

## A Suggestive Framework for Measuring the Effectiveness of Social Media: An Irish Tourism Study

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**Abstract :** Over the past five years, visitations of American holidaymakers to Ireland have grown exponentially owing to the online strategies of Tourism Ireland, a Destination Marketer (DMO) with a meagre budget which is extended by their understanding of best practices to maximise their monetary allowance. This suggested framework incorporates a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) such as financial, marketing, and operational that offer a scale of measurement from which the Irish DMO can monitor the success of each promotional campaign when targeting the US and Canada. These are presented not as final solutions but rather as suggestions based on empirical evidence obtained from both primary and secondary sources. This research combines the wisdom extracted through qualitative methodologies with the objective of understanding the processes that drive both emergent and agile strategies. The Study extends the work relative to performance and examines the role of social media in the context of promoting Ireland to North America. There are two main themes that are identified and analysed in this investigation, these are the approach of the DMO when advocating Ireland as a brand and the benefits of digital platforms set against a proposed scale of KPIs, such as destination marketing, brand positioning, and identity development. The key narrative of this analysis is to focus on the power of social media when capitalising upon marketing opportunities, operating on a relatively small budget. This will always be a relevant theme of discussion due to the responsibility of an organisation like Tourism Ireland operating under the restraints imposed by government funding. The overall conclusions of this research may help inform those concerned with the implementing of social media strategies develop clearer models of measurement when promoting a destination to North America. The suggestions of this study will benefit small and medium enterprises particularly.

**Keywords :** destination marketing, framework, measure, performance

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