The place and importance of **digital reputation management** in **tourism establishments**

O lugar e a importância da **gestão da reputação digital** nos **estabelecimentos turísticos**

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Abstract | The purpose of this research is to determine the place and importance of digital reputation management in tourism establishments. In this context, it has been attempted to determine what needs to be done to strengthen the digital reputation of tourism establishments. The interview form technique, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. In this context, 44 digital marketing agencies cooperating with tourism establishments and 11 hotel establishments were determined. Interviews were done with 11 of the determined agencies, and a participation level of 25% was achieved. The data obtained from the participants were analyzed with the content analysis method using the MAXQDA analysis program. As a result of the research, it has been determined that the website should be kept up-to-date and monitored by considering the customer satisfaction rates. Also, it is crucial for tourism establishments not to reduce their service quality and select or train their personnel from well-equipped and trained individuals to protect their reputation. Finally, it was stated that during the COVID-19 pandemic process, tourism establishments should pay attention to hygiene conditions in order to remain strong in the market and protect their reputation. Digital reputation cannot be achieved without a good website, a practical customer relationship management approach, and social media management, and tourism establishments need to have a corporate social media account to strengthen their reputation.

Keywords | Digital marketing, digital reputation, tourism establishments, COVID-19

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Resumo | O objetivo desta pesquisa é determinar o posicionamento e a importância da gestão da reputação digital nos estabelecimentos turísticos. Neste contexto, procurou-se determinar quais as necessidades dos estabelecimentos turísticos visando o fortalecimento da sua reputação digital. Para tal, foi utilizada a técnica de inquérito por entrevista, uma metodologia de base qualitativa. Neste contexto, foram identificadas 44 agências de marketing digital que trabalham em cooperação com estabelecimentos turísticos e 11 estabelecimentos hoteleiros. Foram realizadas entrevistas com 11 das 44 agências identificadas, equivalente a uma taxa de aceitação de 25%. Os dados obtidos foram analisados com o método de análise de conteúdo, através do software de análise qualitativa MAXQDA. Os resultados revelaram que o website dos estabelecimentos turísticos deve ser constantemente atualizado e monitorizado, tendo em consideração os índices de satisfação dos clientes. Adicionalmente, é imperioso que os estabelecimentos turísticos não diminuam a qualidade do seu serviço, bem como selecionem ou formem profissionais adequados para proteção da sua reputação. Por último, afirmou-se que durante a pandemia da COVID-19, os estabelecimentos turísticos devem ter em consideração as condições de higiene para solidificarem a sua posição no mercado e protegerem a sua reputação. Foi ainda revelado que a reputação digital não pode ser alcançada sem um bom website, uma abordagem eficaz de gestão de relacionamento com o cliente e de gestão de redes sociais, e que os estabelecimentos turísticos necessitam de uma rede social corporativa para fortalecer sua reputação.

Palavras-chave | Marketing digital, reputação digital, estabelecimentos turísticos, COVID-19.

1. Introduction

There is a direct proportion between the ability of an establishment to reach its target and its reputation (Herbig & Milewicz, 1993). The higher the reputation of any establishment from consumers' and the industry's point of view, the higher its sales and profitability (Alnıaçık, Alnıaçık & Genç, 2010). Recently, reputation management, which plays a crucial role in marketing, has been expressed in printed materials and verbal communication and has also become an essential issue in the digital environment. With the rapid increase in Internet usage, establishments take different initiatives to protect their reputation in the digital environment. At this point, digital reputation agencies have become one of the most common organizations doing this duty.

The digital age we are in is the most fundamental reason for the emergence of digital reputation agencies. In today's world surrounded by social media and the Internet, almost every sector has many different digital marketing implementations. According to data collected in 2018, the digital world, in which 4 billion people actively take part, has been growing and developing day by day (Internet Live Stats, 2018; Gökşin, 2018). With the development of technology, the skills and benefits of the digital world have increased. Thus, people can access information quickly and faster thanks to these abilities. As a result, in the developing and growing digital world, the purchasing behavior of consumers has begun to change as well (Gökşin, 2018).

For the last 20 years, a serious digital transformation has been taking place worldwide. Investments made in the digital world, both globally and nationally, have constantly risen. According to the IAB Turkey, digital advertising investments in 2017 increased by 15.50% compared to 2016 (Digital Advertising Investments-IAB Turkey, 2018). The form of communication business pro-

cesses carried out by computers and social media is updated regularly and varies. Products created with computer software have emerged, which are found only in the digital world. However, marketing of these products has begun to be needed. Herein, the phenomenon of digital marketing has emerged (Gökşin, 2018). Digital reputation management has become widespread along with digital marketing.

Businesses have to invest the most in digital marketing and reputation in this age. Primarily, it does not seem possible for tourism establishments, one of the essential service sector branches, to do business independently from the digital world. In a sense, this shows that digital reputation agencies will become even more important soon. Because studies have shown that the customer satisfaction levels of businesses that do not use the digital environment effectively decrease (Gu & Ye, 2014). Additively, it is challenging for businesses that do not make an effort to position their digital reputation in a good place, such as effectively managing their social media accounts, that it is challenging to achieve sustainable success in the long term. This situation harms the performance of the business (Kim, Lim & Brymer, 2015). Despite the growing amount of published research about the digital reputation that influences establishments, little is known about the importance of digital reputation management on tourism establishments. This study aims to determine the place and importance of digital reputation management in tourism establishments. In this context, it has been attempted to determine what should be done to strengthen the digital reputation of tourism establishments. In addition, the contribution of digital marketing to the industry, the current situation of digital marketing agencies, and the way tourism establishments should follow to protect their reputation during the COVID-19 epidemic were investigated. From this point of view, this study has a unique value. It is thought that the study will contribute to the literature in this sense, as the

study is aimed at both digital reputation agencies and all tourism establishments. In this context, the two fundamental questions that constitute the problem of the study are as follows:

- What kind of support do tourism establishments get from digital reputation agencies?

- To what extent do digital reputation agencies affect the reputation of tourism businesses?

2. Literature Review

There is a positive correlation between the increase in online advertising and the rise in consumers using the Internet to buy and sell goods/services. This trend is referred to as e-commerce or electronic commerce. According to a report on e-commerce prepared by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), with the financial crisis that started in 2008, e-commerce sales increased as consumers looked for ways to reduce their spending (Iafrica, 2009). E-commerce is growing faster in the USA, even in Europe and developing countries (Schulman, 2008). While the annual growth rate of e-commerce is expected to increase to 28%, it is thought that this rate may be higher in some countries. For example, it has been stated that the annual growth rate of e-commerce in India is around 51% (Marvist Consulting, 2008).

The use of digital channels also affects how marketers communicate with today's consumers. A significant portion of the consumers worldwide owns and use the computers and mobile devices that contribute to the growth of digital advertising spending (Ritz, Wolf, & McQuitty, 2019). Correspondingly, marketers realized the benefits of social networks such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, and LinkedIn in terms of communication very quickly. To-

day, people and organizations stay up to date and remain connected using various social media networks such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram (Barman & Sharma, 2021). Globally, a significant increase of 55.4% was realized in 2017 for social network ads, compared to the previous year, and $ 51.3 billion was spent (Cooper, 2018). The increasing concentration of advertising dollars has a positive effect on the reach of digital marketing to target markets, the increasing sales, the creation of brand awareness, and ensuring customer engagement (Labrecque et al., 2013; Tuten & Solomon, 2015; Lamberton & Stephen, 2016; Ritz, Wolf & McQuitty, 2019). Accordingly, the following question was created:

- How important is the role of digital media in reputation management? (Hotel Establishment)

All these developments in digital marketing have led to the emergence of the concept of digital reputation. Digital reputation can be defined as an aggregate idea regarding a social entity resulting from a social evaluation given a series of factors with a positive connotation (Seker, Cankir, & Arslan, 2014). For instance, any entity including, a brand, a person or a company, an institution, can have a digital reputation (Seker & Eryarsoy, 2015). Online or digital reputation shares many similar features with the original concept of reputation, but it also varies in some ways. Online reputation is also based on consumer perceptions. However, it can be calculated as the sum of the sentiment of UGC that consumers autonomously create in an online platform, i.e., social media, online marketplaces, travel and restaurant websites (Choudhary, Mital, Pani, Papa, & Vicentini, 2018; Horster & Gottschalk, 2012; Papa, Santoro, Tirabeni, & Monge, 2018; Scuotto, Santoro, Papa, & Carayannis, 2017). An excellent online reputation represents an essential advantage for any product or service provider (Cillo, Rialti, Del Giudice

& Usai, 2021). It can be the source of advantages such as improved corporate image, increased consumer loyalty, and, finally, increased consumer retention capabilities (Abratt & Kleyn, 2012). Digital reputation is often used from a professional point of view to express emotion and a measure related to it. The tourism industry is one of the best examples to understand that digital reputation (Govers & Go, 2009) and especially social media (Xiang & Gretzel, 2010) are critical. Digital reputation is one of the most critical issues in defining the marketing strategies of hotels today. The number of people -who read customer reviews published on different websites such as Booking.com, TripAdvisor, and Holiday-Checks before making a holiday decision- is regularly increasing (Horster & Gottschalk, 2012). Previously, the traditional marketing strategy of accommodations used to be based on travel agencies and tour operators specialized in the sale of hotel beds (Rodríguez-Díaz and Espino-Rodríguez, 2008). On the other hand, the Internet broke away from the sales density experienced through commercial channels designed by tour operators and started a new era in accommodation and guest relations (Díaz & Rodríguez, 2018). Accordingly, the following questions were formed:

- Which factors do you think the digital reputation of a tourism establishment depends on? (Digital Agency/Hotel Establishment)

- What is the contribution of your digital marketing agency to the tourism industry? (Digital Agency)

Digital reputation is becoming more critical in the competition and sales strategies in the accommodation sector. Important issues such as revenue management, business image, and communication take shape based on customer reviews made on valid websites. However, the number of reliable and valid researches on tourism-related websites such as Booking.com, TripAdvisor, and HolidayCheck is

quite limited (Díaz & Rodríguez, 2018). It is revealed that most of the studies on that issue have been conducted on the effects of reputation management on the performance of establishments in the literature (Gu & Ye, 2014; Schuckert et al., 2015). In studies on digital reputation and tourism, the effects of the responses of hotels to their customers in the digital environment on the financial performance of establishments (Kim et al., 2015; Xie et al., 2017) and on customer trust and satisfaction (Min et al., 2015; Sparks et al., 2016) were examined. This study has been carried out quite about managing reviews from online travel sites such as Tripadvisor (Schuckert et al., 2015; Perez-Aranda, Vallespín, & Molinillo, 2019). Besides, studies have shown that online presence and visibility play an essential role in increasing digital reputation. On the other hand, digital reputation can be evaluated under the digital strategic management process according to Cioppi, Curina, Forlani & Pencarelli (2019). Therefore, the first step about this case consists of accessing the network by establishing its online presence (websites, social media). As a second step, online presence should be promoted to increase the online visibility and traffic towards the online contact points. The last point is that once users are attracted to the contact points, the task of retaining and influencing potential customers is assigned to the online reputation (digital reputation). Correspondingly, the following questions were created:

- What would you like to say about the current reputation of your digital marketing agency/hotel? (Digital Agency/Hotel Establishment)

- At what point do you think your reputation will be in the next five years? (Digital Agency/Hotel Establishment)

- In your opinion, what are the features that tourism establishments that will continue to serve after Covid-19 should apply additio-

nally in terms of digital reputation? (Digital Agency)

Digital reputation management is closely related to corporate reputation. Carrol and McCombs (2003) claim that organizations can have different types of reputation, which can significantly help measure and overcome transparency of information about online corporate reputation. When the reputation is associated with media communication, they suggest that there is a social structure that adopts different forms: the company's current reputation, the reputation communicated and perceived by the different interest groups, the interpreted reputation, the agreed reputation, the excellent reputation, and the desired reputation. In this sense, online corporate reputation (in the future OCR) could be defined as the evaluation obtained by the company on the Internet through favorable or unfavorable usage of the possibilities offered by the Internet. Prestige in social networks emanating from the value offered to users online is a determining feature for OCR, as may be appreciated through the analysis carried out in this emblematic case of TripAdvisor in the tourism sector (Gil, Barandalla & Idoeta, 2017).

Park and Allen (2013) have revealed in their study that hotels which frequently respond to comments express their feelings about the experience they have gained through their customers' comments honestly. In comparison, hotels that do not respond to comments believe that the comments represent highly positive or negative views. Levy et al. (2013) stated in their study that hotels with very high scores responded to negative comments by apologizing and making explanations but rarely agreed to pay any compensation. Zhang and Vásquez (2014) divided the answers to the comments made in the digital environment for four and 5-star hotels into ten categories in their research on hotels. It has been determined that the most frequent of these are appreciation and apology (Zhang & Vásquez, 2014). Luca and Reshef

(2020) investigated the influence of price on establishment reputation measured by online ratings. The results are consistent with cross-sectional evidence, which suggests that higher prices affect a restaurant's reputation (Ferreira, Ferreira & Fernandes, 2021). In some other studies on this issue, it has been revealed that the responses to negative comments and the time spent for it affect the performance of establishments (Sparks & Bradley, 2014; Min et al., 2015). Therefore, based on the literature, the following questions were formed:

- In your opinion, what should be done to strengthen the reputation of tourism establishments and in which digital environment (website, social media accounts, etc.)? (Digital Agency/Hotel Establishment)

- In your opinion, what are the situations that damage the reputation of a tourism establishment? (Digital Agency/Hotel Establishment)

According to Williams and Buttle (2011), establishments have little knowledge of managing their reputation by taking into account the comments made by consumers online. Today, it has become imperative for hotels and other tourism establishments to understand how and why digital reputation management based on online comments affects the establishment (Floreddu et al., 2014). In this way, managers can monitor the situation and intervene where they deem necessary (Schuckert et al., 2015). In many studies on digital reputation management for tourism establishments, the situations such as the response frequency and speed of the establishments and the number, content, and length of the responses have been examined (Perez-Aranda, Vallespín, & Molinillo, 2019).

Dickinger, Koeltringer, and Koerbitz (2011) found in their study that data collected online and offline yielded similar results in the field of tourism (Marchiori & Cantoni, 2012). Yacouel and Fleischer (2012) have found that digital reliability

is essential in improving the digital reputation of tourism establishments without false or incomplete opinions. According to Gössling et al. (2016), the critical point of evaluations made about the digital environment is reliability. The reliability of the content expressed in the digital environment is related to understanding consumer preferences. Ert et al. (2016) and Teubner et al. (2017) examined reputation management, including interesting variables such as photos uploaded by establishments to the Internet.

In the study of Inan (2002), due to the establishment of mutual and effective communication between the Internet and the customer and the company, customer requests and requirements can be learned more easily and quickly and help provide customer service effectively. However, it has been shown that advantages such as reducing costs and providing products and services to customers at lower prices have a positive effect on customer satisfaction. It is thought that this positively affects the reputation of companies. On the other hand, Gretzel et al. (2007) stated that the comments made on social media minimize the possible risks. People who plan their vacation may encounter and offer them alternatives about accommodation and thus increase their self-confidence (Saçlı, Efe, Sunar, & Ersöz, 2018).

3. Method

This section includes data collection tools, data collection method, data analysis, and demographic characteristics of the participants.

3.1. Data Collection Tool

The interview form technique, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. A structured interview form was prepared. While

determining the questions in the interview form, the literature was used. Expert opinions were taken during the preparation process, and it was understood that there was no ambiguity. Within the scope of the study, the digital marketing agencies, which operate in Turkey and work in cooperation with the tourism industry, and hotel establishments, have been selected as purposeful sampling. Purpose sampling is a common technique for qualitative research to identify and select information-rich cases for the most efficient use of limited resources (Patton 2002; Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan & Hoagwood, 2015).

3.2. Data Collection Method

Digital marketing agencies could efficiently distribute information, promotional programs, and testimonials of establishments through different electronic channels (Andayani, 2021). They would check their digital accounts and prepare reports instead of businesses. For this reason, these agencies, which are pioneers in digitalization, were determined as the institutions to be interviewed. While determining digital reputation agencies, a list of digital reputation agencies operating in Turkey was created. Afterward, the agencies working with tourism establishments were determined by checking the agencies' websites and having phone calls since the research is about tourism businesses. In addition, 11 large-scale hotel owners are included since hotels have a larger and more complex structure (food and beverage sections, human resources, front office, and others) among tourism enterprises. The aim here was to determine how important the hotels, which opened their doors to many innovations from booking methods to virtual tours, attach importance to their digital reputation.

Forty-four digital agencies working in cooperation with tourism establishments were determined. Interviews were done with 11 of the determined

agencies, and a participation level of 25% was achieved. Data were collected between April and June 2020 via electronic mail. The structured interview form with pre-determined questions directed to the participants in a specific order. In this form which was designed to get answers in compliance with the purpose of the study, the same questions were asked to each participant in the same order (Abdul-Rahman, Wang, Wood, & Low, 2012: 437). In addition, hotel establishments working with digital marketing agents were evaluated within the scope of the study. Eleven hotel establishments' owners were interviewed, and it has been determined that these data support the data obtained from digital reputation agencies. The interviews were held in April 2021.

3.3. Data Analysis

The MAXQDA analysis program was used to process the data obtained from the participants. The data obtained were encoded using the "MAX-Maps"tab. Within the scope of the study, content analysis methods were applied. Content analysis refers to the detailed analysis of the collected data and their categorization and theming. The codes of frequently repeated or emphasized situations are extracted (Coffey, 1996: 46-47). A total of 299 codes were extracted from the data obtained within the scope of the study. Ninety of these codes consist of findings obtained from demographic questions. The study's' demographic questions are gender, age, education level, income level, and work experience. We did not use participants' names to the principle of confidentiality. We coded officials of digital marketing agencies as "K1, K2, K3, ..., K11."and Hotel owners as "P1, P2, P3, ..., P11."The codes extracted within the scope of the study are as follows:

Figure 1 | Code and Theming

3.4. Participants' Characterization

The first five questions asked to the participants are demographic questions. These are about gender, age, education, income, and experience. While 9 of the participants answered demographic questions, two of them left them unanswered. A total of 90 encodings were made in this section.

Figure 2 | Gender Results of Participants

The first of the demographic questions is gender. It is seen that all of the participants who answered this question are male. Although it is not possible to generalize the obtained data for Digital Marketing Agencies, it can be said that there is a male-intensive managerial staff in digital marketing agencies.

The second of the demographic questions are about the age of the participants. It is observed that the participants who answered this question are predominantly in the middle age category. It can be said that the Digital Marketing Manager's potential is in the middle age group.
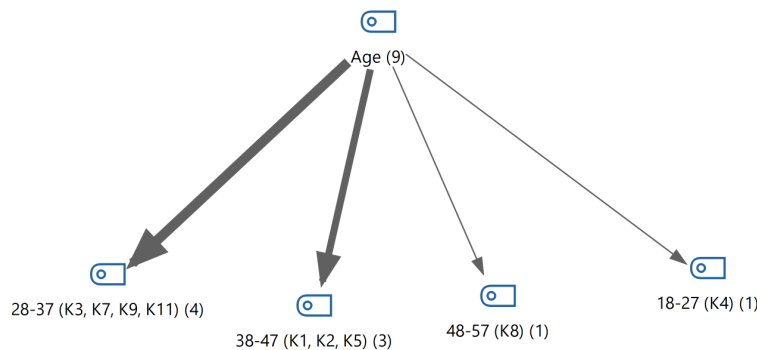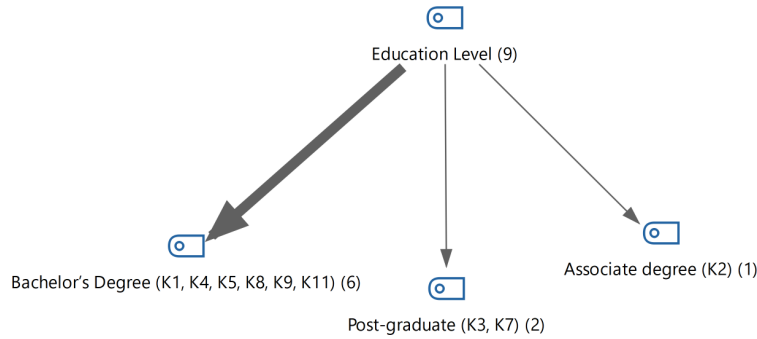

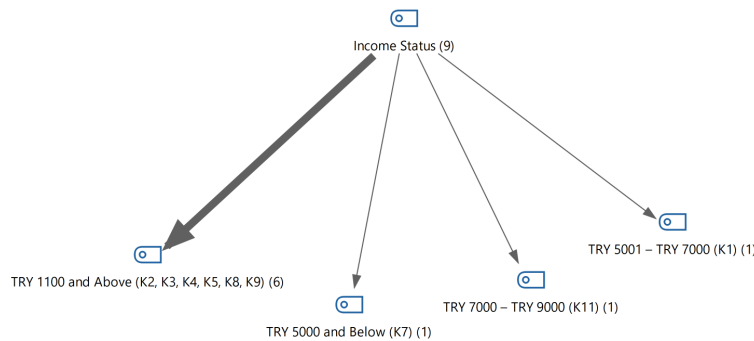**Figure 3** | Age Results of Participants

The third demographic question is about education level. Thus, it is seen that the participants predominantly have bachelor's degrees. In this context, it can be said that Marketing Agency managers are very likely to have at least a bachelor's degree.
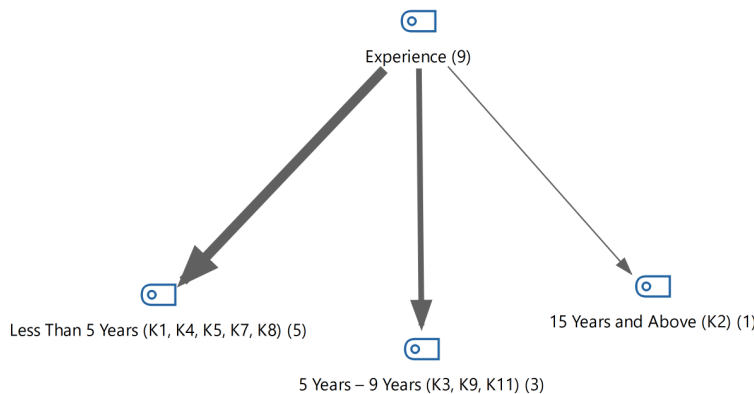
Figure 4 | Education Level Results of Participants

Figure 5 | Income Results of Participants

The fourth demographic question is about income. Considering that the participants are in managerial positions, their income is expected to be high. It is understood that they have income that match the expectations.

Figure 6 | Experience Status Results of Participants

The fifth demographic question is about the experience in tourism establishments. Although the participants work for digital marketing agencies working with tourism establishments, their work experience is low. Therefore, it can be said that when working with tourism establishments, they approach the issue as a digital marketing expert, not as tourism professionals. Therefore, hotel esta-

blishments' owners who are tourism professionals were also included in the study. Within the scope of the study, hotel establishments working with digital marketing agencies were chosen.

It has been determined that all of the hotel establishments' owners are men over 35 years of age, at least a bachelor's degree in education, their income is over 20 thousand Turkish Lira, and their tourism experience is ten years or more.

4. Findings

The interview form consists of two parts. These are the first part where demographic questions are and the second part where questions about reputation management are included.

4.1. Findings on Digital Reputation

The second part of the study consists of the questions on digital reputation management in tourism establishments. We asked seven questions to the participants and created 209 codes out of the obtained data. Interviews were held with hotel establishments' owners who received professional advertising agency support and five questions were asked to the participants. A total of 197 encodings were made.

The first question asked to the participants in this section is, "Which factors do you think the digital reputation of a tourism establishment depends on?" The code map created in line with the responses of the participants is as follows:
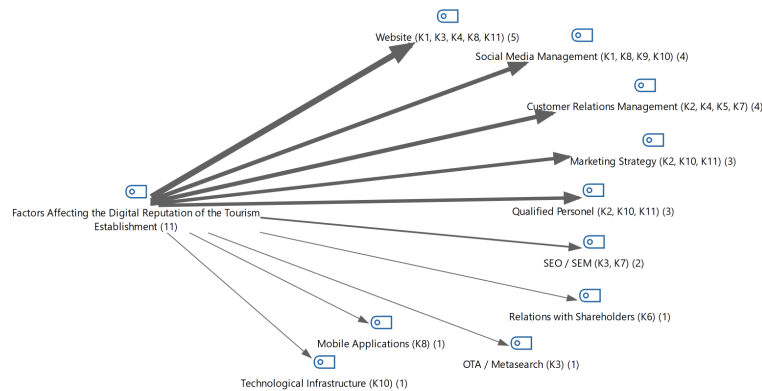

Figure 7 | Factors Affecting the Digital Reputation of the Tourism Establishment (Digital Agency)

The main headings for creating digital reputation are "Website, Customer Relationship Management, and Social Media Management." At this point, it is assumed that digital reputation cannot be achieved without a good website, effectively managed customer relationship management, and social media management.

The code map formed after the hotel owners' answers is represented in figure 8.

It is realized that the themes of "social media management, financial performance, and customer comments" are emphasized more in the code map. Compared to the responses of digital agency officials, financial performance is at the forefront of the theme. In this context, it is understood that hotel owners see financial performance as a success criterion for reputation management.

The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants are shown in table 1.
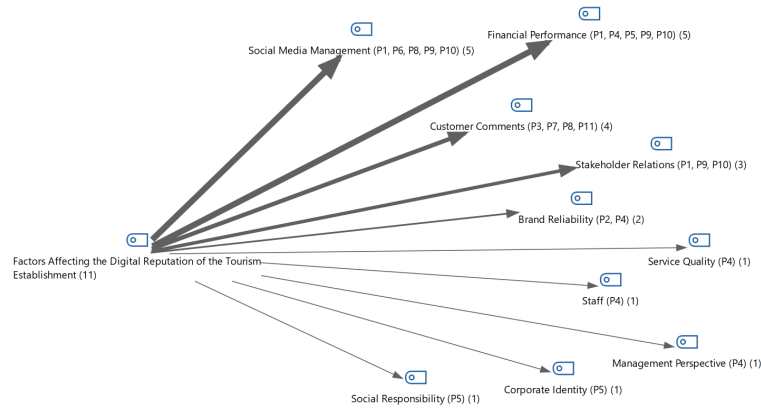
Figure 8 | Factors Affecting the Digital Reputation of the Tourism Establishment (Hotel Establishment)

Table 1 | Direct Quotations Regarding Factors Affecting Digital Reputation

Participant	Code	Quotation
		Digital Agency
K1	Website	*"Websites should be updated regularly. All facility features should be introduced on the website (virtual tour, photo, video, technical data). The more effectively the technology is used, the more effectively potential guests can evaluate the facility."*
K2	Customer Relations Management Marketing Strategy Qualified Staff	*"First of all, it is necessary to have a transparent and correct marketing strategy. Expert-competent people should manage traditional and digital marketing services. Honestly, there should be a professional yet amateur-spirited sales team. There should be a high-level customer relationship management that can be executed accurately and effectively, media monitoring and tracking systems, and a marketing budget aimed at eliminating customer dissatisfaction."*
K3	Website SEO / SEM OTA / Metasearch	*"The main sources of the digital reputation of a tourism establishment are websites and comparison sites called OTA and Metasearch. It is essential to be visible on Google, the most used search engine in Turkey, and stand out through user comments. It is necessary to invest for these channels."*
K7	Customer Reviews	*"Digital reputation is closely related to how the results found in the Internet searches look mostly. Before using any product or service, consumers search for this product or service on the Internet media and pay attention to the experiences of those who convey their positive and negative experiences. If the search results consist of positive experiences, there is an expectation that the experience to be purchased will be positive in the eyes of the consumer."*
K10	Social Media Management Marketing Strategy Qualified Staff Technological Infrastructure	*"A team that will coordinate different dimensions of reputation management should be present or professional service should be received in this field. All the essential elements from corporate identity to visual quality, from social media management to online comment management, should be available. The service and facility quality and strategy planning should be created expectations and should be made accordingly. All tools, including next generation messaging platforms, should be used efficiently in order to receive positive feedback from the guests after the sources of complaints are eliminated."*
		Hotel Establishment
P1	Stakeholder Relations/	*"The reputation of the hotel establishment depends on its economic situation in the industry, stakeholder relations, and social and media management."*
P5	Social Media Management / Financial Performance	*"Its vision, corporate identity, financial strength, social responsibility projects, and digital transformation rate will form the digital reputation of that tourism establishment."*
P8	Corporate Identity / Financial Performance / Social Responsibility	*"Digital Reputation is the resultant of the traces left on digital platforms. These tracks are directly proportional to digital assets."*

The second question asked to the participants in the second part of the study is "How important is the role of digital media in reputation mana-gement?" The code map created in line with the responses of the participants is as follows:
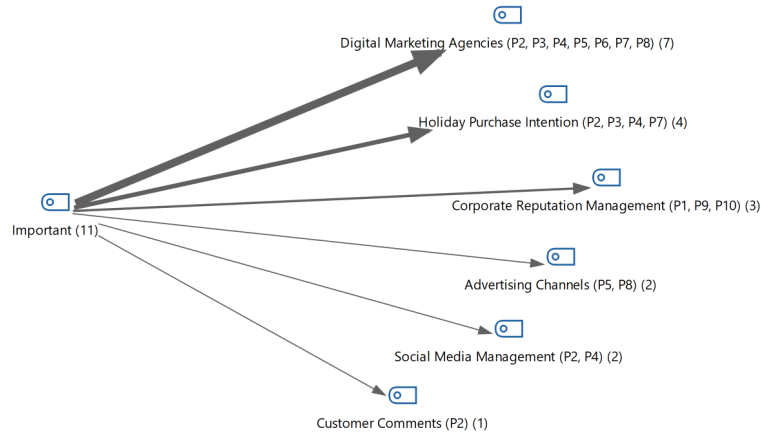
Figure 9 | The Role of Digital Media in Reputation Management (Hotel Establishment)

Digital environments have been specified as necessary in reputation management. It has been determined that digital marketing agencies significantly contribute to reputation. In addition, it has been determined that digital environments affect tourists' holiday purchase intention.

The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants are as follows:

Table 2 | Direct Quotations Regarding The Role of Digital Media in Reputation Management (Hotel Establishment)

Participant	Code	Quotation
P2	Customer Comments / Social Media Management / Digital Marketing Agencies / Holiday Purchase Intention	"It is an essential factor. Comments made on social media affect sales, especially in recent years. I do not take a vacation in a business with a bad reputation. Digital marketing agencies have a significant contribution to the tourism industry. Especially the domestic market hotels fill the hotels by using digital marketing methods."
P9	Corporate Reputation Management	"The online environment can humiliate a business's reputation; why? Since every word that comes out of you will describe your corporate stance in the sector, it is essential. Nowadays, all kinds of information are shared instantly in social media areas. If you have a reputation in the industry, people will consider your advertising and sharing because you have a line. However, a word or a mistake you put there will cause misunderstanding. Your reputation can disappear in an instant. It takes a long time to try to tidy it up. Digital media can be dangerous if you do not have corporate reputation management. "

The third question asked to the participants in the second part of the study is, "In your opinion, what should be done to strengthen the reputation of tourism establishments and in which digital media (website, social media accounts, etc.)?" The code map created in line with the responses of the participants is in figure 10.

It is observed that the participants' answers are gathered under the title of effective management. It is seen that the prominent titles are "Social Media Accounts, Website and Customer Satisfaction Rates." Thus, it is understood that tourism establishments need to have a corporate social media account to strengthen their reputation, the website should be kept up-to-date, and customer satisfaction rates should be taken into account and followed.

The code map formed after the hotel owners' answers is depicted in figure 11.
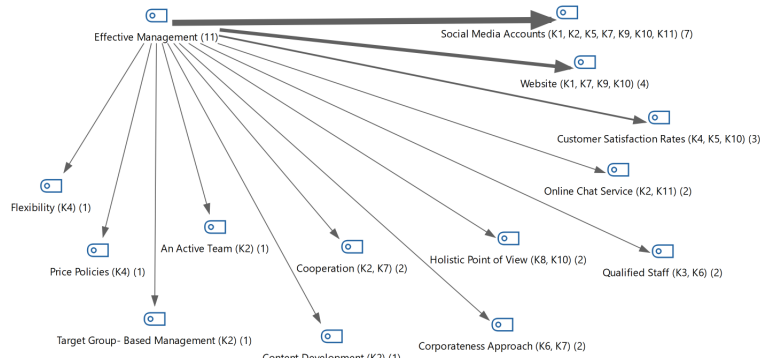
Figure 10 | What Should Be Done to Strengthen Reputation and in Which Digital Media? (Digital Agency)
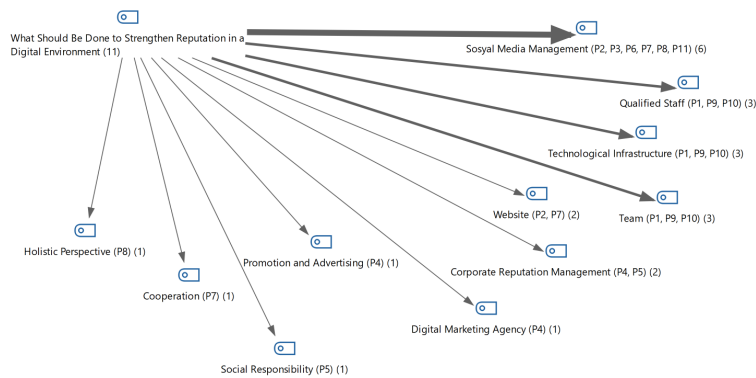

Figure 11 | What Should Be Done to Strengthen Reputation and in Which Digital Media? (Hotel Establishment)

It is realized that the themes of "social media management, qualified staff, technological infrastructure and team"are preferred. The responses of the digital marketing representatives are similar to those of the hotel owners. It has been determined that hotel owners touch on the themes of technological infrastructure, team, and qualified staff more.

The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants are shown in table 3.

The fourth question asked to the participants in the second part of the study is "What do you think are the conditions that damage the reputa-

tion of a tourism establishment?" The code map created in line with the responses of the participants is in figure 12.

When the participants' answers are examined, the titles of "Service Quality and Personnel Quality" come to the fore in circumstances that damage the reputation. It is understood that tourism establishments should not reduce their service quality and choose their personnel from qualified and trained individuals or train them to protect their reputation.

The code map formed after the hotel owners' answers is exposed in figure 13.

Table 3 | Direct Quotations Regarding What Should Be Done in Digital Media
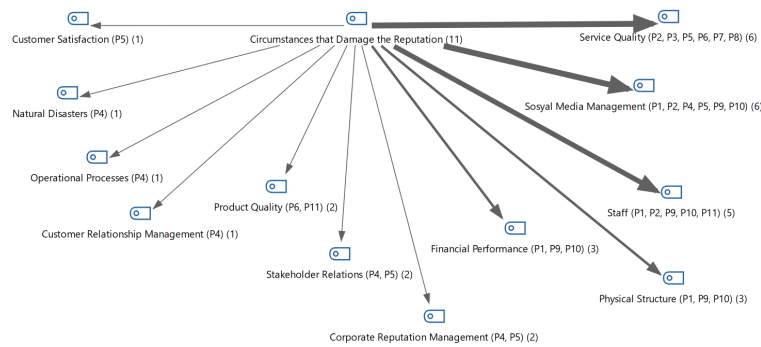
Participant	Code	Quotation
		Digital Agency
K2	Social Media Accounts Content Development An Active Team Target Group-Based Management Online Chat Service Cooperation	"Among social media accounts, Twitter is ideal for reaching press members working in digital and conventional media. The media monitoring service should be received in all social media channels, especially Twitter and sites like sikayetvar.com. The opportunity to intervene in possible crisis moments as soon as possible should be provided. Target group-based management approach should be adopted. Social media accounts such as Instagram and Facebook should be used as a customer relationship management tool. 24-hour online chat services should be offered, and digital channels should be involved with advertising and content studies. Projects should be developed in content-producing channels such as onedio and mynet, and cooperation should be made with influencers; that can reach large audiences."
K4	Customer Satisfaction Rates Price Policies Flexibility	"Reviews and stars should be collected from every customer, and these comments should be published in reliable sites such as TripAdvisor, google, website. It is very effective to share these comments, especially on social media, and post them on the page as a story. Price policies, flexibility, and customer satisfaction rates are important at this point. Prices should not be varied too much. Companies that are flexible in their cancellation and return conditions appear to be more prestigious. Every social media account should have a common brand language and color."
K6	Qualified Staff Corporateness Approach	""To begin with, the company should protect its employees. Why? The employees are the ones who represent the establishment and talk about you in society. They are this establishment's hands, eyes, and ears. Therefore, if you establish the opportunities you offer to your employees' social activities, in short, your working policy within the framework of mutual trust and satisfaction, nobody can destroy you from inside anymore, and it means you are strong. The corporates approach is another important point. If you do not have corporate reputation-policy management, the digital environment can destroy the outstanding work you do all at once in a small mistake."
		Hotel Establishment
P2	Website Social Media Management	"The web page should be a visual and easy-to-use page for digital reputation. The easiest way to market the service is through web pages and social media accounts. Therefore, I think the most important thing is; providing marketing services to guests through their social media accounts."
P5	Corporate Reputation Management Social Responsibility	"Units that undertake reputation management in coordination in all digital environments should prioritize especially social responsibility projects and reputation management, taking into account their corporate identity."
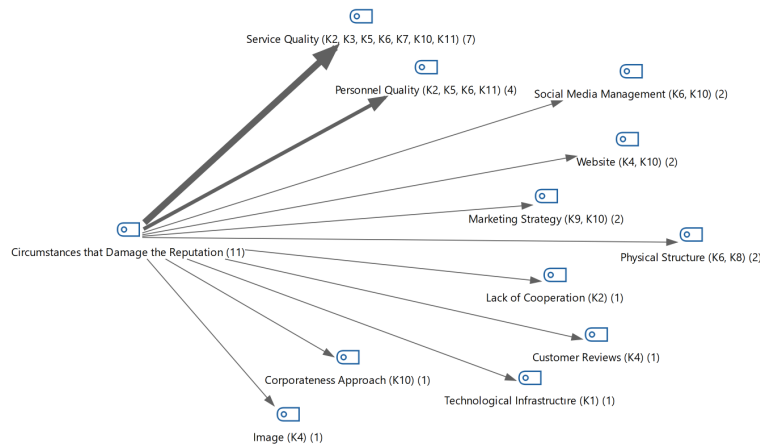
Figure 12 | Circumstances that Damage the Reputation (Digital Agency)

The responses of the digital marketing representatives are similar to those of the hotel owners. The themes of "social media management, service quality, and staff" are striking. Successful management of social media, service quality, and qualified staff are seen as the main factors supporting the reputation of the hotel business.

The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants can be seen in table 4.

Figure 13 | Circumstances that Damage the Reputation (Hotel Establishment)

Table 4 | DDirect Quotations Regarding Factors Damaging the Reputation

Participant	Code	Quotation
K6	Service Quality Personnel Quality Physical Structure Social Media Management	*"I will start to answer this question again as employees. The reason is that if you have qualified and happy staff who know the ethical rules of the workplace well, then your castle is strong, as the employees are the representatives of the organization. Your establishment decreasing the service quality it offers is the major issue that damages its reputation. There is a value that your establishment has gained in the market. While representing it with your employees and managers, the physical position in your building affects your place and reputation in the sector. In addition, if your social media management cannot be managed in a properly controlled manner, news or sharing that will be published there may harm the business."*
K9	Marketing Strategy	*""A communication strategy should be formulated, especially considering the target group. If they give a message that will disturb the target group, the loss of customers occurs."*
K10	Service Quality Website Marketing Strategy Social Media Management Corporateness Approach	*"The situations such as the low quality of the facility and service, the lack of corporate identity, the presence of different information on platforms such as the website and social media, the creation of excessive expectations in the guests through incorrect strategies, not providing accurate and up-to-date information in social media and online comment management, and the low rate and speed of answering guest questions damage the reputation of the establishment."*
Hotel Establishment		
P4	Corporate Reputation Management / Customer Relationship Management / Stakeholder Relations / Social Media Management	*"Hotels should give importance to corporate reputation management in order to create a difference that will gain competitive power. A hotel's reputation cannot be achieved solely by its success and profitability. They should value their relationships with their guests, employees, consumers, investors, and their environment."*
P7	Service Quality	*"The worst case is that the business does not meet the expectations and the promised services are not fulfilled."*

The fifth question asked to the participants in the second part of the study is "What is the contribution of your digital marketing agency to the tourism sector?" The code map formed in line with the answers of the participants is given in Figure 14.

When the participants' answers are examined, it is seen that the agencies primarily contribute to the tourism sector in the subjects of "Social Media Management, Reputation Enhancement, and Income Increasing". In this context, it is understood that agencies are essential for tourism establishments to remain strong in the market and protect their reputation.

The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants are demonstrated in table 5.
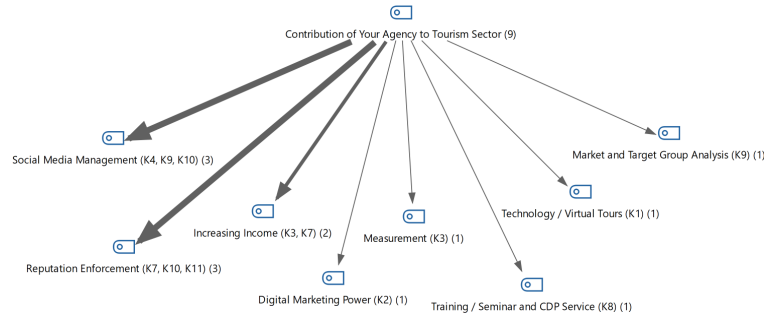
Figure 14 | Contribution to Tourism Sector (Digital Agency)

Table 5 | Direct Quotations Regarding Contribution to Tourism Sector (Digital Agency)

Participant	Code	Quotation
K1	Technology/Virtual Tours	"We are implementing the next generation virtual tour applications. It is a technology that is more interactive. So, users can communicate with the user, which offers a very comfortable browsing experience, can be used on all platforms (computer, tablet, mobile) without installing any application. Users have many more features, and the use of which intensifies in the world becoming, instead of the old 360-degree photo shoots."
K2	Digital Marketing Power	"We are a company well-known to the industry with our motto 'the PR agency of the tourism industry. Apart from this sector, we do not operate in other sectors. We have been serving in the tourism industry for more than 27 years. We are unique in this field, and we are a tourism marketing-PR professional that knows tourism best. We are telling brands that have been using traditional marketing for years and do not think of advertising outside of conventional media the right way of doing business and how it should be done."
K3	Increasing Income Measurement	"Our agency provides digital services to many hotels. Here, we spend the money of the companies we serve here under the principle of transparency. Allows the hotel to get more turnover in return for the money it spends or sees it. The most important element of digital marketing is "measurement." The metric that we call "Return Of Investment" allows you to see how much revenue you have brought to your establishment in return for the advertising budgets you invested."
K7	Increasing Income Reputation Enhancement	"The biggest impact of our agency is to direct the incoming tourists by influencing them during the decision stages. We follow strategies to strengthen the reputation of the establishment and increase their revenues over time, especially by guiding unstable tourists and telling them where to find the product or service they are looking for and how they will finally gain experience."
K10	Social Media Management Reputation Enhancement	"We are providing a social media management service offered to employees who are focused on tourism facilities. Employees are experienced in this field and have up-to-date information through continuous hotel visits. The installation and training of worldwide common and leading software solutions in the field of Online Reputation Management (ORM), organizations held in the fields of digital marketing, and the digital media sponsorship of regional associations such as AKTOB."

The sixth question asked to the participants in the second part of the study is "What would you like to say about the current reputation of your digital marketing agency/hotel?" The code map created in line with the responses of the participants is as follows:
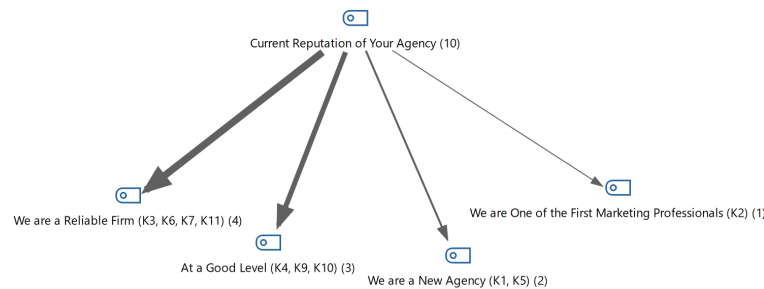

Figure 15 | The Current Reputation (Digital Agency)

When the participants' answers are examined, they consider the reputation of their agencies to be in a good position. The responses of the digital marketing representatives are similar to those of the hotel owners. Hotel owners evaluate their establishments as reliable.

The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants are as follows:

Table 6 | Direct Quotations Regarding the Current Reputation (Digital Agency)

Participant	Code	Quotation
K2	We Are One of the First Marketing Professionals	"Since we are a PR agency established by a 27-year-old tourism professional working in the tourism sector, we are a well-known agency with a good reference from the Minister of Tourism, the President of TURSAB, all the heads of tourism NGOs, and the leaders of the sector."
K2	We Are A Reliable Firm	"Our rate of losing customers is 3% now. Our rate is a very low rate for a digital agency. The principle of honesty and transparency is the biggest factor in this situation. We have a team that is well-known within the sector and has a budget experience of million TRY in Turkey's biggest tourism companies."
K6	We Are A Reliable Firm	"We are an establishment where people in the industry only have had the word "Reliable" in their minds about us for nearly 21 years."
K10	At A Good Level	"We offer all digital services such as online reputation management-oriented software solution for tourism facilities, social media management, professional photography, corporate identity management. Moreover, digital marketing from a single point in our agency was founded entirely by tourism-based managers. We are one of the rare agencies that can provide all the digital needs of a tourism facility from a single source and provide 360degrees of service. For many years, we have been sponsoring regional associations such as AKTOB (Mediterranean Touristic Hoteliers Association) for digital media and attending conferences and events. We have been trying to raise awareness in digital marketing and reputation management in the tourism sector via the events we have been holding with our partners since 2016."

The seventh question asked to the participants in the second part of the study is the question, "At what point do you think your digital marketing agency's reputation will be in the next five years?" When the participants' answers were examined, it was determined that they anticipated that their institutions would be in a better position in the next five years.

The code map formed after the hotel owners' answers is as follows:
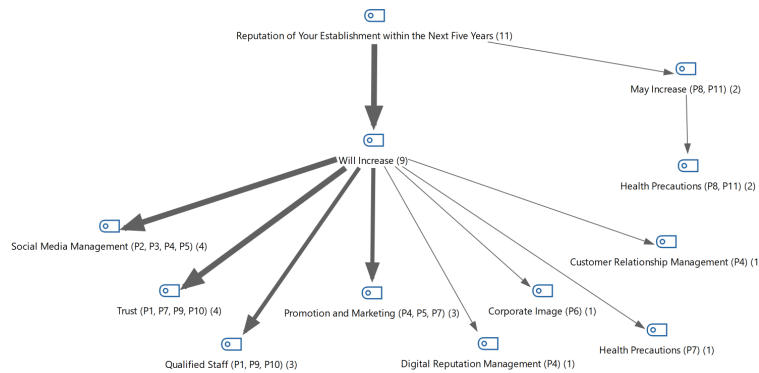
Figure 16 | Reputation in the Next Five Years (Hotel Establishment)

The responses of the digital marketing representatives are similar to those of the hotel owners. Hotel owners claim that their reputation will increase five years later. "Social media management, trust, promotion and marketing and qualified staff" codes are considered as the main factors for increasing reputation.
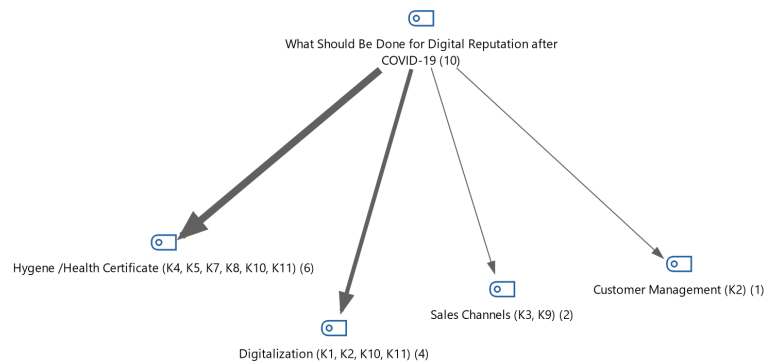
The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants are as follows:

Table 7 | Direct Quotations Regarding the Reputation within the Next 5 Years (Digital Agency)

Participant	Code	Quotation
K2	It Will Increase	*"I think that an environment in which even the brands recently entering the sector have heard about our brand from the very first day and which other stakeholders have told about our brand in the first days will begin to emerge. I think that new brands will be eager to work with us by themselves after five years, without us having to tell anyone about our services. I think that a situation will emerge within 1-2 years, in which a foreign investor will engage in a partnership with us and acquire our brand."*
K4	It Will Increase	*"We want to grow more in the next five years, especially in England, and open two separate offices in Turkey. In doing so, we want to work with prestigious companies and celebrities and service Turkey in the most stylish way and at the UK level."*
K6	It Will Increase	*"I think that our "Reliable" value will preserve its place in the sector and that the customers' feelings towards us will not change in their hearts by adding value to our management. Our management provides us with all kinds of supports regarding changing technology, and we get support from professional places and work with professional personnel."*
K10	It Will Increase	*"We think that online reputation management will gain much more importance in the next five years as today's pandemic conditions lead people to be more selective. We are confident that online reputation management has a history of almost a quarter of a century in global brands in tourism. It will also be one of the aspects of our country's facilities. We think our agency has been positioned almost unrivaled in this field since 2012. It will benefit from this transformation in the most advantageous way."*

The eighth question asked to the participants in the second part of the study is, "In your opinion, what are the features that tourism establishments that will continue to serve after Covid-19 should apply additionally in terms of digital reputation?" The code map created in line with the responses of the participants is as follows:

Figure 17 | What Needs to Be Done for Digital Reputation after COVID-19 (Digital Agency)

When the participants' answers are examined, especially the "Hygiene/Health Certificate" title comes to the fore, especially in the post-COVID-19 epidemic period. In this context, it is understood that tourism establishments should pay attention to hygiene conditions to remain strong in the market and protect their reputation. The prominent quotations in line with the answers of the participants are as follows:

Table 8 | Direct Quotations Regarding What Should Be Done for Digital Reputation after COVID-19 (Digital Agency)

Participant	Code	Quotation
K2	Digitalization	"I think they need to be prepared for Covid-19 starting from today; they should continue their communication activities without slowing down starting from today, carry out backlink studies for digital PR and SEO, establish new satellite sites, and produce plenty of content. In this period, I think everyone should make qualified webinars while they are silent, and they should carry out special projects through influencers."
K3	Sales Channels	"Companies should advertise in their names and brands. I recommend that they create their websites and advertising budgets. Tourism companies' only sales channel is their website and call center. All sales channels other than these depend on other companies' initiatives and sales targets. For example, an Instagram page is not the official page of the establishment. That page is the page of the Facebook Group, and someday soon, your page may be shut down for no reason. For example, an agency that brings outstanding profits to your establishment may be shut down someday soon. Therefore, companies should now support and invest in their own sales channels. Web sites should be owned by themselves and not by a different company. The call center should be owned by itself, not a different company. Advertising budgets should not be given to an agency once. These expenditures should be checked and questioned."
K7	Hygiene / Health Certificate	"The most important service that can be offered recently is the health and disinfection services. The tourism establishments show that they care about cleanliness and health and produce content on this subject consists of the first steps to be taken. In addition, when they convey the status of their establishments, and business managers express their attitudes with video content, this will be the most important strategy in terms of the trust that they will create in the consumer."

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Digital reputation management has become more important along with digital marketing continuingly. Digital reputation management has been put into practice in the tourism sector as it is in every sector. At this point, it has been an object of curiosity to what extent tourism establishments use digital reputation management, and researchers have attempted to identify this situation.

It has been stated that digital reputation could not be achieved without a good and effective website, a dynamically managed customer relationship management approach, and social media management following consumer expectations and requests very closely and quickly. From this point of view, it is thought that businesses that do not fulfill the issues above may face the risk of not being able to protect their existing reputations. Subsequently, it is assumed that this situation will adversely affect the profitability of the business and its customer potential. It has been determined that tourism establishments need to have a corporate social media account, keeps their Internet pages up-to-date, and consider and monitor customer satisfaction rates to have a more substantial reputation. Otherwise, even a response to a negative comment that the business representative does not give can cause even greater chaos. In addition, it has been revealed that it is essential for tourism establishments not to lower their service quality and select their employees among qualified candidates to protect their existing reputation. Tourism establishment should pay attention to hygiene conditions to remain strong in the market and protect their reputation during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The responses of the hotel owners are similar to those of the digital marketing representatives. Unlike digital marketing agencies, they focused more on qualified personnel and financial performance themes. They emphasized the importance of digital marketing agencies for reputation. In addition, it has been stated that success cannot be achieved without social media management and corporate reputation management.

It was seen that there were some similarities and differences in the literature. Since the research is about tourism establishments, it shows similarities with other studies, especially on subjects such as "website," "customer satisfaction and trust," and "online reviews" (Gu & Ye, 2014; Schuckert et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2015; Min et al., 2015; Schuckert et al., 2015; Sparks et al., 2016; Xie et al., 2017; Perez-Aranda, Vallespín, & Molinillo, 2019).

However, in the studies above, it has been determined that the importance of digital reputation in terms of tourism businesses is not clearly addressed. This study differs from previous studies on digital reputation, as the subjects such as the contribution of digital marketing to the tourism industry and the current situation of digital reputation agencies. Moreover, what kinds of activities tourism establishments should engage in to protect their reputation during the COVID-19 pandemic are also examined. It is assumed that it will contribute to the literature in this respect.

This study is also thought to provide some practical benefits. Both the role of digital reputation agencies in terms of tourism establishments and the level of importance of any establishment's reputation in the digital environment have been attempted to be revealed. In addition, practical information such as what factors the digital reputation depends on, how it can be carried forward, and the situations that damage the reputation are presented. Thus, this study is essential for guiding other establishments. It is thought that when establishments pay attention to their digital reputation and take steps in this direction, this will reflect on the establishment's profitability and the motivation and performance of the employees. It has been revealed that to keep digital reputation at a high level from the management perspectives. The tourism business's website and social media accounts should be well managed; they should respond to customer demands accurately and quickly. They should focus on customer relationship management and marketing strategies. The business management assumes that knowing consumers' current trends and expectations which are more prominent in the digital environment will bring benefits in managerial practice.

The research was conducted with only 11 of 44 digital reputation agencies working with tourism businesses. Future researchers can do it with more agencies in different countries. Second, only 11 hotel owners were interviewed in the hotel mana-gement part of the study. Future researchers may interview more hotel managers or various tourism businesses. Finally, the research was conducted between April and June of 2020. Doing it over a more extended period may produce distinctive results. In this study, some issues were not asked/examined by the researchers. For example, it has not been questioned what kind of techniques digital reputation agency employees use to protect or increase the reputation of tourism businesses. Moreover, it is another issue that is not examined how by whom and by which methods the communication between the digital reputation agency and the tourism business takes place. Lastly, the subjects such as the digital reputation awareness or perception of the employees and the perspective of employers and managers on digital reputation management can be examined. Also, the relationship between digital reputation and premium, which are not addressed in this study due to various internal and external factors, can be investigated by future researchers.

Acknowledgments

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