

A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF TIK TOK LIVE E-COMMERCE ON TOURIST CONSUMERS' PURCHASING INTENTION

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Abstract

Live streaming e-commerce has rapidly evolved in recent years, becoming a key driver in the digital transformation of China's tourism industry. This shift has significantly reshaped traditional tourism marketing models. As China's leading short video and live streaming platform, TikTok offers consumers an interactive and real-time experience, influencing their purchase decisions. Compared to traditional tourism channels, TikTok live streaming enhances consumer trust and purchase intention through intuitive content presentation, real-time engagement, and social recommendations. This study explores the impact of TikTok live streaming on consumer purchase intentions in the Kunming tourism market, emphasizing its advantages and limitations relative to traditional tourism channels. Empirical data were collected through structured surveys and in-depth interviews, with systematic analysis identifying key factors affecting consumer decisions. The findings provide insights for tourism enterprises to optimize marketing strategies in response to the rapid expansion of live streaming e-commerce.

Keywords: Tik Tok, live-streaming e-commerce, tourism channels, purchase intentions, consumer behavior.

Introduction

With advancements in digital technology, live streaming e-commerce has emerged as an innovative sales model, integrating real-time engagement with direct consumer interactions. In the tourism sector (Hua, N., Li, B., & Zhang, T. 2023), this model reduces information asymmetry and enhances the accessibility of travel products. Platforms such as TikTok enable consumers to explore destinations, accommodations, and travel packages through immersive live broadcasts, offering an interactive alternative to traditional tourism channels.

Unlike conventional marketing approaches, which rely on static images or pre-recorded videos, live streaming provides real-time communication, allowing consumers to ask questions and receive immediate responses from tourism service providers. This interactivity fosters trust and mitigates decision-making uncertainty. Additionally, the integration of promotional incentives, such as flash discounts and influencer endorsements, strengthens consumer engagement and stimulates impulsive buying behavior (Sujaya, H. 2023).

Kunming, a major tourist hub, provides an ideal setting to examine the impact of live streaming on tourism consumer behavior. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, digital tourism sales have surged, challenging the dominance of traditional tourism agencies and offline booking channels (Erkanli, E., Kilic, H., & Ozturen, A. 2024). While live streaming e-commerce enhances the efficiency of tourism marketing, it also raises concerns regarding reliability, service quality, and long-term consumer relationships (Yu, T., Teoh, A. P., Bian, Q.,

Liao, J., & Wang, C. 2025).

This study aims to analyze the influence of TikTok live e-commerce on consumer purchase behavior in Kunming, investigating how this model competes with and complements traditional tourism channels. By examining factors such as emotional engagement, trust mechanisms, and consumer preferences, the study seeks to provide actionable recommendations for tourism enterprises adapting to the evolving market landscape.

Objective

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Evaluate the impact of TikTok live e-commerce on consumer purchase intentions

By analyzing interactive elements, content presentation strategies, and their influence on consumer trust and cognitive processes, this study examines how live streaming e-commerce stimulates tourism purchases (Wang, J., Shahzad, F., & Ashraf, S. F. 2023).

Psychological factors such as trust, attraction, and engagement will be explored to determine their role in consumer decision-making.

2. Compare consumer preferences and purchasing behaviors across live streaming and traditional tourism channels

By comparing TikTok live e-commerce with offline travel agencies and traditional booking websites, this study identifies differences in consumer behavior.

Key areas of analysis include information acquisition, price sensitivity, and brand recognition. The study also assesses whether live streaming fosters higher engagement and immediate purchase behavior.

3. Provide strategic recommendations for integrating live e-commerce into tourism marketing

Based on empirical findings, the study offers insights into how tourism enterprises can leverage live streaming for brand exposure, customer engagement, and revenue growth (Yu, T., Teoh, A. P., Bian, Q., Liao, J., & Wang, C. 2025).

It provides strategies for integrating live commerce with traditional sales models to maximize consumer reach.

Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research to examine the effects of TikTok live e-commerce on tourism consumption in Kunming.

1. Quantitative Analysis

A structured survey was conducted to assess consumer participation in TikTok live e-commerce, purchase intentions, and attitudes toward traditional tourism channels.

Respondents were recruited using a stratified sampling approach to ensure a representative distribution across age groups and travel preferences.

Statistical methods such as regression analysis and ANOVA were used to evaluate key determinants of purchase behavior (Khan, Y., Hameed, I., & Akram, U. 2023).

2. Qualitative Analysis

In-depth interviews were conducted with frequent TikTok users and tourism industry professionals to gain insights into consumer decision-making and industry perspectives on live e-commerce (Zhan, Y. 2024).

Thematic analysis was applied, using a coding framework to categorize recurring themes, such as trust-building mechanisms, content engagement, and perceived risks.

3. Research Scope and Limitations

Kunming was selected due to its status as a major tourist destination, allowing for the assessment of live e-commerce in a high-demand market (Zhang, B., Luo, M., Du, Q., Yi, Z., Dong, L., Yu, Y., ... & Lin, J. 2023).

Potential biases include the influence of platform-specific marketing strategies and consumer preferences shaped by regional tourism trends.

This methodological framework ensures a comprehensive analysis while maintaining research validity and reliability.

Results

Based on the survey and interviews, the impact of TikTok live e-commerce on tourism consumption behavior manifests in several aspects, mainly including interactivity, purchasing decisions, and trust mechanisms.

1. Interactivity: Live Streaming Makes Tourism Products More "Real"

The biggest advantage of TikTok live streaming is its interactivity, where consumers can communicate with the host in real-time to gather information, moving beyond just watching ads or videos (Wen, C., Xu, K., & Zhang, W. 2024).

Immersive Experience Is More Attractive: Compared to traditional tourism promotions, live streaming showcases the real charm of tourist spots and activities, giving consumers a more intuitive feeling of the product's appeal.

Real-time Interaction Enhances Trust: Consumers can ask questions during the live broadcast, and the host responds instantly, resolving doubts and increasing trust in the purchase.

Influencer Impact: Many respondents said they felt more confident in purchasing products recommended by popular influencers, especially those with significant followings.

2. Purchasing Decisions: Live Streaming Makes Purchases Quicker

The immediacy of live streaming encourages consumers to make faster purchasing decisions.

Time-limited Discounts Attract Purchases: Many respondents stated that the time-limited discounts during live streams were an important factor in their decision to buy.

Impulse Purchases Are More Common: Research showed that more than half of respondents made purchase decisions spontaneously during live broadcasts due to price and promotional temptations.

FOMO (Fear of Missing Out): Live streams often feature countdowns or limited-time offers, which drive people to act quickly, fearing they'll miss out on a deal (Tang, A. 2023).

However, purchasing habits vary across age groups:

Younger Consumers Are More Impulsive: They are more likely to watch a live stream and purchase immediately.

Middle-aged Consumers Tend to Compare More: They tend to carefully review reviews and prices before making a purchase.

Older Consumers Prefer Traditional Methods: They are more likely to seek face-to-face communication and personalized services when purchasing complex or high-value travel products (Hili, G. 2024).

3. Trust Mechanism: Live Streaming Builds Trust Differently Than Traditional Channels

There's a clear difference in how trust is built between live streaming e-commerce and traditional tourism channels.

Real-time Reviews Increase Trust: The live comments and feedback during the

broadcast make it easier for consumers to trust the quality of the travel products.

The Host's Personal Charm Adds Credibility: Many respondents felt more confident in the product recommendations due to the host's professionalism and credibility.

Social Proof is Significant: Consumers who had watched the live stream shared their experiences, which further boosted trust among other viewers (Patwa, N., Gupta, M., & Mittal, A. 2024).

However, some consumers were concerned about "exaggerated claims" in live streaming, particularly regarding pricing and services.

4. Market Reach and Cost-effectiveness: Live Streaming Provides More Opportunities for Small Businesses

TikTok live e-commerce not only changes the way consumers shop but also provides small and medium-sized tourism businesses the opportunity to reach a broader customer base at a lower cost.

Cost Reduction: Compared to traditional channels, live streaming is less costly in terms of advertising, allowing smaller businesses to directly reach consumers.

Flexible Sales Methods: Sellers can adjust products or prices based on real-time feedback from viewers, offering a more adaptable sales approach (Mohamed, S., & Frank, L. 2024).

Breaking Geographical Barriers: The live streaming platform allows consumers to quickly access information about travel products and compare them, regardless of location.

However, there are some challenges:

Intense Market Competition: More and more businesses are entering the live streaming space, creating fierce competition. Companies need to keep innovating to capture attention.

Decision Fatigue: Some consumers reported feeling overwhelmed by the constant flow of live streaming promotions, which reduced their purchasing intent.

5. The Relationship Between Live E-commerce and Traditional Channels: Complementary, Not Substitutional

Although TikTok live streaming has disrupted traditional tourism channels, the latter still holds irreplaceable advantages.

Live streaming allows consumers to quickly access information, but for those seeking personalized services, traditional travel agencies and offline channels remain their preferred option.

Therefore, tourism companies could consider integrating both online live streaming and offline services, allowing them to complement each other and meet the diverse needs of consumers (Liu, C., Zhao, Q., Gursoy, D., & Zheng, H. 2024).

These results suggest that while TikTok live e-commerce has impacted the traditional tourism industry, it also brings new opportunities, especially in attracting younger consumers and expanding market reach

Discussion

This study highlights how TikTok live e-commerce is influencing consumer purchasing behavior in Kunming's tourism market. The platform's interactive features, such as real-time communication and influencer marketing, significantly enhance consumer engagement and trust, making it a powerful tool for influencing purchase decisions. Live streaming offers an immersive, dynamic experience that traditional tourism channels can't easily replicate, which appeals to consumers seeking instant gratification and personalized experiences.

However, traditional channels still hold value, especially for consumers who prefer

personalized service and face-to-face interactions. Older generations, in particular, may feel more comfortable with conventional methods like travel agencies. Therefore, while TikTok live e-commerce is reshaping the tourism industry, it is unlikely to fully replace traditional channels. Instead, both can complement each other—live streaming offers immediate engagement, while traditional methods provide more in-depth, personalized service.

Moreover, TikTok’s cost-effectiveness and accessibility provide significant advantages. Consumers can access exclusive deals and discounts that aren’t typically available through traditional channels, making live e-commerce an appealing option for price-conscious customers.

Future research could focus on the long-term effects of live e-commerce on consumer loyalty, explore content strategies and influencer types, and examine the role of emerging technologies like AR and VR in enhancing consumer engagement and purchase decisions.

In conclusion, TikTok live e-commerce offers a unique opportunity for tourism companies to engage consumers in new ways, but it should be integrated with traditional methods to create a balanced and effective marketing strategy.

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