conducted to determine the confidence of these results within the study.

4.3.1 DEPENDENT VARIABLE

In order to assess the validity and reliability of our dependent variable*, the Intention to use social media*, a test for unidimensionality was conducted to assess validity and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was conducted to assess reliability. The unidimensionality test was done to ensure that the scale is established in order to portray one concept due to the fact that all items on the scale are strongly associated to one another (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:123).

4.3.1.1 Intention to use social media

A total of five items were originally meant to measure *Intention to use social media* (INT1, INT2, INT3, INT4 and INT5). Through analysing the data it was found that all five factor loadings were above the lower limit of 0.4 (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:115) and, as a result, all five items were included for further statistical analysis. It can be seen from Table 4.5 that factor loadings between 0.500 and 0.766 were returned for *Intention to use social media*. These factor loadings were above 0.4 and are thus considered to provide sufficient evidence of validity existing for this construct.

Table 4.5: Validity and reliability of the intention to use social media

% of Variance: 44.08%		Cronbach's alpha: 0.642		
Code	Item	Factor loading	Item-total correlation	CA
INT3	I intend to use social media to make my customers aware of specials the business is having.	0.766	0.556	0.558
INT4	Social media will become my main source of communication with customers in the future.	0.728	0.456	0.558
INT1	I intend to use social media in my business to gain immediate customer feedback about my business.	0.705	0.416	0.579
INT2	I intend to use social media to communicate with my customers.	0.583	0.360	0.622
INT5	I intent to use social media to grow my market share.	0.500	0.305	0.631

As can be seen from Table 4.5, *Intention to use social media* explains a 44.08 percent of the variance in the data. *Intention to use social media* returned a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.642 and is therefore sufficient evidence of reliability for the scale, as it falls just above the lower limit of 0.6 suggested by Suhr and Shay (2008:3). This ensures the data can be considered reliable. It is evident that *Intention to use social media* proved sufficient when tested for validity and reliability.

4.3.2 INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

In order to determine and evaluate the validity of the independent variable (*Intention to use social media*), the test for unidimensionality using a factor analysis was used. The independent variables included: *Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Attitude, Social norms* and *Perceived behavioural control*.

4.3.2.1 Perceived usefulness

A total of nine items were originally meant to measure *Perceived usefulness* (USEFUL1, USEFUL2, USEFUL3, USEFUL4, USEFUL5, USEFUL6, USEFUL7, USEFUL8 and USEFUL9). However, through analysing the data provided in Table 4.6, it was found that USEFUL4 and USEFUL5 had factor loadings of -0.300 and -0.041 respectively. These factors were below the lower limit, cut-off of 0.4 (Hair, *et al.*,

2014:115) and, as a result, were removed from statistical analysis. As a result of USEFUL4 and USEFUL5 being removed from the statistical analysis, it was decided to re-operationalise the items of *Perceived usefulness*.

Table 4.6: Validity and reliability of perceived usefulness

% of Variance: 41.20%		Cronbach's alpha: 0.791		
Code	Item	Factor loading	Item-total correlation	CA
USEFUL8	Using social media platforms to be more beneficial than traditional marketing methods.	-0.841	0.679	0.739
USEFUL9	Using social media allows me to customise my advertising.	-0.816	0.750	0.727
USEFUL7	Using social media within my business can increase my customers' feedback.	-0.764	0.616	0.750
USEFUL6	Using social media within my business allows me to save time.	-0.743	0.684	0.738
USEFUL3	Using social media can help my business reach a wide geographical area.	-0.684	0.515	0.776
USEFUL2	Using social media can help my business gain tourists.	-0.594	0.413	0.784
USEFUL1	Using social media can be used to help my business growth.	-0.535	0.485	0.773
USEFUL4	Social media can be used to enhance my businesses communication with its customers.	-0.300	0.203	0.799
USEFUL5	Using social media within my business can aid in gathering information on my customers.	-0.041	0.055	0.817

After re-operationalisation, the remaining factors loaded factor loadings between 0.524 and 0.862 for *Perceived usefulness*. These factor loadings were above 0.4 and are thus considered to provide sufficient evidence of validity existing for this construct. *Perceived usefulness* explains a 52.02 percent of the variance in the data. *Perceived usefulness* returned a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.829 and therefore is sufficient evidence of reliability for the scale, as it falls above the lower limit of 0.7 suggested by Tavakol and Dennick (2011:54). This ensures that the data can be considered reliable in nature. It is evident that Perceived ease of use proved sufficient when tested for validity and reliability.

4.3.2.2 Perceived ease of use

A total of six items were originally meant to measure *Perceived ease of use* (EASE1, EASE2, EASE3, EASE4, EASE5 and EASE6). Through analysing the data it was found that all six factor loadings were above the lower limit of 0.4 (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:115) and as a result, all six items were included for further statistical analysis. It can be seen from Table 4.7 that factor loadings between 0.433 and 0.883 were returned for *Perceived ease of use*. These factor loadings were found to be above 0.4 (even if only barely) and are thus considered to provide sufficient evidence of validity existing for this construct.

Table 4.7: Validity and reliability of perceived ease of use

% of Variance: 46.52%		Cronbach's alpha: 0.767		
Code	**Item**	**Factor loading**	**Item-total correlation**	**CA**
EASE4	Social media platforms are easy to learn how to use.	-0.883	0.766	0.652
EASE2	It is easy to use social media platforms.	-0.825	0.692	0.678
EASE6	It's easy for me to become more skilful at using social media for my business.	-0.697	0.508	0.733
EASE3	Social media platforms allow for clear marketing messages to be sent to customers.	-0.640	0.478	0.742
EASE1	Social media will make it easier to market my business.	-0.497	0.326	0.772
EASE5	Social media as a marketing tool, can be easily be understood by my customers.	-0.433	0.307	0.775

As can be seen from Table 4.7, *Perceived ease of use* illustrates a 46.52 percent of the variance in the data. *Perceived ease of use* returned a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.767 and is therefore sufficient evidence of reliability for the scale as it falls above the lower limit of 0.7 suggested by Tavakol and Dennick (2011:54). This ensures the data can be considered reliable in nature. It is evident that *Perceived ease of use* proved sufficient when tested for validity and reliability.

4.3.2.3 Social norms

A total of five items were originally meant to measure *Social norms* (NORM1, NORM2, NORM3, NORM4 and NORM5). However, through analysing the data provided in Table 4.8 it was found that NORM1 had factor loadings of -0.364. This factor was below the lower limit, cut-off of 0.4 (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:115) and, as a result, was removed from further statistical analysis. As a result of NORM1 being removed from the statistical analysis, it has been decided to re-operationalise the items of *social norms*.

Table 4.8: Validity and reliability of social norms

% of Variance: 47.00%		Cronbach's alpha: 0.709		
Code	**Item**	**Factor loading**	**Item-total correlation**	**CA**
NORM3	Stakeholders whose opinions are valuable to me would prefer me to use social media within my business.	-0.795	0.602	0.609
NORM4	Family and friends of my customers have an influence on whether they utilise social media platforms.	-0.785	0.579	0.609
NORM5	Family and friends of my customers dictate which social media platforms they utilise more frequently.	-0.739	0.515	0.640
NORM2	My friends encourage me to use social media within my business.	-0.650	0.433	0.675
NORM1	My family members think that I should use social media in my business.	-0.364	0.214	0.740

After re-operationalisation, the remaining factors loaded factor loadings between 0.641 and 0.795 for *Social norms*. These factor loadings were above 0.4 and are thus considered to provide sufficient evidence of validity existing for this construct. *Social norms* explains a 56.77 percent of the variance in the data. *Social norms* returned a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.740 and therefore is sufficient evidence of reliability for the scale, as it falls above the lower limit of 0.7 suggested by Tavakol and Dennick (2011:54). This ensures that the data can be considered reliable in nature. It is evident that *Social norms* proved sufficient when tested for validity and reliability.

4.3.2.4 Perceived behavioural control

A total of five items were originally meant to measure *Perceived behavioural control* (PBC1, PBC2, PBC3, PBC4 and PBC5). However, through analysing the data provided in Table 4.9 it was found that PBC1 and PBC4 had factor loadings of 0.124 and -0.325, respectively. These factors were below the lower limit, cut-off of 0.4 (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:115) and, as a result, were removed from further statistical analysis.

Table 4.9: Validity and reliability of perceived behavioural control

% of Variance: 30.27%		Cronbach's alpha: 0.206		
Code	Item	Factor loading	Item-total correlation	CA
PBC5	Using social media advertising, I can control the behaviour of my customers.	0.789	0.023	0.285
PBC2	Using social media within my business is entirely within my control.	0.646	0.256	0.018
PBC3	I have the resources to use social media within my business.	-0.594	-0.042	0.268
PBC4	I can fully control what content is made available to my customers via social media platforms.	-0.325	0.053	0.221
PBC1	My customers are able to use social media platforms.	0.124	0.258	0.052

Furthermore, some items were found to load in different directions, with PBC3 loading a negative factor loading of -0.594 to PBC2 and PBC5, which loaded positive factor loadings of 0.646 and 0.789, respectively. It was then decided to also exclude PBC3 as it was found to disturb the factor structure, which aim is to acquire a set of theoretically meaningful factors with easy interpretation and that which would account for the bulk of the variance (Hair *et al.*, 2014:91).

According to Hair, *et al.* (2014:109), selecting too few factors to represent the data of an item will result in negative consequences later on. As mentioned in Chapter Three, Hair, *et al.* (2010:676) recommends a minimum of three items per construct for statistical evaluation of a construct. Thus, for the purpose of this study the researchers have decided that the two remaining items (PBC2 and PBC5) which loaded

successfully, were not enough to justify keeping *Perceived behavioural control* in the analysis, thus the construct was removed from the study.

4.3.2.5 Attitude

A total of five items were originally meant to measure *Attitude* (ATT1, ATT2, ATT3, ATT4 and ATT5). Through analysing the data it was found that all five factor loadings were above the lower limit of 0.4 (Hair*, et al.,* 2014:115) and as a result, all five items were included for further statistical analysis. It can be seen from Table 4.10 that factor loadings of between 0.503 and 0.855 were returned for *Attitude*. These factor loadings were above 0.4 and are thus considered to provide sufficient evidence of validity existing for this construct.

Table 4.10: Validity and reliability of attitude

% of Variance: 59.02%		Cronbach's alpha: 0.822		
Code	Item	Factor loading	Item-total correlation	CA
ATT5	My employees find using social media platforms within my business as enjoyable.	-0.855	0.743	0.746
ATT4	My employees feel comfortable using social media platforms.	-0.821	0.697	0.762
ATT1	I have a desire to use social media platforms within my business.	-0.814	0.679	0.773
ATT3	My attitude towards social media is that it can make a difference to my business.	-0.793	0.651	0.776
ATT2	I believe that it is good for me to use social media in my business.	-0.503	0.354	0.847

As can be seen from Table 4.10, *Attitude* explains a 59.02 percent of the variance in the data. *Attitude* returned a very high Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.822 and is therefore sufficient evidence of reliability for the scale, as it falls above the lower limit of 0.7 suggested by Tavakol and Dennick (2011:54). This ensures that the data of *Attitude* can be considered reliable in nature. It is evident that *Attitude* proved sufficient when tested for validity and reliability.

4.4   REVISED THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

In the above section, both validity and reliability of various items were analysed and those items which did not meet the various limits of validity and reliability were excluded from further analyses. With regard to the test for unidimensionality, which uses exploratory factor analysis, the operationalisation of the two constructs namely, *Perceived usefulness* and *Social norms* was restructured. The hypothesised model was reviewed (see Figure 4.1) and these hypotheses were restructured. The restructured operational definitions are summarised in Table 4.11 and the restructured hypotheses shown in Figure 4.1.

Table 4.11 provides reoperationalised definitions for the factors *Perceived usefulness* and *Social norms.*

Table 4.11:   Restructured operational definitions

Factor	Operationalisation
Perceived usefulness	*Perceived usefulness* refers to the belief that using social media can be useful in customising advertising to save time when: gathering feedback from customers; aiding in business growth; and attracting tourists to the business from a wider geographical area, thus being more beneficial than traditional marketing methods.
Social norms	*Social norms* refers to the belief that the opinion of friends and stakeholders encourage which type of social media the business uses, and that family members and friends encourage which type of social media customer's use.

Figure 4.1:   Proposed hypothesised model: The usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB.
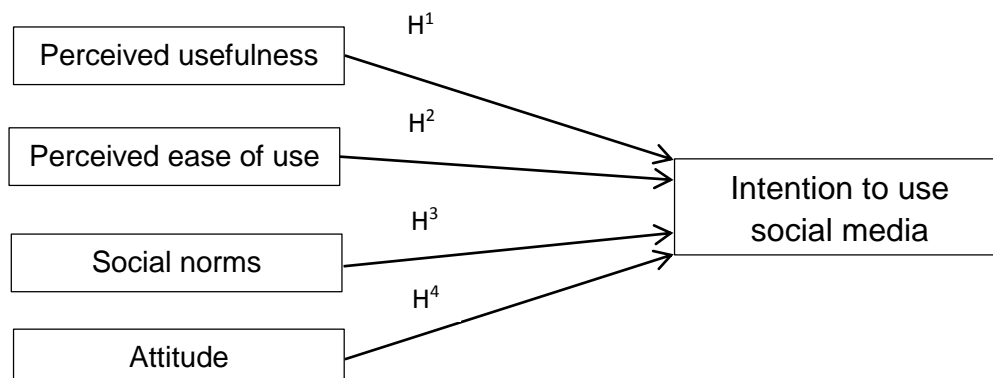
Revised Research hypotheses are as follows:

H[1]:   The business' perception of *perceived usefulness* has a positive effect on the intention to use social media.

H[2]:   The business' perception of *perceived ease of use* has a positive effect on the intention to use social media.

H[3]:   The business' perception of *social norms* has a positive effect on the intention to purchase a product.

H[4]:   The business' perception of *attitude* has a positive effect on the intention to purchase a product.

4.5   EMPIRICAL RESULTS

In this section, a report on the results of the empirical analysis will be discussed. The results of the descriptive statistics include mean, standard deviation and the frequency distribution regarding the dependent and independent variables. The results of Pearson's product moment correlation and the multiple regression analysis will also be reported.

4.5.1   DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics make use of data that has been collected by the researchers from a sample population in order to describe and explain circumstances. Descriptive statistics involve summarising sample data and measures it along with graphics analysis. (Wegner, 2012:7).

The values of the descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables are reported in table 4.12.

Table 4.12:   Descriptive statistics (N=90)

Factor	Mean	Std. Dev	Responses (%)		
			Disagree	Neutral	Agree
Intention to use social media	4.078	0.502	0.000	21.111	78.889
Perceived usefulness	4.084	0.642	0.000	21.111	78.889
Perceived ease of use	3.894	0.650	0.000	27.778	72.222
Attitude	3.991	0.716	0.000	27.778	72.222
Social norms	4.472	0.568	1.111	4.444	94.444

Descriptive statistics were calculated in order to describe the sample data. The descriptive statistics comprised of the mean, standard deviation and frequency distribution. In terms of the 5 point Likert scale used, responses ranging from 1 to 2.3333 were categorised as disagree, 2.3334 to 3.6667 were categorised as neutral and 3.6668 to 6.3332 were categorised as agree.

In terms of the independent variables, *Perceived usefulness* reported a mean score of 4.084, *Perceived ease of use* reported a mean score of 3.894, *Attitude* reported a mean score of 3.991, and *Social norm* reported a mean score of 4.472. The mean score of the independent variables indicated that the respondents of this study chose to respond in a positive manner and generally agree with the items in question. In their responses, respondents chose to agree with items on a more frequent basis than remaining neutral or disagreeing with the items.

The only independent variable reporting a percentage of disagree was *Social norms*, reporting a disagree response percentage of 1.111 percent. The remaining independent variables all reported a disagree response percentage of zero percent. The disagree response percentage shows the extent to which respondents chose to disagree with the items regarding the above mentioned independent variables. The disagree response percentage for the variables evaluated are low, this indicates that respondents did not frequently disagree with the items in question.

Most respondents agree with the items regarding *Social norm* (94.444) more than the items regarding *Intention to use social media* and *Perceived usefulness*, both reporting an agree response percentage of 78.889 percent. *Perceived ease of use* and *Attitude* both obtaining the lowest response percentage of agree with 72.222 percent. The

agree response percentage shows the extent to which respondents chose to agree with the items regarding the independent variables. The agree response percentage of the items is relatively high and is above 70 percent for all items in question. This indicates that respondents responded in a positive manner and frequently chose to agree with the items in question.

The percentage of neutral responses for *Perceived ease of use* and *Attitude* both reported a percentage of 27.778 percent. The items measuring both *Intention to use social media* and *Perceived usefulness* reported a percentage neutral response of 21.111. Lastly, *Social norms* reported the lowest neutral response percentage of 4.444 percent. A neutral response account for the difference between responses of agree and disagree regarding the items being measured. It is evident that respondents chose to respond neutrally to more items than they responded disagree but not as much as they responded agree. As seen above, a 27.778 percent portion of respondents contributed towards the neutral percentage because they were not fully convinced that *Perceived ease of use* or *Attitude* had a large influence on *Intention to use social media*.

The standard deviation of a data set is used to measure the dispersion of data from the mean of the data set regarding the dependent variable (Fisher & Marshall, 2009: 95). The standard deviation indicates how concentrated a set of data is around the mean. The more concentrated the data, the smaller the standard deviation. The standard deviation for the independent variables are as follows: *Perceived usefulness* (0.502); *Perceived ease of use* (0.650); *Attitude* (0.716); and *Social norms* (0.568). The standard deviation of these independent variables indicates that the data set is relatively concentrates around the mean regarding *Intention to use social media*. Most respondents chose to agree with the items regarding the independent variables. This response is reported in the mean score as well as in the standard deviation of the independent variables measured.

4.5.2 INFERENTIAL STATISTICS

The purpose of inferential statistics is to make use of the sample data collected and apply the data to the whole population. Data is collected from a sample and this data is used in order to make assumptions about the population from which the sample was

selected. (Wegner, 2012:7). In this section, the results of the Pearson's correlations and the multiple regression analysis will be discussed.

4.5.2.1 Pearson's product moment correlations

Pearson's product-moment correlation is used in order to find and determine whether or not an association exists between two or more variables (Greener, 2008:62). In order to interpret Pearson's correlation coefficients, the following outline has been provided by (Statistics.laerd.com, 2018):

- -1.0 to -0.7 reflects a strong negative association;
- -0.7 to -0.3 reflects a weak negative association;
- -0.3 to +0.3 reflects a little or no association;
- +0.3 to +0.7 reflects a weak positive association;
- +0.7 to +1.0 reflects a strong positive association.

The values of Pearson's correlation coefficients for the dependent and independent variable are reported in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Pearson's correlation coefficients

	Factor	1	2	3	4	5
1	Intention to use social media	1.000	0.655	0.663	0.623	0.193
2	Perceived usefulness	0.655	1.000	0.781	0.810	0.111
3	Perceived ease of use	0.663	0.781	1.000	0.740	0.104
4	Attitude	0.623	0.810	0.740	1.000	0.239
5	Social norms	0.193	0.111	0.104	0.239	1.000

When analysing the Pearson's correlation coefficient of this study, the researchers found no strong perfect association or any negative association between the variables analysed. At significance ($p < 0.05$) a strong positive association is reported between *Perceived usefulness* and both *Perceived ease of use* (0.781) and *Attitude* (0.810). *Attitude* also reported a strong positive association with *Perceived ease of use* (0.740). A strong positive association indicates a strong correlation between the variables,

which indicates that when the one variable increases, a corresponding change happens within the other variable (Greener, 2008:62).

At significance (p<0.05) a weak positive association is reported between the dependent variable *Intention to use social media* and the independent variable *Perceived ease of use* (r=0.663). This correlation coefficient was closely followed by a weak positive association of dependent variables *Attitude* (r=0.623) and *Perceived usefulness* (r=0.655). A weak positive association indicates that there is a weak degree of correlation between the variables indicating that when one variable increases, a weak change occurs in the other variable (Greener, 2008:62).

At significance (p<0.05) little or no positive association is reported between the independent variable *Social norms* and all other variables: *Intention to use social media* (0.193); *Perceived usefulness* (0.111); *Perceived ease of use* (0.104); and *Attitude* (0.239). Little or no positive association indicates that the correlation between these variables are little to none, and that when one variable increases, the corresponding change in the other variable is quite small if any (Greener, 2008:62).

4.5.2.2 Multiple regression analysis

A multiple regression analysis was undertaken in order to determine whether the independent variables *Perceived usefulness*, *Perceived ease of use*, *Attitude* and *Social norms* have a significant influence on the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media*.

Multiple regression analysis makes use of the independent variables in order to forecast the dependent variable (Struwig & Steed, 2013:168). According to Hair, *et al.* (2014:195), the multiple regression analysis makes use of a significance level which is a probability used in order to examine hypotheses by comparing the significance level to either a p-value or a t-value.

For the purpose of this study, the significance level will be compared to the obtained p-value. The p-value is the probability value that is used to examine the proposed hypotheses. If the p-value is substantially low, it is an indication that the relationship between the variables are quite strong. (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:161). For the purpose of this

study, it will indicate the relationship between the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media,* and the various independent variables.

The accepted significance levels according to Hair, *et al.* (2014:161) are 0.1 to 0.0. For the purpose of this study, the significance levels of 0.05, 0.01 and 0.001 will be used. Should the p-value calculate less than 0.01, then the hypothesis can be accepted as smaller confidence intervals denote greater prediction accuracy (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:161). The report of the multiple regression analysis is found in Table 4.13.

Table 4.14: Influence of the independent variables on Job satisfaction

Dependent variables: Intention to use social media		R-Square=0.5052	
Independent variables	**Beta**	**t-value**	**Sig.(p)**
Perceived usefulness	0.2136	1.8509	0.0677
Perceived ease of use	0.2733	2.7666	0.0069**
Attitude	0.0823	0.9320	0.4077
Social norms	0.0866	1.2315	0.2215

(*p<0.05;p<0.01;***p<0.001)**

From Table 4.14 it can be seen that no significant relationship exists between intention to use social media and the perceived usefulness.

Table 4.14 reported a strong correlation between the actual and predicted values of the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media* with a coefficient of determination of R^2 = 0.5052. *Table* 4.13 also reports a positive linear relationship (0.2733; p<0.01) between *Intention to use social media* and *Perceived ease of use*. Since this relationship is positive, it implies that the business respondents believes that perceiving social media as easier to use, will result in higher intention to use social media platforms within their hospitality business. No positive linear relationships were reported to exist between *Perceived usefulness* (0.0677; p<1), *Social norms* (0.0866; p<1) and *Attitude* (0.0823; p<1). Against this background, support was only found for hypotheses H^2.

4.   SUMMARY

In this chapter, the empirical results of the study were reported. The demographic information collected from the respondents were stated within this study in the sections relating to respondents and the businesses' biographical data. These sections highlighted: the general respondent demographics; their position within the business; duration of this position within the business; respondents educational qualifications; the business' hospitality sector; duration of business' existence; number of employees; and types of social media platforms used.

The validity and reliability results of the measuring instrument was then presented and reported on. According to the results analysed, all of the independent variables *Perceived usefulness*, *Perceived ease of use*, *Attitude* and *Social norm* had an influence on the dependent variable *Intention to use social media* except for *Perceived behavioural control*, which was excluded from the study.

A further analysis of the results was conducted and involved a descriptive analysis as well as an inferential analysis about the data. The descriptive analysis reported on the mean, standard deviation and a summary of the responses to the items by respondents. Included in the inferential analysis was the Pearson's product moment correlation as well as multiple regression analysis.

In Chapter Five, the research objectives and research design will be further discussed and concluded. The main findings of the literature review will be stated and the main findings of the empirical investigation will be provided. The researcher's conclusion and recommendations of the study will then be stated, followed by the limitations and future research of this study. Furthermore, a self-reflection of the researchers will then be provided.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTODUCTION

The empirical results for this study were presented in Chapter Four. In this final chapter, Chapter Five, a brief overview of all previous chapters in will be presented. The empirical results will then be discussed, followed by a detailed summary of the contributions to the study. The recommendations for future research will be highlighted and discussed, along with the limitations experienced by the researchers who conducted this specific study. Furthermore, a self-reflection in terms of the study will be shared by each of the researchers.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the declining hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay. When investigating the usage of social media, the researchers made use of two models that could possibly influence the intention to use social media in small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses. Through identifying these two models and each of their variables, guidelines could be provided to owners/managers as to how social media could influence their business, as well as the declining hospitality industry in NMB.

5.2.1 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to investigate and empirically assess the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB.

In order to address the primary objective of this study, the following secondary objectives have been formulated:

SO[1]: To identify which social media platforms small-to-medium size businesses make use of within the hospitality industry in NMB.

SO^2:   To investigate the relationship between the independent variables (perceived usefulness; perceived ease of use; social norms; perceived behavioural control; and attitude), and the dependent variable (the intention to use social media).

In order to achieve the objectives of this study, the following methodological objectives were put forth:

MO^1:   To conduct a literature review on the nature and characteristics of social media and the hospitality industry, the different types, usage and influence of social media, the benefits and limitations of social media, and contextualise the importance thereof, into small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry.

MO^2:   To determine the appropriate research methodology that will be used to conduct this study.

MO^3:   To propose hypotheses to investigate the relationships between the independent variable, social media, and the dependent variable, the occupancy within the hospitality industry in NMB.

MO^4:   To develop an appropriate measuring instrument that will be used to empirically test the hypothesised relationships.

MO^5:   To report the findings and make appropriate recommendations regarding the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry in NMB.

In Chapter One, an introduction to the study, the problem statement and research objectives of the study were presented, followed by the research questions and hypothesises. The research design and methodology of the study was then formulated and discussed in detail. Furthermore, the scope and significance of the study was outlined and key definitions were given.

In Chapter Two an overview of the tourism sector in South Africa and the relationship between the tourism sector and the hospitality industry was discussed. The overall nature of the hospitality industry in terms of South Africa, and specifically, Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB) was also provided. Moreover, small-to-medium sized businesses and their importance in the South African economy was discussed. Social media was then elaborated on, followed by social media marketing, social media marketing

strategies and various types of social media. Using social media to promote small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses was then discussed. Furthermore, an overview of theoretical intention and adoption models was provided.

Chapter Three provided more detail regarding the research design and methodology. Chapter Three began with an overview of the research paradigm and research approach, followed by the research method used to collect the data in this study. More specifically, secondary data collection and primary data collection was discussed in terms of the population and sample of this study, as well as the sampling techniques and the development of the research instrument that were used. Furthermore, the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument and ethical considerations were discussed. The data analysis of this study was then provided, which elaborated on descriptive and inferential statistics that were undertaken. The last section in Chapter Three then concluded with a chapter summary.

In Chapter Four the empirical findings of the study were discussed. The demographic data of respondents along with the businesses' biographical data was obtained and discussed in detail. The results of the validity and reliability analysis of the measuring instrument's items were then evaluated and discussed. To evaluate the validity and reliability, the factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha were analysed. This analysis was then used to revise the theoretical framework and proposed hypotheses. Next, the empirical results were analysed through evaluation of descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation and frequency table), and inferential statistics (Pearson's product moment correlations and Multiple regression analysis). Finally, Chapter Four concluded with a summary of the results analysed.

5.3   RESEARCH DESIGN

To address the purpose and objectives of this study, the research design was briefly discussed, which included the research paradigm and research methodology. Furthermore, an overview of the characteristics of quantitative and qualitative approaches as well as the population, sampling, and data collection was presented. Finally, the design of measuring instrument and the data analysis was discussed.

5.3.1 RESEARCH PARADIGM, APPROACH AND METHOD

A paradigm is considered to be an ''accepted model or pattern'' that is an organising structure with a philosophical arrangement relating to social structures. There are two main types of research paradigms in social sciences are positivistic and interpretivistic research paradigms (Struwig & Stead, 2013:6). Making use of the positivistic paradigm means that the researcher needs to collect data that supports or disproves theory and then make alterations before more tests are conducted. (Creswell, 2009:7).

In this study a positivistic paradigm was adopted. This is because the researchers collected data to find out whether or not the factors of social media usage influences small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry in NMB.

In terms of the research approach, there are two types that a study can follow, depending on the type of the research. The first approach that can be used is a quantitative research approach. Quantitative research arises from a positivistic research paradigm, which measures, observes, or counts the objective reality of the world. (Seers & Crichton, 2001:487). The second research approach that can be used is the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is used when there is a need to develop an initial understanding of the field of research, which makes use of an interpretivistic research paradigm and non-numerical data. Qualitative research relates to the characteristics of a language, or research concerned with the study of irregularities. (Struwig & Stead, 2013:10).

For this study, the quantitative research approach was adopted because the data collected was to be expressed in numbers, and the procedure that was to be followed by the researchers to collect the data was fairly structured. Furthermore, this research approach was used to analyse specific variables. (Tuli, 2010:102). The quantitative data in this study was gathered by means of a survey.

A research method is an attempt to construct an alternative framework that accommodates the diverse nature of the study being researched (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007:26-28). Fowler (2014:4) states that there are a number of research methods that researches could make use of, one being a survey. Surveys can be defined as asking a sample group of people a collection of relevant questions used to

obtain answers to describe specific population (Fowler, 2014:5). According to Babbie (2013:230), a survey can make use of a questionnaire to gather data from respondents. A questionnaire is an instrument or tool that can be used as a method of evaluation which could contain written questions used to gather information from a specific sample for a purpose (Moerdyk, 2015:333). Questionnaires can be structured or unstructured. Structured questionnaires consist of closed-ended questions, whereas unstructured questionnaires consist of open-ended questions. (Struwig & Stead, 2013:94).

For the purpose of this study, a survey which made use of a structured questionnaire was utilised to extract information from a representative sample of 90 respondents. These questionnaires were distributed to small-to-medium size businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB.

5.3.2 DATA COLLECTION

The following section provided an overview of the secondary and primary data collection methods used in this study. It included the population under investigation and the sample used in this study. In addition, the sampling techniques, as well as the research instrument used in the study were elaborated on.

A comprehensive literature review was conducted, in order to identify factors that could possibly influence the usage of social media for this study, which was then used to undertake a detailed theoretical overview of the usage of social media in small-to-medium size businesses within the hospitality industry. The proposed hypothesised models presented were derived from and based on analysis of relevant secondary sources. Secondary data, for this study, was collected from the library database of Nelson Mandela University, Google Scholar, Emerald Insight, and EBSCOhost.

Primary data was collected after selecting an appropriate population and sampling technique as well as developing a suitable measuring instrument. Each of the aforementioned is described in the sections that follow. For the purpose of this study, the population comprised of all businesses that operate within the hospitality industry.

The sample that was considered when undertaking this specific study was all small-to-medium sized businesses in NMB in the hospitality industry. Small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses include guest houses, bed and breakfasts and hotels that employ fewer than 200 employees (Underhill Corporate Solutions, 2011: 24-25).

The sample size needs to be considered carefully, as statistical techniques used in the study or research can be affected (Rahi, 2017:404). Therefore, 90 [(6 constructs × 5 observations) × 3 items] owners/managers (respondents) of small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB was the sample size for this study.

The two main sampling techniques to collect data are probability and non-probability sampling (Lombaard, *et al.*, 2012:10). A non-probability convenience sampling method was used in this specific study, as the respondents were located within geographical area that was accessible by the researchers. Convenience sampling also allows the researchers to obtain responses in a cost effective manner. Thus, will be beneficial when obtaining information from small-to-medium sized businesses that normally have a high failure rate, where an up to date database does not exist. (Rahi, 2017:404).

The measuring instrument that was be utilised in this study was a structured questionnaire. A questionnaire is an instrument or tool that can be used as a method of evaluation which could contain written questions used to gather information from a specific sample for a purpose (Moerdyk, 2015:333). This study made use of a structured questionnaire and comprised of two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A comprised of the biographical information of the respondents as well as information about the business. Section B made use of a 5-point Likert-scale to measure the respondents' perceptions and attitudes regarding the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in NMB. This ranged from 1-5, with 1 being Strongly Disagree, 2 being Disagree, 3 being Natural, 4 being Agree, and lastly, 5 being Strongly Agree.

5.3.3   DATA ANALYSIS

Once primary data was collected, it was analysed using appropriate methods. The data gathered from the respondents was captured in Excel and imported into a statistical program, known as Statistica version 13.3.

Validity can be defined as the extent to which a measuring instrument measures what it claims to measure (Kimberlin & Winterstein, 2008:2278). There are three different methods used to determine the validity of an intruding instrument, construct validity, content validity, and face validity. For the purpose of this study, the researchers used all three validity methods.

There are two analytical techniques that can be used to interpret factors within research, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. In this study, the test for undimensionality using a factor analysis was utilised to test the validity of the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media* and the independent variables, *Perceived usefulness, Perceived ease of use, Attitude, Social norms,* and *Perceived behavioural control.* Thus, unidimensionality is used when measuring a single item or variable. (Hair, *et al.*, 2014:123).

In terms of the reliability of the measuring instrument, it was assessed to see whether the results were consistent throughout the test and if it is free from any errors, in order to produce the most accurate results (Moerdyk, 2015:333). To assess the reliability of a test, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value was calculated. According to Gleim and Gleim (2003:83-84), Cronbach's alpha coefficient can fall within the range between 0.7 and 0.95 to indicate acceptable reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011:54). However, Suhr and Shay (2008:3) suggested that satisfactory reliability of items developed for research aims can be as low as 0.6.

Descriptive statistics refer to central tendency using, charts, numbers and tables (Rendón-Macías, *et al.*, 2016:397). For the purpose of this study, this statistical method will focus on measures of central tendency such as mean, as well as measures of dispersion such as frequency distribution and standard deviation (Fisher & Marshall, 2009:95).

Inferential statistics is a descriptive statistic that estimates the value of a corresponding population parameter. Inferential statistics can therefore seek estimation errors that are built into samples. (Gibbs, *et al.*, 2017:215). In this study Pearson's product moment correlation and a multiple regression analysis will be use to analyse inferential statistics.

5.4   MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Scorțe, *et al.* (2013:703), tourism is the act and desire of travelling for an individual's own liking. Tourism is seen as a leisure activity that consists of physically travelling or residing far away from an individual's place of residence, either for enjoyment, rest or elevating their experiences and culture. Tourism can also be seen as "the business of attracting visitors and catering to their needs and expectations" (Verma, 2018:1).

South Africa is a developing country, therefore tourism is seen as a key promotional strategy that can lead to economic upliftment, development of communities and decrease poverty levels. It has also emerged as an option to significantly change and develop South Africa. (Binns & Nelt, 2002:235). South Africa is seen to have major tourism assets and attractions which tourists seem to want to experience. When a country hosts activities such as festivals, they become more known to the wider public of tourists and become an option as a holiday destination or a country to invest in. South Africa saw this when they hosted the 2010 soccer World Cup. (Boyle, 1997:1975).

In South Africa the government is looking to capitalise on the country's natural and cultural resources, to bring in more tourism which has the potential to improve the quality of life of all South Africans in a huge way. In April 2017 South Africa had a total of 3 841 519 people travelling in and out of the country. Of this, 72.2 percent (2 773 454) were foreign travellers. However, in 2018 there was a 0.6 percent decline in the amount of travellers. In April 2018, it was revealed that 3 582 842 people travelled in and out of the country. According to the above mentioned statistics, it is evident that fewer people are entering South Africa, therefore the South African Tourism Sector could be experiencing an economic loss. (Statistics South Africa, 2018:9).

According to Ma (2009:13) the tourism industry is made up of multiple components, which include hotels and accommodation, transportation, entertainment services, information services, government agencies, attraction services, and education institutions. The hospitality industry is a component part of the tourism industry, together with other relevant activities. The two areas are independent, but the existence of a common ground is accepted. (Scorțe, *et al.,* 2013:705).

Hospitality is described as commercial service delivery in bars, hotels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, and other catering activities. The term, as well as the concept of hospitality, can also be defined as offering and giving food and drinks and providing accommodation to individuals who are not the regular members of the household or place of residence (Lashley & Morrison, 2000:250).

The hospitality sector can be defined as all commercial businesses, or parts of commercial businesses, in which employers and employees connect for the purpose of conducting any of the following establishments to obtain financial reward: creating accommodation opportunities (for example hotels and guesthouses, restaurants and cafés, pubs, snack bars and taverns, coffee shops and tearooms, fast food outlets, industrial or commercial caterers, and function or contract caterers. (Lashley & Morrison, 2000:251).

South Africa's tourism and hospitality industry is currently thriving and brings in millions of Rands for the country and its communities. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers (2017:11), the available 61 200 rooms in South Africa in 2016 accounted for R15 892 000 (12.2 percent of the South Africa's overall revenue), a 10.3 percent increase from the previous year.

The hospitality industry in NMB consists of 15 000 beds including accommodation types ranging from hotels, guest houses and bed and breakfasts, to 4-star and 5-star luxury hotels. (Nelson Mandela Bay Tourism, 2018:1). The NMB is a 1 959km^2 area, Category A municipality Metropolitan, and consists of various collaborative cities including Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Despatch, Motherwell, Bethelsdorp, Bloemendal, Claredon Marine, Blue Horizon Bay, and KwaNobuhle. The main source of economic stability for this municipality is found in the manufacturing, finance, transport, trade

and community services sectors. Thus, suggesting that accommodation is not one of NMB's major economic contributors. (Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality, 2017:2).

According to Underhill Corporate Solutions (2011:24-25) South African small-to-medium sized businesses are defined according to the number of employees employed by the business, their annual turnover, as well as their gross assets. In numerous countries, small-to-medium sized businesses lead the number of firms and play a vital role in promoting and sustaining economic growth (Asah, *et al.*, 2015:310).

In terms of South Africa, Lekhanya (2015:412) agrees with Fiseha and Oyelana (2015:280) and also indicates that small-to-medium sized businesses have a significant role to play in the economy. Small-to-medium sized businesses can play a crucial role is rectifying the 26.7 percent unemployment rate that South Africa is currently facing, particularly for women, low skill workers and the youth (Fiseha & Oyelana, 2015:280). Small-to-medium sized businesses can increase competitive forces in the South African economy, which influences the position of the business in their specific industry, through innovation stimulation. Furthermore, small-to-medium sized businesses can also address poverty and inequality issues, create innovation, generate income, and improve technological advancement. (Lekhanya, 2015:412).

Small-to-medium sized businesses in NMB could be lacking funds, marketing their businesses unsuccessfully, and need assistance in the areas of marketing and increasing sales (National Small Business Chamber, 2016:2). Therefore, it is important to implement ways and tools to ensure the growth and success of these small-to-medium sized businesses that will ultimately affect the country. With the attraction that social media has obtained since 2003 when it was first introduced, it could be a vital tool to be utilised within small-to-medium sized businesses. Social media networking sites increase daily in terms of the number of users and could have a major effect on the economy of any country. (Matikiti, *et al.*, 2016:740).

Kaplan and Haenlein (2010:61) refer to social media as internet-based technological applications that provides users with formation and exchange of content, while enabling interaction and collaboration between users. Social media is concerned with individuals participating, sharing, interacting, and collaborating using online technology (Boyd & Ellison, 2007:210).

The development of the World Wide Web formed the basis of a networked communication system using technology, known as hypertext, to connect directly to the Internet. This online service was altered from presenting selected channels of communication among individuals, to presenting more interactive platforms where users can share their activities and interests. This shift led to an increase in potential online communications which resulted in online technologies integrating into everyday life and individual's social practices. (Boyd & Ellison, 2007:210). Over the years MySpace, Facebook, Flckr, YouTube and Twitter developed, which allowed individuals to have a variety of online communication strategies that they could choose from (Van Dijck, 2013:7).

Today, social media is mainly about engaging with people on an ongoing basis and this can be done by ensuring that the content found on social media is recent, refreshed, and relevant (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:59). Businesses use social media platforms to market their business as it provides them with the opportunity to reach a large amount of stakeholders that they would not normally be able to reach (Derham, *et al.,* 2011: 8). Social media delivers substantial benefits when it is used to market a firm, and this is a method called social media marketing. (Erdoğmuş & Cicek, 2012:1358; Neti, 2011:3). McCann and Barlow (2015:276) states that small-to-medium sized businesses can do specific things when implementing social media marketing efforts, if they are wanting to use social media platforms as a way to receive a positive return on investment.

Weinberg and Pehlivan (2011:280) stated that some social media platforms are better suited for certain marketing strategies for specific industries than others. Small-to-medium sized businesses are far less likely to use emerging technologies than larger businesses (Weinberg & Pehlivan, 2011:280). The use and adoption of social media by small-to-medium sized businesses can differ substantially from that of larger businesses, as small-to-medium sized businesses face bigger pressures to compete with the larger businesses. Small-to-medium sized businesses are under pressure to be more creative and responsive to local customers' needs and to do a better job in facilitating the consumer's needs. (He, *et al.*, 2014:230).

The business should firstly generate ideas and develop a social media marketing strategy. This can be done by establishing how social media fits into the plan that the

business desires to accomplish in that specific year (Neti, 2011:13). The business can then select one or more social media platform(s) to direct their marketing attempts, by deciding which platform(s) will offer the business the best return on their investment. Furthermore, the small-to-medium sized businesses should set up and utilise social media marketing activities and social media tools that are in agreement with the businesses' other marketing actions. (McCann & Barlow, 2015:276).

The benefits and impacts of social media marketing strategies that small-to-medium sized businesses can experience, can be measured through analytical tools that the social media platforms can provide. The benefits include improved customer service, brand awareness, and promotion of products and services. It also reduces costs, increases sales and volume of traffic to websites, as well as builds more relationships and contacts. (McCann & Barlow, 2015:277).

Social media being the most popular means of communication, social media marketing also provides the benefit of helping the small-to-medium sized businesses' marketing efforts to attain a broad reach (Aguilera, 2013:1). Using social media to communicate to stakeholders can also build customer loyalty, as they remain continuously informed about the business (Erdoğmuş & Cicek, 2012:1358). Therefore, small-to-medium sized businesses should use social media platforms in order to increase business. Social media marketing can be a solution to failed marketing efforts in small-to-medium sized businesses, particularly within the hospitality industry in NMB that are lacking funds and marketing assistance. The benefit of social media being a low cost, easy-to-use information technology, it can provide small-to-medium sized businesses with other benefits that they would not be experience using traditional marketing methods.

Small-to-medium sized businesses must first identify the objectives they want to achieve and then use those objectives as the foundation to determine which social media marketing platform will be best suited for the business (McCann & Barlow, 2015:276-280). The business must investigate which social media platform will offer the best return on their investment, subsequently, focussing their marketing efforts on that particular platform(s) (McCann & Barlow, 2015:279-284). Types of social media include: blogs, Wikis, social network sites, media sharing sites and virtual world content (Republic of Canada, 2012:1).

According to McCann and Barlow (2015:279), the most commonly used social media platforms are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and blogs. In South Africa specifically, the most commonly used social media platforms are Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn. Facebook sees adoption from 49 percent of the South African population, followed by YouTube with a close 47 percent, Whatsapp with 45 percent, and LinkedIn with just under 30 percent. (Querty, 2017:12). These statistics reveal that Facebook would be the most appropriate social media platform to engage with a business' target audience.

Social media engagement can be defined as the emotional and intuitive experiences that consumers undergo when using a specific social media platform at a specific moment (Voorveld, *et al.*, 2018:40). Small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry need to know how consumers' engagement with different social media platforms drives their engagement with advertising methods that they could potentially then make use of. This would aid businesses to know how the consumers would perceive and evaluate their specific advertising. (Voorveld, *et al.*, 2018:38).

Facebook can broadly be defined as a general social networking site that allows for communication and interaction between users, using more elaborate messages and visual images (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61). Above all other social media platforms, Facebook is considered the most important and most used (Bogaert, *et al.*, 2016:506). Twitter can be defined as a free microblogging application service which allows users to share brief tweets, including hashtags (#), @mentions, photos and videos (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61; Help.twitter.com, 2018). LinkedIn can be defined as a business- and employment-oriented social networking service (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010:61). YouTube can broadly be defined as a free online video hosting service (Wu, 2016:2). Companies can use YouTube to post adverts and announcements relating to certain video content in order to ensure the relevant content reaches appropriate users. (Voorveld, *et al.*, 2018:45).

Blogs, short for 'Web Blogs', is an online journal offering multimedia resource accessible over the Web. This Web based information sharing technology contains dated entries about particular topics. (Boulos, *et al.*, 2006:1). WhatsApp is defined as an instant messaging smartphone application. This instant messenger application is a

day-to-day method for individuals via text-based communicate. (O'Hara, *et al.*, 2014:1). Wikis are defined as public websites revolving around certain topics and interests that can be edited and amended by anyone who has general access to these Wikis (which is the main difference between Wikis and Blogs). (Boulos, *et al*, 2006:1).

Stokes and Lomax (2002:350) stated that the most important sources of gaining new customers for small-to-medium sized businesses, is through recommendations from existing customers. The biggest challenge for small-to-medium sized businesses is to reach their customers with the limited resources that they have. Small-to-medium sized businesses should use social media platforms because it is a low-cost and easily accessible marketing tool to achieve brand awareness, as it entices communications with consumers (Neti, 2011:2-3). Therefore, social media marketing can be a solution to improve any small-to-medium sized business, specifically the decline within the hospitality industry in NMB.

TAM and TPB models were found to be most relevant in trying to establish the customer's intention to use social media when looking for accommodation and helping business owners understand their behaviours. Intention becomes the fundamental part towards explaining behaviour. Intention indicates the effort that a person will make to carry out a specific behaviour. It captures the motivational factors that influence a person's behaviour. (Liñána, 2004:11).

The Theory of Planned Behaviour is an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action. The model was further extended to include the variable of perceived behavioural control that should be taken into account and this is the variable that the TRA lacks (Glanz, *et al.*, 2008:68). The Theory of Planned behaviour (TPB) developed by Ajzen (1985:15) proposes that perceived behaviour control is appointed to observe the effects of attitudes and subjective norms on behaviour. Many hospitality and marketing researchers agree that increasing customers' positive pre- and post-purchasing decisions are the key to firms' long-term success. (Ngai, *et al.*, 2015:34).

While customers' decision-making process is very complex, it is believed that their decision development can be evidence in comprehending this process. (Han, *et al.*, 2010:325). Considering factors affecting customers' decisions may deliver important perceptions regarding their purchasing decision-making process (Lam & Hsu,

2006:589). The TPB identifies three aspects of intention. Two imitate the perceived desirability of performing the behaviour. They are the customer's personal attitude toward outcomes of the behaviour and perceived social norms. The third aspect, perceived behavioural control, emulates perceptions that the behaviour is individually controllable. (Krueger, *et al.*, 2000:416).

Throughout the hospitality industry, little is known about the features regarding customer engagement behaviour in social media usage (Bitter & Grabner-Kräuter, 2014:197). The benefits from social media usage within the hospitality industry, has been found to enhance user's perceptions of company attractiveness and thus motivates customer's intention to purchase (Kang, *et al.*, 2014). It was also found that not only consumer-brand relationship, but also the consumer's interaction with society, that plays a crucial role within customer engagement with brands and their products (Bitter & Grabner-Kräuter, 2014:199).

As previously mentioned, the TPB model illustrates relationships between attitude, social norm, and perceived behavioural control towards the intention to purchase a product or service (Hsu & Chiu, 2004:369). These variables play a vital part in the usage of social media by small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses.

The first variable, attitude, pertains to consumers' viewpoint and position towards a specific behaviour or action and reflects an individual's evaluation (positive or negative) about purchasing the company's product or service (Ajzen, 2002:665). The second variable, Social norms, refers to the influence of other people on the users' behavioural actions. It revolves around the opinion of and pressure from friends and family and the actions of the general public the individuals associate with. (Ajzen, 2002:666). The last variable of the TPB model, perceived bahavioural control, is concerned with perceived control over the performance of a certain behaviour (Ajzen, 2002:666).

Information technology adoption and the use thereof, in the work place remains a concern within information research and practice. Regardless of there being a remarkable advancement within hardware and software capabilities, the issue of underutilised systems is prevailing. Low usage of technological systems has been recognised as a major issue underlying the organisations investment in information

technology. (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000:186). TAM entails, enhances and explains how users come to accept technology. The model proposes that when users are presented with new technology, two factors will be used, which are the perceived usefulness and usage intentions in terms of social influence and cognitive instrumental processes.

The TAM model explains that an individual's behavioural intention to use a system, which in this study refers to social media platforms, is determined by two beliefs. The first belief being perceived usefulness, defined as the degree to which an individual believes that using the social media platform will enhance their job performance. The second belief being the perceived ease of use, defined as the degree to which an individual believes that utilising the social media platform will be effortless. (Michaelidou, *et al.*, 2011:1153).

According to Carlson and Christopher (2015:80), online social media networks are one of the most favourable tools used in advertising. Social media platforms are seen as an effective advertising route that competes well with traditional advertising methods (Nelson-Field, *et al.*, 2013:186). Sponsored advertising on social network sites can be customized based on the individual users search history, making it more reliable at targeting businesses' consumers that are relevant to the advertisement (Barreto, 2013:119). Social media can play a vital role in influencing consumers to state their opinions and experiences, referrals and information about hospitality businesses if it is viewed as more useful and easy to use to consumers (Rese, *et al.*, 2014:869).

The significance in making use of this TAM model is that it could help individuals understand and create the circumstances under which social media platforms will be embraced by individuals in small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000:186). The model includes external variables that will influence the perceived use and usefulness of technology, the relationship between the two and how attitude will have an impact on it (Lin & Kim, 2016:710).

External variables from the TAM include demographics and social media-use experience, perceived risk and trust associated with the social media use. These variables can also influence individuals' beliefs when wanting to adopt a new technology (Lin & Kim, 2016:710). Lin and Kim (2016:712) reveal that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use positively relate to customers decisions on

whether to adopt the social media site or not. In terms of perceived usefulness of social media advertising, it is expected that it will become stronger and have a lasting positive effect and influence on the business and consumers' attitudes towards social media sites. Perceived usefulness can therefore stabilize or strengthen the consumer's intention to purchase based on the experience and content they receive from the social media sites. Davis (1989:320).

The TAM can explain consumers' active responses to social media when it is used as an advertising technique for any business, specifically for small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses. It conceptualizes whether perceived attributes of social media would influence consumer's attitudes and their intentions to purchase the service or product, and whether external variables would impact the perceived attributes of social media used by small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses. (Lin & Kim, 2016:713). Therefore, the usage of social media can be influenced by the specific variables in the TAM and TPB model, identifying individuals' intentions to purchase, their behaviour and how easy the social media platform is to use (Venkatesh & Davis, 2000:186; Ngai, *et al.*, 2015:34). Thus, indicating that these models are ideal for usage in hospitality businesses.

5.5 MAIN FINDINGS FROM THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

The analysis of the demographic information obtained from the respondents in the study was presented in Chapter Four. Most of the respondents who participated in the study were the actual owners of the business (53.33%) and identified as males (56.67%) between the ages of 36-45 (34.44%) or 46-55 (24.44%) years of age. The largest percentage of respondents were found to be white (60.00%), followed by black (22.22%), followed by White (27.8%). It was also evident that most of the respondents who participated in this study did not possess a form of tertiary qualification (56.67%). Lastly, the majority of the respondents in this study have been in their position within the business for 5-10 years (58.89%).

Most business respondents were found to be Bed and Breakfasts' (48.89%), followed by guest houses (34.44%). Most of the businesses analysed have been running for between 5-10 years (42.22%). The highest percentage of respondents within small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses were found to employ between 5-10

employees (50.00%). Most small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses analysed make use of multiple (a combination of more than three platform options) (23.33%), followed by businesses making use of Websites only (17.78%).

The validity and reliability of the measuring instrument was then assessed. A test for undimensionality was conducted, along with a calculation of the Cronbach's alpha in order to assess the validity and reliability of the measuring instrument. All five items (INT1, INT2, INT3, INT4 and INT5) originally intended to measure the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media*, loaded successfully. The factor loadings of the items of this variable range between 0.500 and 0.766.This indicates that the validity of the scale measuring *Intention to use social media* is satisfactory. All six items (EASE1, EASE2, EASE3, EASE4, EASE5 and EASE6) originally intended to measure *Perceived ease of use*, loaded successfully. The factor loadings of the items of this variable range between0.433 and 0.883.This indicates that the validity of the scale measuring *Perceived ease of use* is satisfactory. All five items (ATT1, ATT2, ATT3, ATT4 and ATT5) originally intended to measure *Perceived ease of use*, loaded successfully. The factor loadings of the items of this variable range between 0.503 and 0.855.This indicates that the validity of the scale measuring *Perceived ease of use* is satisfactory.

Of the nine items originally used to measure *Perceived usefulness* only the first seven (USEFUL1, USEFUL2, USEFUL3, USEFUL4, USEFUL5, USEFUL6, and USEFUL7) loaded together (see Table 4.5). The factor loadings for these remaining items range between 0.524 and 0.862. This indicates that the validity of the scale measuring *Perceived usefulness* is satisfactory. Of the five items originally intended to measure *Social norms*, only four loaded together (NORM2, NORM3, NORM4 and NORM5) (see Table 4.8). The factor loadings for these remaining items ranged between 0.641 and 0.795. This indicates that the validity of the scale measuring *Social norms* is satisfactory. Of the five items originally intended to measure *Perceived behavioural control*, only two loaded together (PBC2 and PBC5) (see Table 4.9). These two remaining items were not enough to conduct a statistical evaluation based on this construct so *Perceived behavioural control* was removed from the study.

The Cronbach's alpha calculated for the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media,* was 0.642, which is above the lower limit of 0.6 suggested by Suhr and Shay

(2008:3). The Cronbach's alpha calculated for all the independent variables, *Perceived usefulness* (0.829); *Perceived ease of use* (0.767); *Social norms* (0.740); and *Attitude* (0.822), which are all above the lower limit of 0.7 suggested by Tavakol and Dennick (2011:54). Thus, all variables that were considered valid, were considered reliable in nature after further analysis.

After the above validity and reliability of the various variables were anaylsed and interpreted, the following hypotheses were adapted:

H[1]: The business' perception of *perceived usefulness* has a positive effect on the intention to use social media.

H[2]: The business' perception of *perceived ease of use* has a positive effect on the intention to use social media.

H[3]: The business' perception of *social norms* has a positive effect on the intention to purchase a product.

H[4]: The business' perception of *attitude* has a positive effect on the intention to purchase a product.

The descriptive statistics of this study comprised of the mean, standard deviation and frequency distribution of the results obtained. In terms of the 5 point Likert scale were used to create categories of agree, neutral and disagree. The various mean scores obtained from the Pearson's coefficients regarding the independent variables were *Perceived usefulness* (4.084); *Perceived ease of use* (3.894); *Attitude* (3.991); and *Social norm* (4.472), which indicates that respondents chose to respond in a positive manner and generally agree with the items in question.

The standard deviation for the independent variables are *Perceived usefulness* (0.502); *Perceived ease of use* (0.650); *Attitude* (0.716); and *Social norm* (0.568). The standard deviation of these independent variables indicates that the data set is relatively concentrates around the mean regarding *Intention to use social media*.

In respondent's responses, the disagree percentage for the variables evaluated were extremely low, this indicates that respondents did not frequently disagree with the items in question. The agree percentage of the items were relatively high and is above 70 percent for all items in question. This indicates that respondents responded in a

positive manner and more frequently chose to agree with the items in question. Respondents responded neutral to more items than they responded disagree but not as much as they responded agree. This indicates that respondents responded neither positively nor negatively to the items in question.

When analysing the Pearson's correlation coefficient of this study, the researchers found no strong positive associations, perfect association, or any negative association between the dependent variable and any of the independent variables. A strong positive association was reported between *Perceived usefulness* and both *Perceived ease of use* (0.781) and *Attitude* (0.810). A moderate positive association was reported between the dependent variable *Intention to use social media* and the independent variable *Perceived ease of use* (r=663), which held the highest correlation coefficient of this study. This correlation coefficient was closely followed by a moderate positive association of dependent variables *Attitude* (r=0.623) and *Perceived usefulness* (r=0.655). A weak positive association is reported between the independent variable *Social norm* and all other variables: *Intention to use social media* (0.193); *Perceived usefulness* (0.111); *Perceived ease of use* (0.104); and *Attitude* (0.239).

A strong correlation was reported between the actual and predicted values of the dependent variable, *Intention to use social media* with a coefficient of determination of $R^2 = 0.5052$. A positive linear relationship was also reported between *Intention to use social media* and *Perceived ease of use* (0.2733; p<0.01). Since this relationship is positive, it implies that the business respondents believes that perceiving social media as easier to use, will result in higher intention to use social media platforms within their hospitality business. Against this background, support was only found for hypotheses H^2.

5.6   CONCLUSIONS

The study has provided relevant summarised information necessary to understand the perceptions of the owners/managers of small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses within NMB, regarding the usage of social media to market their business and communicate with consumers. The information provided by the researchers of this study is necessary to understand which social media platforms these small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses currently make use of. It was evident that most of the

businesses analysed make use of a combination of multiple social media platforms (more than three platform options). To be more specific, respondents were mostly found making use of websites or a combination of a website and Facebook. This validates what was stated in the literature review of this study, which was that Facebook is considered to be the most important platform and most used amongst businesses and consumers.

The study then evaluated intention and adoption-based models to conclude whether they have an influence on the usage of social media among respondents. After extensive tests were done for validity and reliability, it was concluded that all the variables analysed, except for one, were considered to be valid and reliable in nature. The variable which was not considered valid and reliable, *Perceived behavioural control* (which formed part of the intention-based model), was thus excluded from the revised hypotheses. When analysing responses to the measuring instrument, most respondents were found to agree and disagree strongly with items measuring *Social norms* in comparison to other items which found respondents responding more with agree or neutral. When analysing inferential statistics, it was found that the only independent variable to have a strong linear relationship with the dependent variable, is *Perceived ease of use*. This resulted in only the second hypothesis being supported. All other independent variables had a minimal effect on the *Intention to use social media.*

5.7   RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are put forth to aid small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses in using social media:

- Since *Perceived ease of use* was found to hold the a strongest significant relationship with *Intention to use social media*, it is recommended that businesses make their social media experiences as easy and user friendly as possible for both employees and customers. This can be done by implementing joint publishing systems to enable them to post on multiple platforms as quickly and easily as possible at the same time.
- As the majority of respondents were found to use minimal different platforms, it is recommended that they widen their digital footprint and make themselves available

on many or all frequently used social media platforms. This will ensure optimal coverage and interaction between the business and their customers.

- Businesses should make use of social media platforms because they have little to no costs, decreasing marketing expenditures, as small-to-medium sized businesses are known to have minimal resources and funds.

- Businesses should encourage all staff members to become familiar with all social media platforms and provide sufficient support to those who struggle. Businesses should also assign specific staff members to run major social media platforms.

- In the Pearson's correlation coefficient, the strongest correlation between *Intention to use social media* was *Perceived usefulness*. Thus it is recommended that businesses focus their efforts and resources on social media platforms they deem to be useful and that results in the desired response from consumers.

5.8   SHORTCOMINGS OF THE RESEARCH

This study had various limitations. However, limitations are common in any research. It is very important that these limitations are considered when interpreting the study. The limitations are as follows:

- The study focused on the Nelson Mandela Bay area, which portrayed a decline in the hospitality industry. However, it was immensely hard to find literature and facts regarding this geographical area. The lack of literature on NMB's hospitality industry made it hard to motivate the decline that they were experiencing.

- Handing out the questionnaires to respondents was an easy task, however retrieving them back from respondents proved to be harder than expected. Most respondents either forgot about filling in the questionnaires or delivered it to us a few weeks late. Thus, setting us back in terms of time.

- Time constraints' was another limitation for the researchers, with regards to the completion of this study. Both researchers had part time jobs and were studying full-time too. Setting time aside for the researching, reading and writing of this study was very time consuming and a struggle to balance.

5.9 FUTURE RESEARCH

The researchers believe that future research into the perceptions of the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized hospitality businesses from the consumers' point of view is necessary. This will provide businesses and researchers the perspective of online marketing and social media platforms usage from the receiving end of the scale. Allowing businesses to adapt certain approaches and content to appeal to the consumers in a positive way.

The researchers also feel that future research should be done with regards to how fees and billings from different social media platforms can influence the businesses decision to marketing towards them. This could also highlight the effect it will have about the business in the minds of consumers knowing that the business paid for the marketing platform.

Future research could also be done to examine the influence of social media usage in different declining business industries or geographical areas. This could create comparisons between two industries or areas as to identify strengths in one or weaknesses in another in terms of social media usage.

Future research could include more refined and detailed items from a wider range of models. This would narrow down and simplify the items being proposed to respondents and measure the different aspect more clearly.

5.10 SELF REFLECTION

When starting the process of this study, it was easy to underestimate the amount of time that one has to complete the research, as you are not fully aware of the amount of work that is ahead. However, when the researchers started the process of researching for this study it was evident as to how time consuming it was going to be. The researchers had to learn how to manage their studies as well as put time aside to research and write this specific study. It taught the researchers how important time management is and how to plan ahead of time.

In terms of researching, both researchers took the time to understand how important reading is and documenting the written pieces that they have read. Both researchers now enjoy the challenge of finding literature to back up their content. The researchers have learned a great deal of knowledge about the hospitality industry in NMB and how important the role of small-to-medium sized businesses is in any economy, specifically South Africa's economy. This has given the researchers a now profound perspective on small-to-medium sized businesses. Both researchers families partake in the hospitality industry, and in doing this study, they have found a great deal of respect and passion for their family businesses.

The researchers had minimal knowledge with regards to statistical work and statistical programs. Therefore, using and interpreting the program Statistica, proved to be an immense challenge and a setback. More reading and researching had to be done in terms of understanding the statistics of this study before the researchers could actually run the statistics and interpret the findings.

Assorted skills and new knowledge was acquired in the process of completing this specific study. Firstly, the knowledge acquired in Chapter Two regarding the actual content in terms of social media and small-to-medium sized businesses, as well as South Africa's hospitality industry. Secondly, the knowledge gained upon when developing the measuring instrument and the selecting the sample and size. Thirdly, knowledge was acquired with regards to interacting with various types of people (respondents) while distributing and retrieving questionnaires. Another skill that was obtained was how to run and interpret a statistical analysis using the statistical program, Statistica. This was the knowledge and skills that the researchers gained and developed in order to gather and analyse the necessary information that assisted in compiling the conclusions of this study.

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ANNEXURE A COPY OF COVERING LETTER

NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

Summerstrand South Campus
Department of Business Management
June-August 2018

Dear respondent

Research has shown a decline in the occupancy rates within the hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay (NMB), with an 8.69% shortfall in recent years. Those hospitality businesses that have been making use of social media to communicate with consumers were urged to assign even more resources (time and budget) to social media marketing of their business. However, research on the use of social media marketing strategies to support the growth of small-to-medium sized businesses, specifically in South Africa, has been lacking. It was also found that a lack of marketing strategies and skills were the very reason why these small-to-medium sized businesses were failing, hence the decline in occupancy rates in NMB's hospitality industry.

Topic: **Investigating the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry**

The aim: **To investigate and empirically assess the usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay.**

The honours students are required to gather the necessary information from small-to-medium sized businesses within the hospitality industry in Nelson Mandela Bay. For the purpose of this assignment, a *small-to-medium sized business* is a business which employs **fewer than 200 employees.**

It would be greatly appreciated if you could respond to the following questions so as to assist in the completion of this project. The questionnaire should take about 15 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers. Only your **honesty** and the **perceptions you hold** are important. **All information will be treated in the strictest confidence** and you are under no obligation to participate. Please note that the information obtained will be used for research purposes only. The final report will not include any identifying information. Please feel free to contact us with regard to any queries you might have. Your participation in the study will be most appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Ms S.B. Saunders   Elandré Coetzer   Kirsty de Wet
Study Leader   Honours student   Honours student

Department of Business Management
Nelson Mandela University
Email: shelley.saunders@mandela.ac.za
Tel: +27 (0) 41 504 1392

ANNEXURE B COPY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

A **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Please mark your selection to the following questions with an (X).

1.1 Do you meet the requirements for participating in this research study, namely (1) your business has been in operation for at least one year (2) is a small-to-medium sized business is a business which employs **fewer than 200 employees**. Please indicate if your businesses is a small-to-medium size.

Yes		1
No		2

1.2 Please indicate the type of business you own/manage in the hospitality industry.

Hotel		1
Motel		2
Bed and Breakfast		3
Guest House		4
Guest Farm		5
Other, please specify …………		6

1.3 Please indicate how long the business has been operating.

0-5 years		1
5-10 years		2
10-15 years		3
15-20 years		4
20-30 years		5
Other, please specify …………		6

1.4 Please estimate how many full-time employees are currently employed in your business.

Less than 5 employees		1
5-10 employees		2
11-20 employees		3
20-50 employees		4
50-100 employees		5
More than 100 employees		6

1.5 Please indicate what social media platforms your business currently makes use of.

Facebook		1
Twitter		2
LinkedIn		3
WhatsApp		4
YouTube		5
Instagram		6
Website		7
Other, please specify …………		8

1.6 Please indicate how often your makes use of marketing on social media platforms.

Never		1
Once a week		2
2-3 times a week		3
More than 4 times a week		4

2 Please indicate which of the following positions you currently hold in the business.

Owner		1
Manager		2
Other, please specify …………		3

3   Please indicate your gender.

Male		1
Female		2

4   Please indicate to which age category you belong (for statistical purposes only).

18 – 25		1
26 – 35		2
36 – 45		4
46 – 55		5
56 – 65		6
65 +		7

5   Please indicate to which population group you belong (for statistical purposes only).

Asian		1
Black		2
Coloured		3
White		4
Not willing to say		5

6   Do you have a tertiary (post-matric) qualification?

Yes		1
No		2

7   Please indicate the duration of your position at the hospitality business.

0-5 years		1
5-10 years		2
10-15 years		3
15-20 years		4
Other, please specify …………		5

B   **THE USAGE OF SOCIAL MEDIA WITHIN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IN NELSON MANDELA BAY**

Please indicate (with an '**X**') the extent to which **you agree or disagree with each statement**. The columns are graded from **1** to **5**. The number **1** denotes strong **disagreement** with the statement, and at the other end of the scale, **5** denotes strong **agreement** with the statement.

	In my opinion…..	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
1	It's easy for me to become more skilful at using social media for my business.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Using social media allows me to customise my advertising.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have the resources to use social media within my business.	1	2	3	4	5
4	My employees find using social media platforms within my business as enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Using social media within my business allows me to save time.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Social media will become my main source of communication with customers in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Social media platforms are easy to learn how to use.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I intent to use social media to grow my market share.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I intend to use social media in my business to gain immediate customer feedback about my business.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Using social media platforms to be more beneficial than traditional marketing methods.	1	2	3	4	5
11	My family members think that I should use social media in my business.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Social media will make it easier to market my business.	1	2	3	4	5
13	My customers are able to use social media platforms.	1	2	3	4	5
14	Using social media within my business is entirely within my control.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I intend to use social media to communicate with my customers.	1	2	3	4	5
16	My friends encourage me to use social media within my business.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Social media can be used to enhance my businesses communication with its customers.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I can fully control what content is made available to my customers via social media platforms.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I believe that it is good for me to use social media in my business.	1	2	3	4	5
20	Using social media can be used to help my business growth.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Stakeholders who's opinions are valuable to me would prefer me to use social media within my business.	1	2	3	4	5
22	I have a desire to use social media platforms within my business.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Using social media can help my business reach a wide geographical area.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Using social media within my business can aid in gathering information on my customers.	1	2	3	4	5
25	My attitude towards social media is that it can make a difference to my business.	1	2	3	4	5

26	My employees feel comfortable using social media platforms.	1	2	3	4	5
27	I intend to use social media to make my customers aware of specials the business is having.	1	2	3	4	5
28	Using social media within my business can increase my customer's feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
29	It is easy to use social media platforms.	1	2	3	4	5
30	Family and friends of my customers have an influence on whether they utilise social media platforms.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Social media platforms allow for clear marketing messages to be sent to customers.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Using social media can help my business gain tourists.	1	2	3	4	5
33	Using social media advertising, I can control the behviour of my customers.	1	2	3	4	5
34	Family and friends of my customers dictate which social media platforms they utilise more frequently.	1	2	3	4	5
35	Social media as a marketing tool, can be easily be understood by my customers.	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

ANNEXURE C ETHICAL CLEARANCE FORM

NELSON MANDELA
UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC SCIENCES

ETHICS CLEARANCE FOR TREATISES / DISSERTATIONS / THESES

Instructions:
- Should be completed by supervisor and student
- Must be signed off by student, supervisor and HoD
- Submit completed form to Ms Lindie van Rensburg
- Please ensure that the research methodology section from the proposal is attached to this form
- *Please note that by following this Proforma ethics route, the study will NOT be allocated an ethics clearance number*

FACULTY: Business and Economic Sciences

SCHOOL / DEPARTMENT: Department of Business Management

I, Ms S.B. Saunders the supervisor for Mr E. Coetzer (215096673) and K.L. de Wet (215161289) a candidate for the degree of Business Management Honours with a treatise entitled: **The usage of social media in small-to-medium sized businesses in the hospitality industry**, considered the following ethics criteria *(please tick the appropriate block):*

		YES	NO
1.	Is there any risk of harm, embarrassment of offence, however slight or temporary, to the participant, third parties or to the communities at large?		X
2.	Is the study based on a research population defined as 'vulnerable' in terms of age, physical characteristics and/or disease status?		X
2.1	Are subjects/participants/respondents of your study:		
2.1.1	Children under the age of 18?		X
2.1.2	NMMU staff?		X
2.1.3	NMMU students?		X
2.1.4	The elderly/persons over the age of 60?		X
2.1.5	A sample from an institution (e.g. hospital/school)?		X
2.1.6	Handicapped (e.g. mentally or physically)?		X
3.	Does the data that will be collected require consent of an institutional authority for this study? (An institutional authority refers to an organisation that is established by government to protect vulnerable people)		X
3.1	Are you intending to access participant data from an existing, stored repository (e.g. school, institutional or university records)?		X

4.	Will the participant's privacy, anonymity or confidentiality be compromised?		X
4.1	Are you administering a questionnaire/survey that:		
4.1.1	Collects sensitive/identifiable data from participants?		X
4.1.2	Does not guarantee the anonymity of the participant?		X
4.1.3	Does not guarantee the confidentiality of the participant and the data?		X
4.1.4	Will offer an incentive to respondents to participate, i.e. a lucky draw or any other prize?		X
4.1.5	Will create doubt whether sample control measures are in place?		X
4.1.5	Will be distributed electronically via email (and requesting an email response)? Note: • If your questionnaire **DOES NOT** request respondents' identification, is distributed electronically and you request respondents to return it *manually* (print out and deliver/mail); **AND** respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO. • If your questionnaire **DOES NOT** request respondents' identification, is *distributed via an email link and works through a web response system (e.g. the university survey system); AND* respondent anonymity can be guaranteed, your answer will be NO.		X
5.	Do you wish to publish an article from this study and submit to an accredited Journal?		X

*Please note that if **ANY** of the questions above have been answered in the affirmative **(YES)** the student will need to complete the full ethics clearance form (REC-H application) and submit it with the relevant documentation to the Faculty RECH (Ethics) representative.*

and hereby certify that the student has given his/her research ethical consideration and full ethics approval is not required.

_____   12 June 2018
SUPERVISOR(S)   _____
                                         DATE

_____   12 June 2018
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT   _____
                                         DATE

                                          12 June 2018

_____   _____
STUDENT(S)   DATE

_____   12 June 2018
STUDENT(S)   _____
                                                    DATE

ANNEXURE D TURNITIN REPORT

Submission date: 26-Oct-2018 10:54AM (UTC+0200). Submission ID: 1027235107

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