ET

Enlightening Tourism.
A Pathmaking Journal

Universidad
de Huelva

THERMAL RESORTS OF EXTREMADURA AND ENGAGEMENT WITH CONSUMER IN FACEBOOK (SPAIN)

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ABSTRACT

With the advent of social networks, the building of Engagement between consumers and brands surpassed the limits of off-line relationships, and became reflected on-line. Social networks became then an essential tool for consumers, whether as regards the decision to purchase, or the searching for information, a primary item for touristic activity. With the purpose of facilitating access to information on their products and services, the thermal resorts of the Autonomous Region of Extremadura, in Spain, have invested in Facebook pages. However, just the presence in said social network is not sufficient anymore, becoming necessary to interact with their users. In order to understand if such interaction between the Facebook pages of Extremadura Thermal Resorts and their consumers is being efficient or not, this work aims at measuring and comparing the Engagement level of each of those thermal resorts (in their official Facebook pages), through digital metrics defined as from literature review, with the purpose of assisting administrators in the elaboration of communication strategies that might increase interaction and the involvement of fans with their brands. As methodology, two analyses were also used: a digital metrics and a content analysis, carried out in the period considered of high season, between the months of June and October, and in which all-thermal resorts were in operation. It was observed that Extremadura thermal resorts, in their great majority, are using the Facebook tool adequately, facilitating communication with their potential clients.

KEYWORDS
   Brand Engagement; Facebook, Thermal Tourism, Extremadura.
ECONLIT KEYS
   I19; M39; Z31; Z32.

1. INTRODUCTION

The diffusion of the access to Internet worldwide caused a technology revolution, generating changes in the behavior of both companies and their brands, and consumers. The main difference between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 consists of the authorship of content creation, whereas in the first the brands created their content unilaterally, in Web 2.0, the content is created by the user or, still, jointly with the brands, affecting therefore their social life (Shu and Chuang, 2011).

Upon the emergence of Web 2.0, the "navigators" became eligible to share their experiences without the filters imposed to them by some companies, that is, they earned the right to be listened, even when exposing a negative opinion (McCracken, 2011). There was therefore a change of paradigm in the Web as a means of publishing to a means of participation and, mainly interaction (Lassila and Hendler, 2007).

In such context, social networks, like Facebook, assume a great relevance not only on people's everyday life, but also mainly in the relationship between consumers and brands. After all, a new consumer who explores social networks and shares information has more tools at its disposal to assist him in his decisions and, therefore, it is not easily influenced by old marketing techniques (McCraken, 2011).

Communication dynamics that was previously from one to one, turned out to be from one to various (Patino, Pitta and Quinone, 2012; Recuero, 2009; Dambrós and Reis, 2008). The primary elements of power and productivity as from evolution of Web 2.0 became the generation, the process and the transmission, both of information and of knowledge, since they allow interchange among people of all parts of the world (Amboage , Fernández, , Ferandez, Vásquez and De La Torre, 2014).

For the citizen of the informational society, it is no longer enough to know how to read and write, or having learned a trade. It is necessary to have access to information, to know how to search it and find it, to dominate its use, to organize it

and understand its forms of organization and, above all, to utilize it appropriately, adequately and efficiently (SPITZ, 1999 apud Nanni and Cañete, 2010).

The tourism segment is not different; the companies related to the segment also need to communicate themselves and adapt to this new context. Thermal tourism and thermal resorts, in particular, have improved their management and commercialization of their activities as from the use of Information and Communication Technology. In such context, social networks are responsible for a revolution in the form of travelling, becoming an essential tool for consumer before, during and after travel (Amboage et al., 2014)

In order to create curiosity in users and stimulate the interest for visits, social networks should be considered a good means of publicity and promotion as regards regions of touristic destination (Brusha, 2010). As from an increase in the need of development of these activities, there is a growth in the importance of touristic marketing as a form of creating competitive advantages for touristic destinations (Baker and Cameron, 2008; Cooper and Hall, 2008).

Thermal organizations must seek to better identify their clients and develop individual and relevant relations, in order to know their attitudes and changes of needs, so as to be able to influence their loyalty (Antunes, 2005).

With the purpose of understanding if Extremadura Thermal Resorts are succeeding in achieving a satisfactory *Engagement* level (provoking involvement and stimulating and keeping consumer's interest), in their official brand Facebook pages, this work intends to measure and compare those pages' activities, both in terms of content and as regards certain digital metrics. These results aims at serving as basis for future decisions of those thermal resorts' administrators, with the purpose of broadening divulgation of the entire thermal structure existent, attracting new consumers, and increasing the Engagement degree with the brand's fans.

This work is structured in five parts: in the first, an introduction is presented; in the second, a theoretical framework in which the themes addressed in the literature review are identified. The third part describes the methodology utilized and the characteristics of the universe of the population under study. The fourth part addresses the results obtained, and the fifth ends by presenting the conclusion of the work.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1   *PRESENCE OF BRANDS IN SOCIAL NETWORKS (FACEBOOK)*

The brands are a part of the private universe of each person. There are brands that awaken more interest and charisma of the public by the own nature of their services and others for the communication directed to their consumers (Moura, 2011).

Social networks can be considered a great forum where clients and brands are involved in a behavioral and emotional manner (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman and Pihlström, 2012), being responsible for a new dynamics in communication that is transforming social standards and perceptions (Patino et al., 2012; Recuero, 2009; Dambrós and Reis, 2008), generating a new life style, revolutionizing the manner how consumers interact with brands in these social networks (Tsai and Men, 2013).

The presence of brands in these social networks also provoked a change in the marketing interchange dynamics between companies and consumers, thus becoming an additional marketing channel to be integrated to the already traditional companies' marketing mix (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013).

On-line marketing has as basic objectives to make a brand known and obtain return from those receiving such action. In this sense, it may have a differentiated action, that is, it can be customized or for mass consumption, according to the knowledge that the brand has of its consumers, therefore, the presence of brands in social networks facilitates their access to information related to their consumers and their opinions (McCracken, 2011).

Among social networks, Facebook stands out by being one that in less than a decade reached more than one billion users, becoming part of the life of consumers, as well as of brands (Kabadayi and Price, 2014). This public dimension reached by Facebook has convinced many administrators to test and develop new marketing plans based on the attributes of that network (Zarella and Zarella, 2011).

Consumers or potential consumers of a brand in Facebook are known by the fans and can interact with brands, mainly in four ways: commenting publications;

publishing contents; liking the page, or any publications of the brand, or still, sharing the brand's publications in their personal or friends' wall, whereas brands can communicate beyond their pages through Advertisement, *Social Plugins*, Facebook Applications, and sponsored *Stories* (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013).

The presence of brands in that social network becomes therefore fundamental in competitive terms, since it demonstrates to competitors or to clients the brand's constant updating (Zarella and Zarella, 2011).

2.2   *THERMAL TOURISM AND SOCIAL NETWORKS*

The thermal tourism is a clearly emergent touristic modality, presently having great opportunities of growth due to the great attraction that its characteristics represent for any touristic activity.

 According to González-Loureiro and Dorrego (2005), the thermal tourism can also be called health tourism, according to definition of the Worldwide Tourism Organization (WTO). This type of tourism has two branches: the curative tourism and the preventive tourism. And the thermal tourism comprises both. These two facets of the thermal tourism drive the activity by allowing compensation of the seasonality of thermal centers (Conde, Mazaira and Costa, 2005).

Spain can be considered the Europe's thermal centre, due to the great variety, quantity and quality of its medicinal waters. (López, 2001). *"Spain has excellent conditions for the development of health tourism, especially tourism that comes to centers whose treatments are based on the properties of water (hydrotherapy, thalassotherapy and spa), as they have a lot of springs with mineral and medicinal properties and 7,880 km of coastline" (*Álvarez-García, Del Río Rama, González Vázquez and Merigó Lindahl, 2015:102)

Thermal treatments have been acquiring in Spain a major relevance due to the presence of several thermal centers, which are kept preserved since antiquity, where the region of Extremadura stands out by its Roman baths (Puértolas, 2003).

The consolidation of the Extremadura region as a countryside touristic destination has taken form due to the transformation of communication and promotional campaigns, as well as the identification of a touristic infrastructure of quality,

benefitted by the sun and beach tourism crisis (López, 2001). This consolidation also contributes to maintain the economy of the region thriving, fixing the population in the countryside (Vera, 2013).

In this context, social networks can bring opportunities to the tourism after all, can attract the interest of new clients, and increase the probability of having a communication that really reach the target public effectively. Based on the following up of "*feedbacks",* the organization can and should capture and render potential its relationship with existent and potential clients, in order to convey an image of credibility and confidence (Brusha, 2010).

One of the great differentials of communication between brands and consumers in social networks, such as Facebook, is the potential obtained by e-WOM (*Electronic Word of Mouth*), produced spontaneously by its participants who, in obtaining information they consider interesting, relevant and original, quickly and easily transmit them to a large number of persons, producing what it is known as "viral effect", becoming a great source of divulgation for tourism (Brusha, 2010).

2.3 BRAND ENGAGEMENT

The *Engagement* from the point of view of the study carried out by Forrester Research in 2009 applies both to the level of interaction, intimacy, involvement and also the influence that a brand has along the time in relation to consumer, as being the main objective to be reached by communication *on-line* (Cerqueira and Silva, 2011).

The success of the strategies adopted by brands in social networks is due to the consumer's Engagement, because it is through the comments and likes, that is, the consumer's contribution, that success in brand's global performance can be measured (Kabadayi and Price, 2014).

The activities performed by consumers *on-line* as regards the relationship with brands are called COBRAS (*Consumer Online Brand-Related Activities*) by Mutinga, Moorman and Smit (2011), being considered a reflection of the Engagement between consumer and the brand *on-line,* and are divided in three dimensions: consuming, contributing and creating; and according to the level of gradual involvement of

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consumer with the brand's content, the first will be considered a level of passive involvement and the other two of active involvement.

Considering the consumer's involvement with the brand also as active or passive, Tsai and Men (2013) classify the Engagement in only two levels: "*Consuming*" and "*Contributing*", where in the first level are present video and image views, readings of product analysis, among other examples of a behavior solely focused in consuming a contents. Whereas in the second level, the consumer's focus is in contributing to the construction of content of the brand's pages, participating in activities, commenting photos, publications and videos, that is, answering to the content provided by the brands, as well as by other users, actively.

However, it is worth pointing out that each consumer is involved in a social network in a different manner with a brand *on-line* (Gummerus et al., 2012) and for different reasons, that's why Li and Bernoff (2009) developed what they call Engagement Pyramid, where consumers *on-line* are divided into five levels, in order to differentiate their differences and attitudes in the network, according to figure 1.
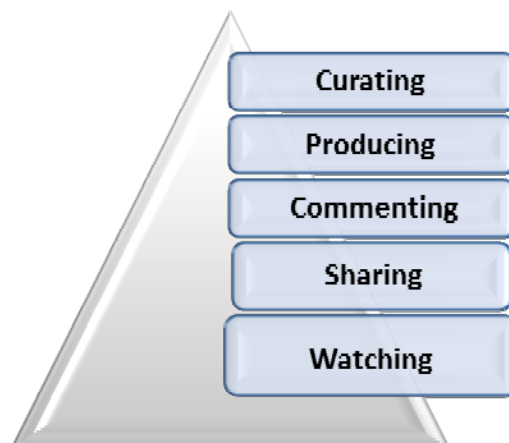
Figure 1: Engagement Pyramid.
Source: Adapted from Li and Bernoff (2009).

On the top of the pyramid the users who have an influence upon the others determine convivial rules and curate the contents produced by other consumers, and are therefore the most engaged in the pyramid, but they are in lesser number in the network (*Curating*). Below, the users producing contents in text, video or even audio, which will be replicated by other users (*Producing*), are considered influencers.

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Next, we have the users that like to comment, evaluate, criticize products and services and are used to participate in communities and forums; these are more easily found in the network (*Commenting*). Notwithstanding, the great majority of consumers are in the two last levels of the pyramid, *Sharing* and *Watching*, which may be considered levels of more passive activities. In *Sharing*, the users interact in networks more in the form of sharing contents already produced by other users and in *watching* the users only consume contents and seek information on products or services, which may assist in the decision of purchase.

With the purpose of encouraging the interaction and involvement of all types of consumers, the brands seek to "harmonize" their identities with those of their consumers, developing more self-expressive brands to facilitate the building of affectionate ties with them, strengthening emotional attachments and the will of recommending the brand's page to other users (Pentina, Gammoh, Zhang and Mallin, 2013; Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Wallace, Buil and De Chernatony , 2014).

It is worth pointing out that the brands need to utilize the "*insight*" generated by Facebook's users to understand their wishes and their needs, seeking not to artificially influence the e-WOM communication (Wolny and Mueller, 2013). It is through this *feedback* that the companies can increase their offer, deal with problems and, as a result, provide a better service to their clients *off-line* (Kabadayi and Price, 2014).

The marketing practices-oriented engagement surpasses the barriers of the decision to purchase process and walks at the side of satisfaction, causing fans, followers or consumers not only to consume, but to exhibit in their contact networks in cyberspace their motivations and objects of desire (Moura, 2011).

2.3 ENGAGEMENT MEASUREMENT METRICS IN FACEBOOK

The marketing professional who deals with Internet campaigns needs to keep always alert towards novelties, because every day tools and new features appear to facilitate measurement of results, as well as to deepen market analysis (Fernandes and Rosa, 2013).

The clearness of the importance and the multidisciplinary impact of social media in businesses makes monitoring (that is, capturing and listening to what the persons say in social channels and analyzing such information for decision taking) the main prerequisite of this new field of knowledge (Monteiro and Azarite, 2012).

In this context, there are several forms of measuring the results obtained by a brand page in Facebook. According to Sterne (2011), there are 100 metrics for measuring performance of a brand in social medias, among them the following stands out: (1) number of admirers; (2) mentions in mass media; (3) growth rate of admirers, followers and sympathizers: (4) number of likes; (5) number of views; (6) number of interactions; (7) *tags* added; (8) volume of *feedback* generated by consumer; (8) percentage of videos watched; (9) rate of viral infection, and (10) volume of repercussion based on the number of postings.

Metrics may also be based on the four strategic objectives of the companies: (1) brand perception (ex: positive versus negative perceptions, index of brand recognition); (2) relationship and proximity (ex: revenue gains through collaboration *on-line*, satisfaction in attendance through social medias); (3) innovation and creativity (ex: number of ideas captured and implemented from social medias), and (4) efficiency and efficacy (ex: spontaneous appearances in the media, agility gains by virtual collaboration), according to Cipriani (2011).

According to Yanaze, Freire and Senise (2010), all communication activity must also be measured through three main metrics: (1) Efficiency Metrics (related to the adherence to the objectives of communication and quality of content of the message sent); (2) Efficacy Metrics (related to the quantity of public reached) and, (3) Effectiveness Metrics (related to time, exposure and synergy with other communication activities).

Four metrics are appointed by Cerqueira and Silva (2011), represented in figure 2: reach, engagement, influence and adequacy.

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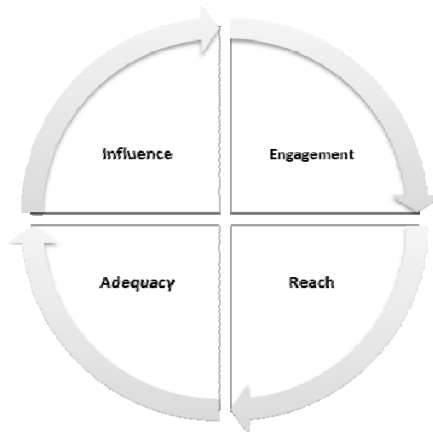
Figure 2. Metrics for engagement measurement.
Source: Adapted from the PAPERCLIQ study (2010).

According to the authors, the "reach' would be related to the number of followers, friends, fans, views and visitors, that is, the message dissemination. The "engagement" refers to the degree of participation of a certain group in relation to a specific theme. The "influence" is perceivable through rankings, classifications and/or recommendations, that is, it is related to the degree of mobilization of a certain content can generate other. On the other side, the "adequacy" aims at perceiving if a certain content is addressed to the correct public. It is worth pointing out that, the four metrics work as one another's feeders, so as to turn into a cycle.

There are also electronic means available to facilitate comparison between pages of a same social network. Among them, Google's features are emphasized, where it is possible to obtain different metrics in each social network in which the brand participates: the Facebook Insights[i], the Truesocialmetrics[ii]; the Socialbakers[iii], and PageMatch[iv].

Being impossible to test so many variables, this work is based on the formula utilized by PageMatch to calculate the Engagement in the pages of Extremadura Thermal Resorts and comparing them in order to observe eventual similarities and differences existent among them.

Engagement in **Facebook= {[(shares*3) + (comments*2) + (likes) / publications] /fans} * 100.**

And by agreeing with Cerqueira and Silva (2011) who conclude that no metrics is self-sufficient and revealing for itself, mainly in contexts in which medias are constantly crossing, rendering the activity of measurement complex, this work

complemented PageMatch's metrics with the three metrics suggested by Kaushik (2011), which seek to evaluate the quality of the Engagement developed. Kaushik (2011) has differentiated metrics for each social network to be studied; in this case, the Facebook was studied and for such the metrics presented in table 1 were also applied.

Metrics	Formulas
Rate of Applauses	no. of Likes/ no. of Publications
Rate of Conversation	no. of Comments/ no. of Publications
Rate of Amplification	no. of Shares /no. of Publications

Table 1. Quality Metrics of Kaushik's *Engagement*.
Source: Adapted from Kaushik (2011).

The rate of applauses, according to the author, tries to understand what type of content is most adequate to the target-public intended. It is listed therein the number of likes and the number of publications made by the brand.

The rate of conversation aims at comprising the opinion of brand's fans on the themes published, thus allowing a relation to be made between the number of comments and the number of publications made by the mark, in order to know if publications are causing a positive or negative effect on fans.

And finally, the rate of amplification is responsible for evaluating the level of dissemination of the content published by the brand throughout Facebook, through the relation between the number of shares and the number of publications made by the brand. This way, it is possible to know which types of content can transmit the message desired by the brand to the greater number of persons possible.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study is analyzing and comparing the forms of utilization of brand pages of Extremadura thermal resort (Spain) in Facebook and if they are obtaining results in terms of Engagement between their brands and their fans.

For such, a bibliographic research was elaborated on themes, such as social networks, Facebook, thermal tourism in Extremadura, *Brand Engagement,* and social network measurement metrics. Afterwards, a content and digital metrics analysis were carried out in the pages of Extremadura's thermal resorts in the period

comprised between the months of June and October 2015, since these months comprise the high season period in all stations, therefore it should be the period of more activity for them, being a time interval during which all thermal resorts were open. Data obtained were analyzed in Excel, according to Kaushik's metrics (2011) and the digital indicators of the PageMatch tool.

A study of the *Engagement* of Extremadura thermal resorts with their consumers in Facebook was developed as from information from the sites Tribunatermal.com and balneários.org, arriving to the seven official sites of Extremadura thermal tourism areas to be studied. In this study, Facebook pages indicated in those official sites were utilized, as shown in table 2.

Thermal Resorts	Official Site	Official Facebook
Montemayor	http://www.xn--balneariobaos-skb.com/	https://www.facebook.com/Balneario-De-Montemayor-Termas-Romanas-505053686309857/timeline/
El raposo	http://www.balneario.net/	https://www.facebook.com/balnearioelraposo
El salugral	http://www.hotelbalneario.com/	https://www.facebook.com/elsalugral/timeline/
Fuentes del trampal	http://www.fuentesdeltrampal.com/	It does not have
Alange	http://balneariodealange.com/	https://www.facebook.com/balneariodealange
Brozas (San Gregorio)	http://www.balneariodebrozas.com/	It does not have in business format
Valle Del Jerte	http://www.balneariovalledeljerte.com/	https://www.facebook.com/HOTEL-BALNEARIO-VALLE-DEL-JERTE-51361073352/timeline/

Table 2. Web and Facebook of Extremadura Thermal Resorts.
Source: Own elaboration.

It is worth emphasizing that Fuentes Del Trampal thermal resort does not have an official Facebook page and that the page of Brozas thermal resort (San Gregorio) in Facebook has not a business format, operating like an individual, and therefore, it does not have the same functionalities of the others. Hence, these two thermal resorts are not included in this study, therefore we will be utilizing only five thermal resorts for the study.

4. <u>RESULTS</u>

4.1 FACEBOOK METRICS ANALYSIS

Firstly, we have applied the *Engagement* metrics suggested in PageMatch to the official Facebook pages of Extremadura thermal resorts. The results obtained are presented in table 3.

	Montemayor	El Raposo	El Salugral	Alange	Valle del Jerte
Publications	50	63	85	54	10
Likes	1,047	1,629	714	3,037	668
Comments	22	116	38	76	21
Shares	1,392	279	93	971	127
Fans	597	5,985	506	8,510	3,212
Engagement	17,645	0,716	2,485	1,328	3,397

Table 3. PageMatch Engagement Metrics applied to Extremadura Thermal Resorts.
Source: Own elaboration.

The Montemayor thermal resort obtained the best result in *Engagement* through this metrics, since it gets through its publications a high number of shares of its content, bringing to it a great expansion in its reach, that is, it brings its content to a major number of consumers or potential consumers. This thermal resort gets also a higher return from its fans, that is, it is capable of motivating them to participate and keep being active in its page.

It is worth mentioning that Valle del Jerte thermal resort has a practically inactive page during the period and therefore we should not consider its results as complete.

We notice that a major number of fans does not represent a good Engagement with the same through the metrics presented by El Raposo thermal resort, which even having the second major number of likes (1,629) and the major number of comments, as well as the Alange thermal resort has the major number of likes (3037) and the second major number of comments (76) and also the second major number of shares (971), to be compared with the number of fans they have, respectively (5985 and 8510), results reflected in calculation of its *Engagement.*

Subsequently, in order to complement the studies, the quality metrics of Kaushik's (2011) Engagement was applied to the same pages, obtaining the results presented in table 4.

	Montemayor	El Raposo	El Salugral	Alange	Valle del Jerte
Rate of Applause	20.94	25.86	8.40	56.24	66.80
Rate of Conversation	0.44	1.84	0.45	1.41	2.10
Rate of Amplification	27.84	4.43	1.09	17.98	12.70

Table 4: Quality Metrics of Kaushik's Engagement applied to Extremadura Thermal Resorts.
Source: Own elaboration.

We observe that the Valle del Jerte thermal resort has a high rate of applause and conversation in relation to the ones presented by other thermal resorts, however, we must take into account that it is much more easy to get it right when less publications are made, being considered more important the continuity of the work.

In relation to other thermal resorts under analysis, Alange's has the major rate of applauses (56.24), that is, it can produce content of major interest to its fans. El Raposo's has the best results as regards the rate of conversation (1.84), what means to say that it is the thermal resort that gets more dialogue with its fans. Montemayor's, however, shows a considerable rate of amplification (27.84) in relation to other areas of Extremadura thermal tourism, what means to say that it gets a major diffusion of its content in the network, that is, it maximizes its results through dissemination of content made by its own fans.

There are still other metrics that can be considered with the purpose of understanding the functionality of those Facebook pages. In table 5, the main metrics found are shown.

	Montemayor	El Raposo	El Salugral	Alange	Valle del Jerte
Number of evaluations	19	It does not have	11	70	6
Average of evaluations	4.8	It does not have	4,5	4,5	3,3
Number of *check ins*	87	It does not have	53	1595	245
Applications	1 Book now	Tripadivisor reviews	Book now	Book now	Book now
		Book now			Bonos regalos
		Fan of the week			Events

Table 5. Other Metrics.
Source: Own elaboration.

Firstly, in the pages of entrepreneurial Facebook there is an option to include an item allowing fans or simply users of the network to evaluate, give an opinion on the brand, location, service or company, through a text or still assigning one to five stars to the same. With respect to such evaluations, the Alange thermal resort stands out

by having approximately 70 evaluations and keeping an average of 4.8 stars. Such evaluations become an important means of communication with consumer that seeks information through Internet and prefers evaluations of other users rather than those of paid communication means, by considering them more reliable.

Afterwards, there is the option of *Check-in* that any user of the network may use should it consider important to identify its passage or stay in a certain destination, location or company. Alange stands out again with approximately 1,595 *check-in* made. This metrics is important because through it the user makes a voluntary advertisement to its friends, that is, without realizing, it disseminates the structure and content of the brand through its network voluntarily, freely and spontaneously.

Lastly, it is worth emphasizing the utilization of *links* for applications that intends to facilitate the consumer's life and stimulate consumption. All areas under study present at least the application "Book Now", where the user of the network can make an immediate booking, or know the availability of dates, through the Facebook page of the Extremadura thermal tourism area. The El Raposo thermal resort has also communication with the application "Tripadvisor Reviews", which facilitates access of consumer to opinions of other clients, as well as information on locations, tours or touristic sites in its vicinity. The Valle del Jerte thermal resort has also a *link* to the application "Bonos Regalos", which offers discounts and special promotions for consumer.

4.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS

Facebook's brand pages must prepare clear Engagement strategies with the purpose of providing adequacy of their content and frequency of updating of their publications, as from results obtained through feedbacks, in order to increase the level of consumer's engagement with the brands (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013).

In such sense, publications made by Extremadura thermal resorts during the period proposed were compiled in eight main themes: (1) events; (2) news; (3) photos; (4) services and products; (5) social causes; (6) promotion and discounts; (7) hobbies (referred herein to games or competitions suggested by the brand page, which usually grants varied awards), and (8) videos. In table, 6 are shown the

quantities related to each type of publications by thermal resort and by month, ending with the total of likes generated by all publications of that month.

Thermal Resorts	Months	Events	News	Photos	Services	Causes	Promotion	Hobbies	Videos	Likes
Montemayor	June	1	0	6	0	0	5	0	0	**309**
	July	1	0	0	3	0	6	0	1	239
	August	2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	79
	September	4	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	134
	October	4	0	1	6	0	3	0	1	286
El Raposo	June	3	3	0	0	0	2	2	1	235
	July	2	5	1	0	0	2	0	0	216
	August	2	2	3	0	0	2	0	0	**417**
	September	5	3	1	0	0	4	0	2	381
	October	5	4	1	4	1	3	0	0	380
El Salugral	June	5	5	1	0	0	4	0	1	79
	July	7	5	0	0	0	4	1	4	148
	August	6	6	3	0	0	0	0	2	138
	September	3	3	4	3	0	1	0	1	**208**
	October	5	4	1	4	0	2	0	0	141
Alange	June	6	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	516
	July	3	6	3	0	0	0	0	0	613
	August	4	6	2	1	0	1	0	2	**998**
	September	4	6	1	0	0	1	0	0	724
	October	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	186
Valle del Jerte	June	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	198
	July	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	**416**
	August	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	September	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	34
	October	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20

Table 6. Content Analysis of Extremadura Thermal Resorts.
Source: Own elaboration.

With respect to the content, Montemayor showed the best results in the months in which it presented a major number of publications related to photos, promotions/ discounts and/or services or products offered. The El Raposo thermal resort showed results more significant in publications related to events, news, promotion/ discounts. However, in the month where publication of photos was increased, it obtained the best results in number of likes.

It is important to point out that it was the sole page to utilize any publication of social nature, obtaining therefore a great repercussion for it. El Salugral had the best results in increasing the number of publication of photos and services and products offered. Alange showed growing results until the month of August through publications related to events, news, and photos, and including in this same month two videos. However, in the month of October, it showed a strange abandonment of the page, utilizing only four publications, what reflected negatively in its general results. Valle del Jerte showed again a differentiated development in its page in relation to other pages of the Extremadura thermal tourism area, presenting only one publication in the months of June and October and simply not presenting any publication in the month of August, although having obtained good results with its publication in the month of July. It should also therefore give more attention to its page.

4.3 CHANNEL UPDATING ANALYSIS

With respect to channel updating, that is, the number of times a brand publishes in its Facebook page, it was considered the scale utilized by Amboage et al. (2014), as well as, the study 'Internet Republica' (2012), where it is considered frequent, when there is an optimum average between 3 and 5 updating per week; regular, when there is 2 updating per seek; few, when there is only 1 updating per week and very few, when there is even 1 updating per week.

According to table 7, we can observe the updating of Extremadura thermal tourism pages made during the period under study, approximately 153 days or 21.85 weeks.

	Montemayor	El Raposo	El Salugral	Alange	Valle del Jerte
Publications	50	63	85	54	10
/21.85 weeks	2.288329519	2.883295	3.8901602	2.4714	0.457665904
/153 days	0.326797386	0.411765	0.5555556	0.3529	0.065359477

Table 7. Facebook Channel Updating.
Source: Own elaboration.

Again, Valle del Jerte moves away from the pattern found in other pages under study. However, El Salugral shows an average channel updating considered optimum, followed by El Raposo, which shows a regular average, however, almost

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optimum (2.88..). The other two pages of Montemayor and Alange also showed a regular average with a growing tendency.

5. CONCLUSION

The Facebook, as well as other social networks, must be considered a tool aiming at assisting the relationship between brands and clients. However, each brand is responsible to adequate its contents and make its brand page efficient in disseminating the message which the brand intends to transmit, and not only dependent on viral contents to which it is exposed to (Heringer and Dória, 2013).

As from data obtained, we conclude that the pages of Extremadura thermal resorts, in their majority, know how to take advantage of the tool that Facebook became, to communicate ideally with their consumers or potential consumers, needing only to improve the stimulation of consumers' participation through their comments.

However, the lack of continuity in the work and in observing the fans' reactions may prejudice such communication, as seen mainly in the case of Valle del Jerte thermal resort and in the month of October in the Alange thermal resort.

Therefore, the companies making use of brand pages in Facebook or other social networks should keep a continuous monitoring of the actions taken and mainly of the answers, *feedbacks* made by consumers, in order to get knowledge of characteristics and interests of their communities' members.

Therefore enabling a continuous adjustment of strategies of communication and *engagement* by their administrators (Cvijikj and Michahelles, 2013; Tsai and Men, 2013), enhancing consumer's involvement with the brand, and mainly stimulating tourists' interest, whether for this type of thermal experience, for the region or still, generating the tourists' interests for activities interconnected to the local well-being and health tourism.

This work showed limitations, mainly of temporal character, being interesting that new studies should be carried out so as to complement this one. A study of an extension of the period studied herein would be recommended, in order to understand if the communication of Extremadura thermal resorts is maintained or not

throughout the year, independently of the high season, so as to understand if there are alterations in the *Engagement*, and if they are shown equally in all regions under study or still, to consider if such involvement through Facebook bring real benefits to the Extremadura thermal tourism, independently of the time of the year. It would be also useful the utilization of more metrics as an auxiliary source of information for verification of the results obtained.

Metrics in XXI century are just crawling. It is certain that in the extent that new technologies are incorporated to the market, much more companies will be professionalized through adoption of metrics-based marketing strategies, thus monitoring more vehemently the leading market (Fernandes and Rosa, 2013).

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[i] Tool provided by Facebook itself that makes the results obtained available

[ii] Digital tool for comparison of Facebook pages that creates graphics and trends.

[iii] Social media analysis platform allowing brands to measure compare and highlight globally the results obtained in their marketing campaigns, according to the Press Room Site.

[iv] PageMatch is a computer application working as from comparison of pair of pages of the free access social network Facebook, which tries to identify similarities and differences in traditional metrics presented by Facebook itself, which lead to changes in *Engagement*. To calculate *Engagement*, it has its own calculation.