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Image, satisfaction, and continued usage intention in wine tourism through digital content marketing

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Abstract. In the last decade, the rapid development of technology has increased the importance of the digital presence of service providers in wine tourism. The use of new digital technologies can help wine regions and service providers to improve the visitor experience and enhance the destination image. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the role of digital content marketing (DCM) in wine tourism and explore the importance of its dimensions on wine tourists' perceived image, satisfaction and behavioural intentions. The paper is based on desk and field research. An analysis of previous research was conducted and a survey was formed based on the previous research. The empirical study was conducted with a sample of 241 Croatian respondents, who have visited wine cellars and wine events in Istria in the last 5 years. Hypothesis testing was conducted using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM). The research results showed that usefulness, entertainment and quality of digital content had a statistically significant influence on perceived image, while entertainment and quality of digital content were significant predictors of overall satisfaction of wine tourists. Furthermore, a positive influence of perceived image and overall satisfaction with digital content on intention to continue using it was found. The study contributes to the understanding of wine tourists' behaviour in the digital environment and leads to implications that can be used for the development of digital marketing strategies to improve the wine tourism offer and to better respond to the contemporary demands of wine tourists.

Keywords: digital content marketing, perceived image, satisfaction, continued usage intention, wine tourism.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of digital technology, as well as rapidly growing competition, means that wine destinations are facing ever-increasing challenges to attract new visitors, but also to retain existing ones. To reach their target audience, service providers should develop and promote wine tourism and look for new ways to enhance the visitor experience [1]. Moreover, it is

crucial for both science and the wine industry to find out which factors influence wine tourists' satisfaction and their behavioural intentions [2]. Developing high-quality digital content that integrates physical, cultural and natural resources is now a strategic priority for wine service providers and wine destinations.

Wine tourism has become an important area of tourism in many countries around the world, associated with an eventful trip and providing an additional motivation to travel. Research shows that visiting wine destinations (especially wineries) leads to an increase in (direct) wine sales, customer education, and relationship building with them, providing long-term benefits to all stakeholders [3,4]. As a subcategory of gastronomic tourism [5], wine tourism refers to "visits to wineries, wine cellars, wine festivals, and wine exhibitions, where tasting grape wines and experiencing the characteristics of a wine region are the main motivating factors for visitors" [3, p.3]. Wine tourism has developed into an important facet of tourism in many countries around the world, characterized by a journey enriched with experiential elements. In scientific discourse, wine tourism is widely considered a prime area for the development of experiences, due to its association with sensory and hedonic dimensions [6, 7, 74]. Wine tourism experiences encompass a variety of activities that combine "landscapes, wines, gastronomy, culture, history, and human relations" [7] and allow visitors to forge deeper connections with the culture and heritage of the destination [8]. Due to its multisensory nature, the wine tourism experience is different for each tourist [9], as it encompasses not only wine-related products but also myriad facets of the winescapes [6]. Moreover, Santos [9, 74] emphasises that wine experiences are highly memorable experiences as they stimulate different senses, including the cultural, entertainment, aesthetic and escapist dimensions of the winescapes.

Thanks to a climate that favours the cultivation of vines, the wine industry of the Mediterranean region has been the most developed in Europe for many years. One of the most important sectors of agriculture in the Republic of Croatia is the wine sector [10], the income of which amounts to 626.00 million US dollars in 2023 and is expected to grow by 2.47 % annually until 2027 [11]. In terms of wine production, Croatia is divided into coastal and continental wine regions [12], with Istria, a peninsula in the northern part of the Adriatic Sea, positioned as the leading wine tourism destination [12, 13, 14]. Due to the increasing development of wine tourism offerings (e.g., wine cellars, wine routes, wine events, etc.), wine tourism has great potential for branding Croatia on the tourism market [15]. In the last decade, the number of wine tourists in the world has increased significantly [16]. Since visitors to wine regions are mostly domestic tourists, proximity to their place of residence has been identified as the crucial element for the prosperity of wine tourism [17]. In Croatia, demand growth is generated mainly by the local population based on gastro-ecological experiences, with Croatian citizens most frequently visiting wine routes and 61% of them buying local wines and 63% buying local food, while 53% of visitors order local wines in restaurants [13].

In recent years, digital content marketing (DCM) has become the fastest growing content marketing strategy [1]. This is supported by the fact that 90% of marketers actively used content marketing as part of their overall marketing strategy in 2022, an increase of 20% compared to 2019 [18]. While the importance of DCM has been acknowledged in industry sources, academic evidence remains limited [19]. Most recent research on DCM has focused on driving customer engagement, trust, and value [20,21,22,23], by emphasizing the importance of branded content marketing and loyalty [24,25]. Recent studies have provided valuable insights into DCM and consumer behaviour in various contexts, such as retail [26], financial services [27], business-to-business (B2B) contexts [28], and tourism [29,1]. Although the concept of DCM is receiving increasing attention in academia, there is a lack of empirical studies in the tourism context [29], especially in determining the relationship between DCM, perceived image, satisfaction and behavioural intentions.

This study aims to fill this gap by extending the existing knowledge to improve the understanding of the DCM concept and investigate its predictive power on the behavioural intentions of wine tourists in the Istria region, a leading wine tourism destination in the Republic of Croatia. Specifically, this study empirically investigates the influence of the key dimensions of DCM on the perceived image and satisfaction of wine tourists. It also examines how tourists' perceived image and satisfaction affect their intention to continue using digital content. It is expected that the findings will be of importance to the academic community to expand the knowledge of this current topic in the marketing literature, which may serve as an appropriate foundation for future research. In addition, the research findings may be useful in practice, particularly for wineries, but also for destination marketers in understanding wine tourists' satisfaction with digital content and their continued use of that content. In designing an innovative wine product in a digital environment, the study and application of an attractive content marketing strategy is crucial for both the academic community and the wine industry.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. The framework of digital content marketing

Content marketing in the digital environment is defined as "a strategic marketing approach focused on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience — and, ultimately, to drive profitable customer action" [30]. DCM focuses on creating and publishing high-quality content with the goal of increasing brand awareness [1] and driving consumer engagement [31]. In addition, DCM provides valuable information and/or entertaining content [25] that is not about selling products, as well as providing personalized services in real time [32, 19], which enables the building of long-term relationships [33] and adds value to current and potential customers [34,24]. Based on the literature, we define and explain the dimensions of DCM that influence the perceived image and satisfaction with digital content services: DC Usefulness, DC Entertainment and DC Quality.

As an important predictor of information technology satisfaction and future behavioural intentions [35], perceived usefulness can be explained as the extent to which a technology user believes that using a new technology will contribute to his or her productivity [36]. Joo and Sohn [37] state that digital content usefulness refers to how well and easily users use certain digital content. In the context of tourism, [38] state that DC usefulness can be seen as an anticipated outcome that tourists expect when searching for information and planning a trip, and is the main motivation for the adoption of information technology.

In the context of information and communication technology, entertainment is described as "the ability of the medium to meet the audience's needs for escapism, distraction, aesthetic enjoyment, or emotional release" [39, p. 759]. In attracting and retaining customers, it is especially important to create emotional and engaging experiences, primarily through the provision of entertaining content [25]. People who come across various photos, videos, reviews, and advertising campaigns can use them to satisfy their entertainment needs [40]. Companies tend to use entertaining content, especially on social networks, to create an emotional connection between the content and the audience, which promotes group identity and affirmation as well as motivation to share it [1,24].

In e-tourism settings, the fundamental factor for tourists' satisfaction is the quality of digital content, because higher quality of digital information improves users' experiences and emotions [41]. In the literature, information quality is described as "a function of the value of the output produced by a system as perceived by the user" [39, p. 758] or "the extent to which consumers perceive that the information content published by a company on its brand site is of high quality" [42, p. 16]. Information quality often depends on four key attributes [43]: (1) completeness, which indicates how thoroughly digital technologies provide all the information needed for customer service tasks; (2) accuracy, which indicates the correctness of the information provided by those technologies; (3) format, which refers to how the information is presented; and (4) currency, which refers to how up-to-date and new the information is.

2.2. Perceived image

Following the Qian et al. [44], who explained the differences between self-positioned image and perceived image in the hotel industry, this research refers to perceived image as the perception of digital content users. According to Wang [45], the perceived image of a gastronomy blog can help customers form an overall impression of a location, including a region's offerings, the quality of services, and the environment, suggesting that gastronomy blogs can help readers form an overall impression of a gastronomy location. Santos [9] and Tsai [46] emphasised that memorable tourism experiences can also be related to wine experiences and local food experiences. Before visiting, tourists use various sources of information to obtain as many data as possible and form a perceived image [47], with the Internet playing an increasingly important role and many traditional sources of information being used [48]. Because digital content marketing focuses on communication and not just on sales [1,49], digital content marketing allows users to view and rate various images and videos, learn about specific wine events and exhibitions, learn about the wine region, traditions, and production methods, and rate wine promotion topics. Previous research has included food elements in destination image scales [50], as well as a variable from forming taste awareness, which has a significant positive influence on consumers' behavioural intention [45]. Destination websites directly affect perceived image and create virtual experiences [51]. Therefore, perceived image can be transferred through real and online food and beverage experiences.

2.3. User satisfaction and behavioural intentions

As a central concept in marketing, satisfaction is usually considered as an antecedent of behavioural

intentions [52]. It can represent "the overall customer attitude toward the service provider" [53, p. 41] or the customer's emotional response resulting from the difference between his or her expectations and perceptions [54]. User satisfaction is higher when actual experiences are equal to or better than expected experiences. DCM has a direct impact on creating more participative and richer user experiences, which consequently leads to higher user satisfaction and, more importantly, to referral of digital content [55,29]. Based on Soltani-Nejad et al. [56] study, this paper considers user satisfaction as a cumulative feeling that occurs during the process of users' experiences and interactions with wine tourism digital content.

According to Oliver's [57] expectation - confirmation theory, if the product or service meets the user's expectations, the user's satisfaction will influence their intention to continue using it. In predicting users' future behaviour in the digital environment, intention to keep using is the most commonly employed measure of behavioural intention [58]. As the intensity of the user's willingness to continuously use a particular information system [59], this variable is most often determined by the user's attitudes [29], perceived quality and usefulness [35], and perceived enjoyment, i.e., entertainment [60]. Moreover, Mathew and Soliman [29] pointed out that customers' intentions to use digital content have a significant impact on their actual behaviour. Moreover, the importance of continued intention to use is recognized as a fundamental factor in the sustainability of websites and the retention of their users [52].

3. HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT AND MODEL SPECIFICATION

Digital content marketing must match the image perceived by consumers [61]. The usefulness of digital content can significantly influence visitors' perception of a destination [75,38]. In addition, entertaining elements of digital content can further enrich the user experience and positively influence their experience of the destination [40; 1]. Moreover, Jorge et al. [62] found that a website's perceived usefulness has a positive effect on destination image. Furthermore, Baber and Baber [76] emphasize that when shaping the destination image via social media platforms, digital content is a crucial factor that requires a mix of entertainment, usefulness (i.e. trending topics), customization and user engagement. Consistent with Bu et al. [1], who studied digital content marketing based on usefulness, information, entertainment, and quality of digital content, we expect digital content to help visitors develop a new or reinforced image of a particular wine region. Therefore, we assume that digital content usefulness and digital content entertainment are positively related to perceived image. Hence, we posit the following hypotheses (H):

H1: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content usefulness and perceived image.
H2: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content entertainment and perceived image.

Previous research has shown that digital content quality positively influences attitudes towards the destination and travel intentions [77]. Kullada and Kurniadjie [41] studied the impact of digital information quality on destination image and behavioural intentions. The research results revealed that the quality of digital information is a significant predictor of the formation of the perceived image of a destination and, consequently, the behavioural intentions of tourists. In addition, Kim et al. [78] demonstrated that the information quality on social media, encompassing added value, relevance, completeness, interestingness, and website design, serves as a significant predictor of destination image formation. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content quality and perceived image.

The usefulness of digital content and its quality are key determinants of behavioral intentions [79]. In a study of a travel review website, Wang and Li [80] found that perceived usefulness of digital content was a significant predictor of travelers' eWOM and purchase decisions. Assuming that the official website of a destination management organization has a positive influence on the decision-making process of potential tourists, the research results of Chung et al. [35] found that the usefulness of a website positively influences satisfaction with the website itself. In addition, Carlson and O'Cass [63] research proves that when providing a high-quality content-oriented e-service, satisfaction is influenced by the quality of the e-service on a company's website through four key factors: usefulness, ease of use, entertainment, and complementary relationship. Armutcu et al. [79], who investigated the usefulness of digital content in social media, also found that the perception of a destination's online content is crucial for tourist satisfac-

tion. In addition, Ariffin et al. [81] found that perceived usefulness of digital video content is a significant predictor of overall satisfaction. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content usefulness and overall satisfaction.

In Bu et al. [1] study, digital information and digital entertainment content were positively related to social influence, which acted as a moderator between digital content marketing and electronic word of mouth (e-WOM). In a study by Majeed et al. [64], the influence of destination digital content on tourists' behavioural intentions and satisfaction was investigated as a moderator between these variables. The study confirmed that the perception of destination digital content significantly influences tourists' satisfaction. In addition, Negash et al. [39] have demonstrated a direct relationship between information quality and user satisfaction. The quality of information is determined by the informativeness and the entertainment value of the content. Based on the Uses and Gratifications Theory, Moon and An [82] discovered that the extent to which people find the use of digital media entertaining and enjoyable significantly influences tourist satisfaction. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H5: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content entertainment and overall satisfaction.

In their study, Chung et al. [35] showed that information quality is the most important predictor for confirming the quality of a destination website, which has a direct impact on destination website satisfaction. In addition, according to the study by Dedeoglu [65], the information quality of a content significantly affects the sharing of that content. Kullada and Kurniadjie [41] also proved that the quality of digital information is significantly related to the perception of the destination, which positively influences tourist satisfaction. Therefore, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H6: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content quality and overall satisfaction.

According to Wang's research [45] looking at the formation of taste consciousness through gastronomic blogs, perceived image has a significant and positive influence on intention to taste. Speaking of perceived image, when gastronomic blogs allow readers to form a clear and complete picture of a gastronomic place, they enhance the readers' intention to visit. Research by Mohammad Shafiee et al. [66] also confirms that the positive image of a destination created by social media has a positive effect on tourists' satisfaction and behavioural intentions. Tavitiyaman et al. [83] found that the perceived image of the destination is positively related to tourists' behavioral intention. In addition, these authors demonstrated that the more intensively tourists search for digital content, the stronger the relationship between perceived image and behavioral intentions. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H7: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between perceived image and continued usage intention.

Researchers have reported a relationship between satisfaction with digital content and the intention to continue using it [35,81]. According to the findings of Chung et al. [35], the quality of the website is an important factor in website satisfaction. In addition, the research found that satisfaction with a website encourages potential tourists to use the website continuously. Ariffin et al. [81] argued that satisfaction is positively related to consumers' intention to continue watching digital video content. They conclude that the most respondents who are satisfied with watching digital video content on social networks intend to continue watching it. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is put forward:

H8: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between overall satisfaction and continued usage intention.
H9: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content usefulness and continued usage intention.
H10: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content entertainment and continued usage intention.
H11: There is a statistically significant and positive relationship between digital content quality and continued usage intention.

To complement these hypotheses, we propose the conceptual model in Figure 1.

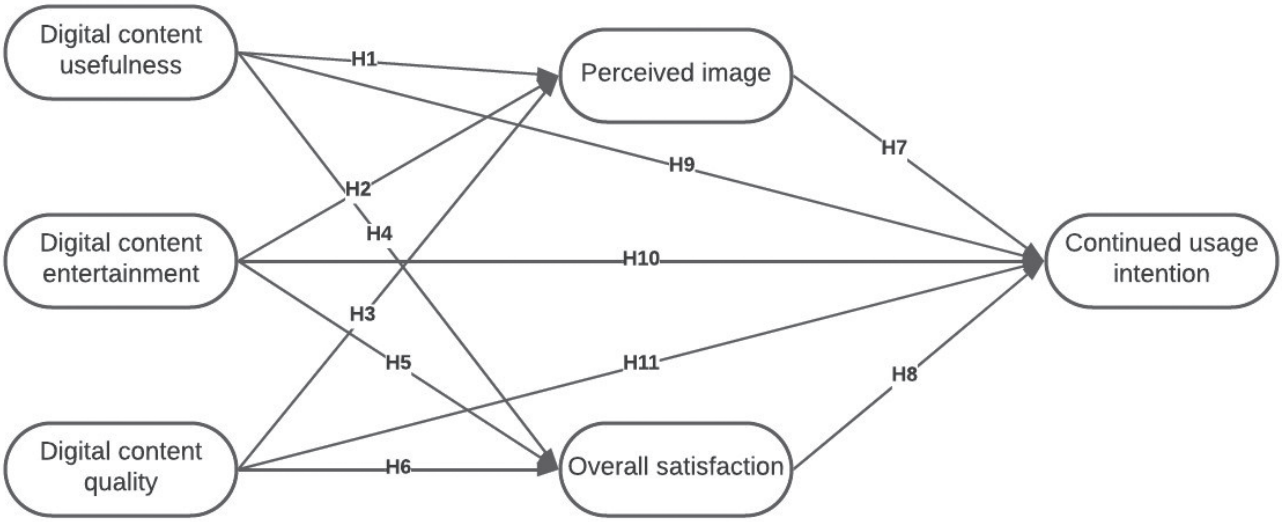

Figure 1 The conceptual model. Source: Authors.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1. Participants and Sampling Procedure

Field research using the survey method was conducted in Istria, Croatia, from April to June 2022 to investigate how wine tourists perceive the impact of digital content on image, satisfaction, and continued usage intention. To answer the research questions, a QR code of the online structured questionnaire was created and distributed to different wineries in the Istria region. Likewise, the QR code linked to the questionnaire was distributed to the visitors of Vinistra, a wine event held for over 25 years, where Istrian and international winemakers exhibit, evaluate and promote their wines. Given the lack of a universally agreed upon definition of wine tourists, this study considers wine tourists "as people who visited a wine-producing region and/or participated in a wine festival" [17, p. 9] in the last 5 years. As in the study by Brown et al. [67], we considered a time span of 5 years to include respondents who visited this wine region in the period before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Hall et al. [7] classified the motives of wine tourists as primary and secondary motives. Primary motives are directly related to the basic product (tasting or buying wine), while secondary or peripheral motives are integral to the overall wine experience (e.g., attending wine events or festivals, sightseeing and learning about wine, socializing, eating at wineries, rural excursions and entertainment). Therefore, respondents representing visitors to wine cellars and wine events are included in this research, and they were motivated by the aforementioned reasons.

4.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire starts with general questions about their motivation to visit the destination and participate in and follow Istrian wine tourism, and then moves to measuring respondents' views on digital content usefulness, digital content entertainment, digital content quality, perceived image, overall satisfaction, and continued usage intention. A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess the level of agreement with the items, anchored at 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The final section contained the sociodemographic data of the respondents.

Due to the novelty of the study and based on previous research in similar settings, the design of the measurement instrument was adapted to the needs of this study. Based on the relevant literature, the constructs of digital content usefulness, overall satisfaction, and continued usage intention were adapted according to Chung et al. [35]. The perception of entertainment offered by digital content was formulated based on the statements of Bu et al. [1], while the statements of Dedeoglu [65] were adopted to measure the digital content quality. The perceived image of digital content was tested based on five statements by Wang [45].

4.3. Modelling Framework

According to the Inverse square root method for estimating minimum sample size [69], assuming a common power level of 80% and significance level of 5%, the minimum sample size is 154,51. Exceeding this thresh-

old, a total of 312 correctly completed questionnaires were collected. Prior to analysis, all manifest variables were checked for outliers. Ensuring the validity and reliability of measurement scales prior to hypothesis testing, 71 outliers were identified and eliminated from further analysis, therefore 241 questionnaires were used for further analysis.

Outer model assessment, inner model assessment, and hypothesis testing were conducted with SmartPLS 3.0 using PLS-SEM, which is preferred for analyses focusing on prediction and theory development [71].

SEM has been continuously adopted by top-tier journals in marketing and consumer behavior [84], as it allows for the examination of complex relationships through comprehensive and simultaneous assessments of the relationships between constructs. SEM employs models to represent relationships between observed variables to quantify whether researchers' specified hypotheses are supported, enabling researchers to integrate and confront theory with data in a manner that advances understanding of complex relationships among constructs [85]. Fornell and Larcker [86] argue that SEM is a valuable method for theory building, well-suited to the ongoing development of knowledge equally effectively and efficiently. PLS was used instead of covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) because it allows for simultaneous analysis of interrelationships among multiple latent variables or analysis of complex models with many manifest variables and theoretical constructs. Finally, PLS-SEM is more appropriate in situations where the analysis goal and emphasis are directed towards explaining variance or predicting constructs through model forecasting [87]. It is suitable when the aim is to develop theory, predict structural relationships (rather than strictly confirm them), and identify key drivers of the model.

Outer model assessment, inner model assessment, and hypothesis testing were conducted with SmartPLS 4.0 using PLS-SEM, which is preferred for analyses focusing on prediction and theory development [67].

5. RESEARCH RESULTS

A descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the study's sampling profile. Of the total number of respondents, 65.98% are female and 34.02% are male. The age distribution of most respondents is between 20 and 29 years old (39.83%), followed by the age group between 30 and 39 years old (29.05%), between 40 and 49 years old (18.67%), and 50 years and older (12.44%). Most respondents (34.44%) have a college degree, followed by those with a graduate degree (30.29%), a high school degree (28.63%), and a post-graduate degree (6.64%). The majority (28.63%) had a personal monthly income between 933 and 1325 EUR, followed by 26,56% with income between 663 and 932 EUR per month.

Fully 85.89% of the respondents have visited the wine region of Istria more than once in the last 5 years, while 14.11% of the respondents were first-time visitors. The largest number of respondents who participate in Istrian wine tourism is motivated by wine tasting (62.24%). This is followed by visiting wine events/festivals (32.43%), buying wine (29.71%) and visiting wine routes (27.42%). Respondents are least motivated to learn about the production process (11.24%). Most of the respondents, 65.15%, regularly follow digital content related to wine tourism in Istria, while 34.85% follow on an irregular basis.

5.1. Descriptive statistical analysis

Table 1 represents the mean values, standard deviations, coefficients Skewness and Kurtosis for each construct and variable. The calculated coefficients of Skewness and Kurtosis for the majority of the variables range from -1 to +1 and are considered acceptable in interpreting the normality of the distribution.

5.2. Measurement model results

Convergent validity, internal consistency and discriminant validity are assessed to evaluate the measurement model [71]. Table 1 shows the items used for each construct, their code names, external loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Two indicator variables were eliminated from further analysis, PIM1 and PIM2.

The results in Table 2 show an excellent level of internal consistency [72], as all Cronbach's alpha coefficient values are above 0.8 and range from 0.893 to 0.960. The values of CR are above the acceptable level of 0.7 [73], and range from 0.771 to 0.860. The results of the average variance extracted (AVE) exceed the threshold of 0.5 and range from 0.833 to 0.891, indicating that the constructs explain a high percentage of the variance in their indicators. Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio, HTMT (Table 3).

The HTMT ratio is below the recommended threshold of 0.9, ranging from 0.779 to 0.892, indicating that the measurement model achieved discriminant validity [68].

Table 4 presents the results of the variance inflation factors (VIF), which indicates that all the values are below 5, so that no multicollinearity can be detected.

Table 1. Results of the descriptive statistical analysis.

Constructs/Variables	Code	Mean	Standard deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Digital content usefulness	**DCU**	**3.687**	**1.112**	**0.13475**	**-0.7965**
I can find a lot of interesting information on the digital content of wine tourism in Istria.	DCU1	3.959	1.155	0.824	-1.235
The information provided by the digital content of wine tourism in Istria is well balanced in terms of quality and amount.	DCU2	3.606	1.061	-0.032	-0.667
The information provided by the digital content of wine tourism in Istria is enriched with the additional links to related sites.	DCU3	3.427	1.080	-0.356	-0.418
The information provided by the digital content of wine tourism in Istria is very useful to me.	DCU4	3.755	1.153	0.103	-0.866
Digital content entertainment	**DCE**	**3.465**	**1.124**	**-0.405**	**-1.565**
The digital content about wine tourism in Istria is fun.	DCE1	3.440	1.118	-0.445	-0.502
The digital content about wine tourism in Istria is exciting.	DCE2	3.270	1.073	-0.540	-0.291
The digital content about wine tourism in Istria is attractive.	DCE3	3.685	1.181	-0.232	-0.767
Digital content quality	**DCQ**	**3.697**	**1.187**	**0.037**	**-0.869**
The information about wine tourism in Istria provided by digital content is complete.	DCQ1	3.373	1.035	-0.302	-0.482
The information about wine tourism in Istria provided by digital content is consistent	DCQ2	3.523	1.011	0.139	-0.657
The information about wine tourism in Istria provided by digital content is accurate	DCQ3	3.610	1.053	0.020	-0.646
Perceived image	**PIM**	**3.656**	**1.139**	**-0.094**	**-0.7544**
I think the digital content about wine tourism in Istria enables me to get to know what the wine region has to offer.	PIM1	3.747	1.169	0.234	-0.953
I think that the digital content about wine tourism in Istria enables me to understand the quality of services offered by the wine region.	PIM2	3.568	1.176	-0.281	-0.682
I think that the digital content about wine tourism in Istria enables me to get to know the wine environment offered by the wine region.	PIM3	3.647	1.176	-0.211	-0.766
I think that the digital content on wine tourism in Istria enables me to objectively evaluate the wine location.	PIM4	3.722	1.094	0.133	-0.827
I think that through digital content about wine tourism in Istria I can get objective assessments of this wine region.	PIM5	3.598	1.078	-0.345	-0.544
Overall satisfaction	**SAT**	**3.412**	**1.107**	**-0.394**	**-0.405**
After using the digital content of wine tourism in Istria I am very satisfied.	SAT1	3.610	1.065	-0.162	-0.580
After using the digital content of wine tourism in Istria I am very pleased.	SAT2	3.382	1.165	-0.614	-0.369
After using the digital content of wine tourism in Istria I am very delighted.	SAT3	3.245	1.090	-0.406	-0.267
Continued usage intention	**CUI**	**3.519**	**1.196**	**-0.393**	**-0.6115**
I will use the digital content of wine tourism in Istria on a regular basis in the future.	CUI1	3.365	1.173	-0.512	-0.432
I will frequently use the digital content of wine tourism in Istria in the future.	CUI2	3.448	1.191	-0.505	-0.492
I will continue to use the digital content of wine tourism in Istria.	CUI3	3.577	1.186	-0.315	-0.710
I will strongly recommend others to use the digital content of wine tourism in Istria.	CUI4	3.685	1.232	-0.243	-0.812

5.2. Structural model results

To evaluate the significance of the path coefficients, the bootstrapping procedure with 5000 subsamples was applied. The results of the hypotheses tests are shown in Table 5.

The results of the structural model show that the construct Digital content usefulness has a significant and positive effect on Perceived image (b=0.303; p<0.05). Hypothesis 4 has not been supported because Digital content usefulness has a non-significant effect on Overall satisfaction (b=0.109; p>0.05). Furthermore, Digital content entertainment significantly and positively affects Perceived image (b=0.274; p<0.05), Hypothesis 2, and Overall satisfaction (b=0.482; p<0.05), Hypothesis 5. Digital content quality has a significant and positive effect on Perceived image (b=0.367; p<0.05) and Overall satisfaction (b=0.324; p<0.05), hence H3 and H6 are supported. Both Perceived image (b=0.213; p<0.05) and Overall satisfaction (b=0.434; p<0.05) have a positive and significant effect on Continued usage intention, supporting the hypotheses H7 and H8. The direct

Table 2. Outer model evaluation.

Code constructs/ variables	Outer loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	CR (rho_a)	CR (rho_c)	AVE
Digital content usefulness (DCU)		0.901	0.931	0.931	0.771
DCU1	0.906				
DCU2	0.889				
DCU3	0.847				
DCU4	0.869				
Digital content entertainment (DCE)		0.901	0.901	0.938	0.834
DCE1	0.909				
DCE2	0.923				
DCE3	0.908				
Digital content quality (DCQ)		0.893	0.893	0.933	0.860
DCQ1	0.897				
DCQ2	0.923				
DCQ3	0.903				
Perceived image (PIM)		0.918	0.919	0.948	0.860
PIM2	0.922				
PIM3	0.946				
PIM4	0.913				
Overall satisfaction (SAT)		0.893	0.896	0.933	0.824
SAT1	0.901				
SAT2	0.918				
SAT3	0.904				
Continued usage intention (CUI)		0.941	0.942	0.958	0.850
CUI1	0.924				
CUI2	0.924				
CUI3	0.936				
CUI4	0.903				

Source: Research results.

Table 3. Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio.

	CUI	DCE	DCQ	DCU	PIM	SAT
CUI						
DCE	0.797					
DCQ	0.779	0.832				
DCU	0.809	0.793	0.866			
PIM	0.828	0.841	0.892	0.863		
SAT	0.875	0.892	0.854	0.779	0.853	

CUI=Continued usage intention; DCE= Digital content entertainment; DCQ= Digital content quality; DCU= Digital content usefulness; PIM=Perceived image; SAT=Overall satisfaction.
Source: Research results.

Table 4. Variance inflation factor.

	CUI	DCE	DCQ	PIM	SAT
CUI					
DCE	3.457			2.531	2.531
DCQ	3.834			3.100	3.100
DCU	3.175			2.809	
PIM	4.126				2.809
SAT	3.655				

CUI=Continued usage intention; DCE= Digital content entertainment; DCQ= Digital content quality; DCU= Digital content usefulness; PIM=Perceived image; SAT=Overall satisfaction.
Source: Research results.

effect of Digital content usefulness has a significant and positive effect on continued usage intention (b=0.254; p<0.05), while Digital content entertainment has a non-significant effect on continued usage intention (b=0.076; p>0.05) as well as Digital content quality on continued usage intention (b=-0.045; p>0.05).

Using PLS predict, the Q^2 value compares the prediction errors of the PLS path model against simple mean predictions. The Q^2 value for Perceived image is 0.740, Continued usage intention 0.644, while for Overall satisfaction 0.704. The Q^2 values are positive, so the prediction error of the PLS-SEM results is smaller than the prediction error of simply using the mean values. Therefore, the PLS-SEM models offers better predictive performance [88].

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The empirical research conducted represents a contribution to the knowledge of digital content marketing development and, therefore, this study has a scientific contribution reflected in its theoretical and practical dimensions. From a theoretical point of view, this paper represents a contribution in the field of digital marketing, especially from the aspect of wine tourism settings. The practical contribution of this paper can be seen in the possibility of applying the knowledge derived from the research in the development of digital marketing strategies, especially content strategies.

This study examined the influence of DC dimensions on perceived image and overall satisfaction of wine tourists. It also examined how wine tourists' perceived image and satisfaction influence their behavioural intentions. Our results show that DC usefulness, DC entertainment and DC quality have a positive influence on perceived image. These results are consistent with the research findings of Kullada and Kurniadjie [41], who demonstrated that the usefulness and quality of digital

Table 5. Structural model assessment.

	Relationship	*b*	SD	T statistics	Confidence interval	p-value	Decision
H1	Digital content usefulness? Perceived image	0.303	0.053	5.683	0.201-0.409	0.000	Supported
H2	Digital content entertainment? Perceived image	0.274	0.052	5.294	0.171-0.375	0.000	Supported
H3	Digital content quality? Perceived image	0.367	0.063	5.857	0.238-0.484	0.000	Supported
H4	Digital content usefulness? Overall satisfaction	0.109	0.064	1.693	-0.009-0.240	0.090	Not supported
H5	Digital content entertainment? Overall satisfaction	0.482	0.061	7.837	0.357-0.599	0.000	Supported
H6	Digital content quality? Overall satisfaction	0.324	0.077	4.213	0.167-0.468	0.000	Supported
H7	Perceived image? Continued usage intention	0.213	0.086	2.486	0.036-0.369	0.013	Supported
H8	Overall satisfaction? Continued usage intention	0.434	0.079	5.480	0.268-0.577	0.000	Supported
H9	Digital content usefulness? continued usage intention	0.254	0.057	4.440	0.144-0.370	0.000	Supported
H10	Digital content entertainment? continued usage intention	0.076	0.083	0.919	0.357-0.599	0.358	Not supported
H11	Digital content quality? continued usage intention	-0.045	0.069	0.647	-0.178-0.091	0.517	Not supported

Source: Research results.

content is a significant predictor of destination image formation. In addition, the research findings revealed that DC entertainment and DC quality have a significant impact on overall satisfaction. The research findings of Carlson and O'Cass [63] demonstrate that when providing a high-quality content-driven e-service, satisfaction is influenced by the quality of the e-service on the company's website through one of the key factors – entertainment, ease of use, complimentary relationship and usefulness of the content. In addition, Chung et al. [35] confirmed in their research that the quality of information has a positive effect on satisfaction with the destination website itself. In terms of wine tourists' behavioural intentions, this study confirmed that perceived image and overall satisfaction have a positive influence on continued usage intention. According to the research findings of Wang [45], perceived image had a significant and positive influence on tourists' behavioural intentions. In addition, the research of Mohammad Shafiee et al. [66] confirmed that a positive image of a destination generated by social media positively influences satisfaction and eWOM intentions. Through research by Chung et al. [35], it was found that satisfaction with a website encourages potential tourists to continue using the website. The significant relationship between digital content usefulness and continued usage intention is noteworthy for several reasons. Firstly, it suggests that users perceive digital content as a valuable resource that influences their intention to continue using a particular platform or service, which underscores the importance of digital content in shaping user behaviour and engagement.

Based on the research conducted, recommendations can be made for marketers involved in providing and creating digital content related to wine tourism. Indeed, customers today voluntarily search for interesting content or take the initiative to look for information about products and services through various digital media. Therefore, marketing managers in wine tourism must understand the characteristics of marketing content such as dialogue and communication, storytelling, and encouraging interaction with tourists. As Santos et al. [76] emphasized, one of the most important digital tools in the wine tourism is narrative, i.e., storytelling about wine, which can enhance the wine tourism experience, and boost the reputation and, consequently, the image of a destination. Digital content must contain the most effective and up-to-date information to meet tourists' information needs. When creating content, marketers should also consider the entertainment aspects of the content. Therefore, this study suggests that wine tourism service providers should work with marketing managers to create and improve the utility aspect of wine tourism content for their target segments. Marketers can expect that high-quality information combined with a usefulness and entertainment factor will increase satisfaction with digital content. In addition, high-quality digital content allows tourists to get an idea of the wine region and wine products, which increases the perceived image when viewing such content. In any case, it should be mentioned that it is necessary to stimulate tourists (through various contests, gamification, VR, AR, etc.) and maintain their interest so that they continuously follow the digital content through social networks, various blogs, websites and the like. Consequently, by designing such content, tourists can be expected to be more engaged in terms of continuously using and sharing the content.

In the empirical investigation conducted, some limitations were identified. The first limitation refers to the sample of the conducted research. The respondents are

exclusively people from the Republic of Croatia, so the responses of foreign visitors to Istria were not taken into account. The reason for this is that the questionnaire itself was distributed exclusively in Croatian. In addition, the majority of respondents in the study are female. The views of men about digital content on wine tourism in Istria have not been sufficiently explored, and it is likely that their views could significantly change the conclusions of the study. Therefore, it is recommended that the survey questionnaire covers respondents in a wider geographical area and not only in the territory of Croatia. It is also recommended that the questionnaire be distributed in such a way that both genders are covered equally. Comparing difference among sociodemographic groups or groups with different levels of wine involvement could enhance the depth of this analysis and broaden the implications of our findings. In addition to the above, only the quantitative method was used in this study; so, for future research it is recommended to use other methods, especially qualitative ones (e.g., focus groups, in-depth interviews).

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