Investigating the Use of Social Media Channels When Capitalising on Ireland's Appearance in US TV and Movies: A Digital Marketing Campaign

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Abstract : The purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact that US TV and movies have had on Irish tourism. This study examines how a destination marketing organisation (DMO) can use social media channels to capitalise upon the opportunities created by film tourism as it pertains to North American TV and movie productions. The findings are based on a combination of two qualitative methods, in-depth interviews with 20 industry professionals and a Netnographic analysis of social media activity between Tourism Ireland and the North American audience on Facebook and Twitter. The qualitative data were analysed in order to provide insights into the effectiveness of using North American pop culture as part of a digital marketing strategy when creating awareness of Ireland as a brand in the US and Canada. This study addresses a gap in the literature in relation to the use of social media when attracting the North American holidaymaker to Ireland. The findings from this investigation will extend an under-researched body of literature pertaining to Ireland as a destination and the successful digital marketing campaigns that have achieved exponential growth in this sector over the past five years. The empirical evidence presented also illustrates how the innovative use of social media has assisted the DMO to engage with the North American holidaymaker as part of an effective digital marketing strategy. This paper will be of value to academics and industry practitioners interested in film-induced tourism and indeed tourism in general, as well as students.