



## Employing Digital Public Relations in Encouraging the Tourism Industry in Jordan

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### Abstract

**Objectives:** This research explores the pivotal role of public relations in the tourism sector, focusing on its significance, functions, and practical applications in promoting tourism in Jordan. It aims to highlight how public relations can enhance the positioning of Jordanian tourism both locally and internationally.

**Methods:** A quantitative methodology was used to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of public relations efforts in Jordan's tourism sector, specifically among public relations practitioners. The study emphasized the role of two-way communication and the use of social media as a powerful tool for tourism promotion.

**Results:** The study revealed that visual content, such as images and videos, is one of the most effective tools in public relations campaigns. However, challenges such as limited technical expertise, resource constraints, and the diverse needs of the target audience hinder the optimal utilization of social media platforms.

**Conclusion:** The study emphasizes the need for a specialized theoretical framework for public relations tailored to the tourism industry. This framework should incorporate strategies based on mutual understanding, accountability, and data-driven decision-making to enhance promotional efforts and ensure sustainable growth in the tourism sector.

**Keywords:** Jordan; public relations; promotion; tourism industry.

### توظيف العلاقات العامة الرقمية في تشجيع صناعة السياحة في الأردن

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#### ملخص

الأهداف: يهدف هذا البحث إلى استكشاف دور العلاقات العامة المحوري في قطاع السياحة، مع التركيز على أهميتها ووظائفها وتطبيقاتها العملية في الترويج للسياحة في الأردن، كما يسعى إلى إبراز كيفية استثمار العلاقات العامة لتعزيز مكانة السياحة الأردنية على المستويين المحلي والدولي.

المنهجية: اعتمدت الدراسة على منهجية كمية لتحليل وتقييم فعالية جهود العلاقات العامة في قطاع السياحة الأردني، وجرى التركيز على ممارسي العلاقات العامة في هذا القطاع، مع تسليط الضوء على دورهم في تعزيز الاتصال ثنائي الاتجاه واستخدام وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي كأداة فعالة للترويج السياحي.

النتائج: أظهرت الدراسة أن المحتوى المرئي، مثل الصور ومقاطع الفيديو، يعد من أكثر الأدوات فعالية في حملات العلاقات العامة. ومع ذلك، تواجه هذه الجهود تحديات متعددة، أبرزها محدودية الخبرة الفنية، وقيود الموارد، وتنوع احتياجات الجمهور المستهدف؛ مما يؤثر في الاستفادة المثلى من منصات وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي.

الخلاصة: تؤكد الدراسة ضرورة تطوير إطار نظري متخصص للعلاقات العامة يتناسب مع حاجات صناعة السياحة. ويشمل هذا الإطار استراتيجيات قائمة على التفاهم المتبادل، والمساءلة، واتخاذ القرارات المستندة إلى البيانات، بما يساهم في تحسين الجهود الترويجية وتحقيق نمو مستدام في القطاع السياحي.

الكلمات الدالة: الأردن، العلاقات العامة، الترويج، صناعة السياحة



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## Introduction

In today's digital era, public relations (PR) have evolved into a crucial tool for shaping public perception, enhancing communication, and fostering relationships between organizations and their audiences. Digital PR, in particular, has revolutionized the way organizations interact with stakeholders by leveraging online platforms, social media, and emerging technologies to disseminate information and manage their reputation. As tourism remains a highly competitive and perception-driven industry, the strategic use of digital PR is essential in promoting destinations, engaging travelers, and sustaining a positive image of tourism sectors worldwide (Smith, 2020).

The tourism industry in Jordan, known for its rich historical heritage, diverse cultural attractions, and unique landscapes, relies heavily on effective communication strategies to attract local and international visitors. Given the increasing reliance on digital platforms for travel planning and decision-making, integrating digital PR into tourism promotion efforts has become a necessity. Through social media campaigns, influencer partnerships, interactive content, and data-driven communication strategies, digital PR can significantly enhance Jordan's global visibility as a tourist destination (Anani-Bossman, 2021; Alsharu et al., 2025; Aldebi & Aljboory, 2018).

By adopting well-structured digital PR strategies, tourism organizations in Jordan can strengthen their brand positioning, improve visitor engagement, and create compelling narratives that highlight the country's unique tourism experiences. This not only fosters a positive perception of Jordan's tourism industry but also contributes to economic growth by attracting more visitors and boosting related sectors such as hospitality and local businesses. In this context, digital PR serves as a powerful driver for tourism development, making it an indispensable tool for ensuring the sustainability and competitiveness of Jordan's tourism sector in the global market (Shahateet & Partale, 2019).

PR plays a vital role in the tourism industry. With the rapid shift toward digital communication, digital PR has emerged as a key strategy for influencing public perception, fostering trust, and maintaining a strong connection between tourism organizations and potential visitors. By leveraging digital platforms, PR professionals can craft compelling narratives, manage crises effectively, and ensure a destination's long-term appeal in an increasingly competitive global market (Mair, 2016; Xie et al., 2022).

In Jordan, where tourism is a cornerstone of economic and cultural development, digital PR has become an indispensable tool in shaping the country's image as a premier travel destination. The widespread use of social media, digital marketing, and interactive content has provided tourism organizations with unprecedented opportunities to reach international audiences, showcase Jordan's unique attractions, and engage directly with potential visitors (Alhawamdeh et al., 2023). Through strategic digital PR campaigns, organizations can offer real-time updates, respond to inquiries, and foster meaningful interactions that enhance the overall tourist experience (Alhawamdeh et al., 2023).

Moreover, digital PR facilitates the creation of high-quality, shareable content that highlights Jordan's tourism offerings. From visually captivating imagery and immersive videos to virtual tours and influencer collaborations, the use of digital storytelling strengthens Jordan's online presence and attracts global attention. This proactive approach not only boosts visitor engagement but also establishes Jordan as a trusted and desirable tourist destination in the digital space (Aziz & Alam, 2024; Albattat et al., 2018).

As tourism organizations in Jordan navigate an evolving digital landscape, the integration of digital PR strategies is essential for sustaining growth and competitiveness. With an increasing number of travelers relying on online resources for trip planning and decision-making, adopting digital PR ensures that Jordan's tourism industry remains dynamic, resilient, and globally relevant. By harnessing the power of digital communication, tourism stakeholders can enhance their outreach, cultivate trust with audiences, and contribute to the sector's long-term success (Aldebi & Aljboory, 2018).

## Research Problem

In light of the rapid digital developments, digital PR has become an essential tool in promoting the tourism industry and enhancing the mental image of countries as attractive tourist destinations. In Jordan, which has a rich cultural and historical heritage and diverse tourist sites, there is a need to invest in modern digital means to improve interaction with potential

tourists, increase awareness of tourism products, and enhance the competitiveness of the tourism sector at the regional and global levels.

Despite the efforts made by Jordanian tourism institutions in employing digital PR, there is still a question about the effectiveness of these efforts in achieving their goals and the extent of their use of modern digital tools such as social media platforms and interactive digital content. The question also arises about the challenges facing the adoption of these tools and their impact on tourists' decision to visit Jordan.

Therefore, the research problem is: How does employing digital public relations contribute to encouraging the tourism industry in Jordan?

### **Objectives**

1. To identify the key challenges and obstacles faced by public relations professionals in tourism promotion.
2. To examine the evaluation methods used by public relations practitioners to assess the effectiveness of their promotional efforts.
3. To Analyze the impact and benefits of public relations in enhancing Jordan's tourism sector.
4. To investigate the specific difficulties encountered by public relations practitioners in promoting Jordan as a tourist destination.

### **Significance of research**

This study emphasizes its theoretical importance by addressing the research gap related to PR applications in the Jordanian tourism sector, a topic that has not been sufficiently explored in the media literature. The research establishes a scientific framework for understanding the function of PR departments within tourism organizations, focusing on their impact on tourism marketing and examining their organizational tactics. The results enhance academic knowledge and deepen understanding of the interaction between PR and tourism industry, thus paving the way for future research in this field.

The practical significance of the study lies in providing applicable recommendations aimed at improving the job performance of PR practitioners in the Jordanian tourism sector. By analyzing the challenges and opportunities, the study seeks to enhance the strategic and operational efficiency of PR departments, thus supporting the sustainable growth of the sector. The results also contribute to providing practical tools that help tourism bodies improve their competitiveness, which enhances the sector's contribution to the national economy and ensures its long-term sustainability.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Literature Review**

The study (Homhual et al., 2024) seeks to establish a PR medium to enhance awareness of creative tourism by integrating tourism routes with augmented reality technology in the Chang Klang District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. The research sample comprised tourists engaging in community tourism in the Chang Klang District of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. The sample size was established at 400 individuals. The findings demonstrated the significant importance of PR in advancing the tourism sector via its online initiatives. It also identified the need to develop PR medium to enhance awareness of creative tourism by integrating tourism routes with virtual reality technology.

Sawir et al. (2024) examined how PR techniques affect stakeholder engagement and community participation in sustainable tourism policies in Tolitoli Regency, Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. The results showed that effective PR communication is crucial for policy adoption, corporate sustainability, and stakeholder and tourist awareness of sustainable tourism. Transformational community participation emphasises culturally responsive policies. It also showed Countering digital falsehoods and balancing development and conservation are challenges. Strategic PR helps promote destinations and teach guests about local culture and sustainability. This study advises Tolitoli and other regions on PR training for sustainable tourism and crisis management with transparent communication.

Similarly, Fiona et al. (2022) examined the effect of digital marketing, particularly Instagram advertising, on the interest of potential visitors in tourist destinations. Their findings showed that Instagram advertising had a notable impact on

drawing attention to tourist sites in Indonesia. Instagram was identified as one of the most effective platforms for tourism promotion, serving not only as a tool to attract tourists but also as a means to use visual media to influence their desire to visit various destinations. The study highlighted the power of visual content in marketing, suggesting that platforms like Instagram play a significant role in shaping public interest and influencing decision-making processes related to tourism.

The study (Burkan & Qadi, 2019) seeks to identify the fundamental qualities of communication and the degree to which its reliance influences the performance of the PR officer. A questionnaire was developed encompassing 106 forms from the National Tourism Office of Algeria. The findings indicated that the study institutions possess websites and offer electronic tourism services by promoting and marketing these services to optimise time, effort, and cost while maximising tourist acquisition. PR operations enhance the efficiency and efficacy of the organisation, augmenting its performance by boosting profitability and improving consumer relations.

According to Santoso and Negoro (2019), PR play a role in conveying tourist destinations. The results show that PR are crucial to communicating and building tourism destinations' images to attract tourists. From this perspective, this study examines how hotel PR professionals promote Yogyakarta as a tourist destination. Based on their efforts, hotel PR practitioners use beautiful and unique cultures and landmarks to promote their hotels to tourists using both traditional and new media.

Shoshary (2018) identified significant challenges in implementing electronic tourism marketing in Tipaza, Algeria, attributing these barriers to both managerial deficiencies and the limited technological infrastructure available. These constraints hindered the effective execution of marketing strategies, preventing the region from fully capitalizing on the potential of digital platforms to attract tourists. The study highlighted the need for improved management practices and the development of technological infrastructure to facilitate more efficient and impactful electronic marketing campaigns.

In a similar vein, Abu Eid (2017) explored the role of PR in international tourism campaigns, using Petra as a case study. The findings revealed that there was inadequate coordination between the public and private sectors, which undermined the effectiveness of PR initiatives. Additionally, the study pointed out the insufficient efforts made by the Tourism Promotion Authority in leveraging PR to its full potential. These gaps in coordination and PR efforts suggest that more integrated strategies between government bodies and private enterprises are necessary to improve tourism promotion and ensure a unified message to international audiences.

Similarly, Sala et al. (2017) analyzed digital engagement strategies employed by Spain's tourist destinations, revealing gaps in website interactivity and user engagement. Their findings pointed to the need for more interactive and user-friendly websites to enhance the online experience for potential tourists. In line with this, Crick and Kuric (2016) emphasized the growing impact of social media on tourism marketing, noting that visually compelling content on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook significantly influences destination selection and visitor intent. Their research highlighted the importance of leveraging social media to create visually appealing campaigns that capture the attention of potential tourists, especially among younger demographics. Collectively, these studies illustrate the critical role that PR and digital strategies play in enhancing tourism marketing and promoting growth within the sector. They highlight the need for effective coordination, professional development, and the integration of modern communication tools to create more impactful tourism campaigns.

Based on previous studies, PR in the tourism industry are essential for promoting destinations, improving stakeholder engagement, and influencing public perception through strategic communication. It uses traditional and digital media, including social platforms and interactive websites, to attract travelers and build destination images. Effective PR promote sustainable tourism, address challenges such as coordination shortcomings and technological limitations, and use visually appealing materials to shape decision-making. Ultimately, it serves as a key driver for tourism expansion, sustainability, and competitiveness.

### **Tourism Public Relations**

Tourism PR serves as a strategic communication tool aimed at fostering mutual understanding between tourism

providers and their audiences. Al-Ragby (2014) defined PR as a crucial link for delivering accurate and timely information to stakeholders. Al-Bakri (2001) further characterized tourism PR as an organized effort to collect and disseminate relevant data to enhance relationships and support tourism growth. Tourism PR operates on both functional and philosophical levels. Functionally, it encompasses activities designed to strengthen relationships between tourism stakeholders. Philosophically, it reflects a commitment to social responsibility and ethical engagement. Effective PR requires audience segmentation, transparent communication, and customized messaging to cater to diverse cultural contexts.

### **Objectives of Tourism Public Relations**

The objectives of tourism PR are designed to align with institutional goals, focusing on fostering communication, building trust, and enhancing public perceptions. These objectives aim to establish a positive institutional reputation, maintain public confidence and satisfaction, cultivate a favorable institutional image, and align organizational interests with audience expectations (Smith, 2020).

The objectives of PR in the tourism sector are multifaceted, encompassing economic, commercial, cultural, social, and political dimensions. These objectives collectively aim to create positive perceptions of the country's tourism sector, enhance its global competitiveness, and build a compelling mental image of an attractive and trustworthy destination. By employing professional and competitive strategies, PR facilitate the introduction of tourism products to international markets, ensure effective communication between tourism establishments and their audiences, and establish credibility by fostering a lasting positive impression among tourists and stakeholders (L'Etang et al., 2007; Petrovici, 2014; Eneizat et al., 2023b).

### **The theory of the study**

The digital transformation theory is the most suitable theoretical framework for this study, as it elucidates the significant alterations in communication resulting from swift technology advancements. The intersection of systems and elements renders the communication process interactive and dynamic, facilitating integration, consistency, and harmony within a multidimensional media landscape (Ben Melit, 2024). The theory is among the few ideas that analyses the intricate relationship between traditional and new media, as well as their interaction within the framework of digital transformations that have altered the global media content. This theory is crucial for comprehending the development of media systems and their role in altering communication patterns and information dissemination in the digital era (Markus & Rowe, 2021; Eneizat et al., 2023a).

Roger Fiedler's Fiedler Model for Understanding New Media helps explain media's rapid changes. Fiedler says these changes are caused by complicated interplay between technical advances, basic human wants, and professional and societal demands. According to this theory, every type of communication is interconnected in the human communication system, hence media cannot exist independently. Thus, digital media emerged gradually, building on traditional media while influencing and modifying it. Interpenetration and mutual influence indicate new media's dynamic nature (Mergel et al., 2019).

The theory states that media sources converge and integrate as each transforms as new media reshapes the media landscape. Due to the rise of digital media, print newspapers can no longer maintain their traditional print format. This trend has forced print publications to seek integration with digital platforms to adapt to the changing media landscape. Integrating traditional and digital features has created "electronic," "digital," or "integrated" journalism. This new paradigm represents a major shift in the media sector, as media channels overlap to fulfil the needs of the changing audience (Ben Melit, 2024; Eneizat et al., 2024).

This study utilizes the theory of digital transformation to emphasize the significance of convergence and integration between PR and new technology. This convergence is regarded as a strategic process whereby the media and PR sector aims to utilize new technological advancements and integrate them into its operational framework, particularly in the promotion of tourism. This transformation seeks to enhance the efficacy of PR efforts through the adoption of advanced digital tools, tailored to meet institutional objectives, while ensuring continuity and strengthening its standing among swift digital advancements. This method underscores the significance of attaining effective integration and interaction between

PR and diverse digital technologies. Therefore, enhancing the quality of PR activities and augmenting the institution's capacity to achieve its professional and media objectives efficiently.

## Methodology

### Research design

The researcher employed a descriptive research methodology, aimed at providing a comprehensive and accurate depiction of the topic under investigation: the reality of PR in the Jordanian tourism sector. This approach involved surveying the opinions of PR practitioners working in the Jordanian tourism sector to explore their use of social networks for promoting Jordanian tourism and the gratifications derived from these activities.

### Population and Sample

The study population comprised public relations professionals working in both the public and private sectors in Jordan. It included six governmental and private institutions focused on tourism promotion, namely the Department of Antiquities, the Ministry of Tourism, the Jordan Tourism Board, the National Council for Tourism, the Inbound Tourism Association, and the Jordan Association of Travel and Tourism Agents, with a total of 220 individuals. Data collection was conducted using a comprehensive survey method, targeting public relations professionals in tourism institutions nationwide. 220 questionnaires were distributed to individuals from various tourism organizations utilizing modern technology and social media for tourism promotion. Of these, 193 valid responses were received and analyzed.

The questionnaire was used as the primary tool to collect data from the study sample. It was designed based on previous studies to ensure clarity and effectively meet the study's objectives.

### Analytical tool

The statistical analysis for this study was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Various statistical techniques were employed to ensure robust data interpretation and derive meaningful insights. These techniques included frequencies, percentages, averages, standard deviations, the independent sample T-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Cronbach's Alpha test for internal consistency. To validate the study tool, the initial questionnaire was reviewed by academic experts in PR and media. These specialists assessed the questionnaire's language, structure, and relevance to ensure its alignment with the research objectives. This expert evaluation ensured that the questionnaire was appropriate and comprehensive for the study.

The reliability of the questionnaire was further tested using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. This test measured the internal consistency of the questionnaire's sections, focusing on how PR practitioners in Jordan's tourism sector utilize social networks for tourism promotion and the gratifications derived from such use. The results of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient analysis are presented in Table 1, which highlights stability coefficients for various topics covered in the study.

**Table 1. Coefficient of alpha Cronbach's (internal consistency)**

Topics	constancy
Ability to deal with technical characteristics	0.77
The adoption of the use of the new goal of newly created by " networks of communication and social	0.78
Motives for public relations practitioners' use of social networks	0.84
Benefits of public relations promotion	0.78
The main gratifications of using social networks	0.82
Advantages of using social networks	0.73
Difficulties facing public relations practitioners	0.85

According to Table 1, the coefficient values range between 0.73 and 0.85, indicating a good level of internal consistency and reliability. Accordingly, the questionnaire is an effective and appropriate tool for this study, as these results confirm its ability to accurately represent the opinions and practices of PR professionals, in the context of promoting tourism in Jordan.

**Results**

This section indicates the study's findings, emphasizing the sample's demographic characteristics, the use and efficacy of social networks in tourism promotion, the challenges encountered by PR practitioners, and the advantages gained from promotional activities. It concludes with an examination of the key findings.

**Demographic Characteristics of the Sample**

**Table 2. Distribution of the search sample according to the gender variable**

	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
gender	Male	114	59.1
	Female	79	40.9
Age	20 years -29 years	67	34.9
	30 years - 39 years	80	41.7
	40 years- 49 years	36	18.8
	50 years and over	9	4.7
number of years of work	year to 9 years	85	44
	10 years to19 years	79	41
	20 years to 29 years	21	11
	30 years and over	6	3
	without	2	1
educational level	High school	15	7.8
	Diploma	19	9.8
	BSC	133	68.9
	Higher Diploma	8	4.1
	Graduate Studies	18	9.3
academic specialization	public relations	11	5.8
	Press and media	22	11.6
	Computer science	13	6.9
	Marketing	37	19.6
	tourism	49	25.9
	Other	57	30.2
device specialized in public relations functions	Yes	147	76.6
	No	45	23.4
importance of public relations in promoting Jordanian tourism.	Big	98	53.6
	Medium	81	44.3
	Low	4	2.2
Public relations to promote the activities of tourism Jordan	Publishing pictures of Jordanian tourist sites	162	88.5%
	Post videos about Jordanian tourism	148	80.9%
	Dissemination of information about Jordanian tourism services	141	77.0%
	Advertising material design about Jordanian tourism	122	66.7%
	Motivating surfers and network users to visit Jordan	115	62.8%
	Answer the audience's most frequently asked questions	57	31.1%
	Other	13	7.1%
<b>Total</b>		<b>193</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2 indicates the demographic characteristics of the sample and emphasizes the use of social media by PR

practitioners to advance Jordanian tourism. The findings indicate that 59.1% of participants were male, whilst 40.9% were female, demonstrating a greater representation of males in the study. The age distribution showed that the predominant segment of participants (41.7%) was within the 30-39 age range, succeeded by 34.9% in the 20-29 age range. Individuals aged 40-49 years represented 18.8%, and those aged 50 years and above accounted for 4.7%. This suggests that most PR practitioners in the tourism industry are youthful to middle-aged individuals.

Regarding work experience, 44% of respondents possessed 1 to 9 years of experience, while 41.5% had 10 to 19 years of experience. Individuals aged 20 to 29 comprised 11%, while merely 3.1% were over 30. The data suggest that most practitioners are in the early to mid-career stages. The educational profile of the sample indicated that 68.9% possessed a bachelor's degree, rendering it the predominant qualification. 16.6% of respondents possessed a diploma or below, whilst 13.4% held postgraduate qualifications.

The study found that visual content is the most commonly employed strategy by PR practitioners. Specifically, 88.5% of respondents emphasized the use of images of Jordanian tourist sites, and 80.9% highlighted the publication of videos. Additionally, 77% disseminated information about tourism services, and 66.7% designed promotional materials. Motivating internet users to visit Jordan was reported by 62.8%, while only 31.1% addressed frequently asked questions from the public. The least utilized element was "Other" promotional methods, reported by just 7.1%.

These findings underscore the prominence of visual materials, such as photos and videos, in social media promotion. The interactive and engaging nature of these elements makes them highly effective in capturing the audience's attention and promoting Jordanian tourism. However, the low emphasis on addressing audience inquiries highlights an area for improvement, as this aspect is critical for building trust and engagement. In conclusion, the results affirm that visual content forms the backbone of tourism promotion through social networks. The reliance on interactive and visually appealing materials aligns with the capabilities of social media platforms to attract and engage audiences effectively. However, there is a notable gap in leveraging audience interaction strategies, such as addressing public queries, which could further enhance the effectiveness of promotional efforts.

### **The results related to the most prominent problems and difficulties that public relations workers face in tourism promotion**

**Table 3. The most prominent problems and difficulties that PR workers face in tourism promotion**

Problems and difficulties faced by technology users	Yes	
	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of technicians to help use social networks and its various applications	52	28.3%
Lack of understanding of the software used for social networking applications	46	25.0%
Failure to provide social networking service continuously	42	22.8%
Failure to overcome the technical difficulties faced by the employees by the organization's management	38	20.7%
Difficulty dealing with computer applications	24	13.0%
Other	11	6.0%

Table 3 highlights several significant challenges faced by social network users in promoting Jordanian tourism. The most prominent issue, reported by 28.3% of the respondents, is the lack of technicians available to assist with and facilitate the use of social networks and their various applications. This shortage likely hampers the ability of PR practitioners to effectively manage and utilize these platforms for promotional purposes. Additionally, 25% of the respondents identified a deficiency in understanding the programs and software used for social networking applications as a key challenge. This suggests a gap in technical knowledge and expertise among practitioners, which could hinder their ability to maximize the

potential of these tools. Another significant problem, reported by 20.7% of the participants, is the failure of organizational management to address and resolve technical difficulties faced by employees. This lack of support can exacerbate challenges and limit the effectiveness of social media campaigns. A similar percentage (20.7%) noted difficulties in handling complex applications, further emphasizing the need for user-friendly tools and better training for practitioners. Other reported issues, including inadequate support for using computer applications, accounted for 13%, while 6% mentioned additional unspecified challenges.

These findings highlight a larger problem of inadequate technical support and organizational resources. Inadequate training for PR professionals and a lack of technology experts suggest a lack of focus on providing employees with the knowledge and resources they need to use social media platforms effectively. This lack may be linked to organizational management shortcomings, such as the lack of infrastructure and ongoing professional development to encourage social media use. The findings highlight the importance of addressing these issues by enhancing technical assistance, providing ongoing training, and streamlining the design of social media applications to better support promotional objectives. By addressing these issues, organizations can empower PR professionals to better leverage social media and improve their marketing initiatives for Jordanian tourism.

**The results are related to the evaluation methods you use to evaluate your efforts when serving promotional objectives.**

**Table 4. Evaluation of efforts made to serve tourism promotion objectives**

No.	Evaluation method	Average ranking	Rank
3	Measurement methods related to the degree of reactivity	2.04	1
2	Measurement methods based on comments received on published information	2.23	2
1	Measurement methods based on counting the number of browsers and network users	2.56	3
4	Measurement methods related to competitor promotion	2.88	4
5	Other	3.82	5

Table 4 outlines the ranking of evaluation methods used by PR practitioners to assess the effectiveness of their social networking activities in achieving promotional objectives. The most commonly employed method, ranking first, involves measuring the degree of interactivity on social media platforms. This method emphasizes tracking user engagement, such as likes, shares, and other interactive actions, which are indicative of audience interest and participation. The second-ranked method focuses on analyzing comments received on published content. This approach allows practitioners to gauge audience feedback, assess public sentiment, and identify areas for improvement in their promotional strategies. The third-ranked method involves counting the number of visitors and users who interact with social networks. While this provides quantitative insights into the reach and exposure of promotional activities, it lacks the depth of engagement metrics offered by the top two methods.

Ranking fourth is the use of competitor-based evaluation methods, which involve analyzing promotional strategies and user engagement achieved by competing organizations. This approach helps practitioners benchmark their performance and identify gaps or opportunities for improvement. Lastly, other unspecified evaluation methods were ranked fifth, indicating their limited use compared to the more established approaches. The findings indicate a strong reliance on interactive and engagement-based metrics, highlighting the effectiveness of direct tools provided by social media platforms. These tools facilitate the collection and analysis of user interaction data, including detailed user characteristics and engagement patterns. Such data not only simplifies the evaluation process but also ensures the continuous improvement of promotional strategies.

**The results related to the benefit derived from the process of promoting public relations for Jordan.**

**Table 5. The benefit achieved from the process of promoting PR for Jordan**

The benefit of the promotion	Too high		High		Medium		Low		Very low		Average
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F.	%	
Increasing the proportion of foreign tourists in Jordan	40	22.3	105	58.7	30	16.8	4	2.2	0	0.0	4.01
Strengthening the mental image of Jordanian tourism among the surfers	49	27.2	53	29.4	41	22.8	22	12.2	15	8.3	3.55
Ease of measuring the public's reaction to tourism in Jordan	27	15.0	50	27.8	67	37.2	30	16.7	6	3.3	3.34
Interaction between the public and public relations practitioners	27	15.0	48	26.7	61	33.9	32	17.8	12	6.7	3.26
Conducting marketing studies and research	13	7.2	46	25.6	85	47.2	19	10.6	17	9.4	3.11

Table 5 presents the arithmetic averages of the benefits derived from promoting Jordanian tourism through social networks, ranging from 3.11 to 4.01. The highest-rated benefit, with an average of 4.01, was the increased proportion of foreign tourists visiting Jordan. This underscores the effectiveness of social media in attracting international audiences and driving tourism growth.

The second-highest benefit, with an average of 3.55, was strengthening the mental image of Jordanian tourism among social network users. This reflects the role of social media in shaping positive perceptions and enhancing the reputation of Jordan as a tourist destination. Following this, the ease of measuring the public's reaction to tourism in Jordan achieved an average score of 3.34, highlighting social media's capability to provide measurable feedback and insights. Interaction between the public and PR practitioners ranked fourth, with an average of 3.26, indicating a moderate level of engagement facilitated by social media platforms. Lastly, conducting marketing studies and research was the lowest-ranked benefit, with an average of 3.11, suggesting limited emphasis on leveraging social media for strategic market insights. These results indicate that social media is a powerful tool for targeting specific audience groups across different geographical regions due to its widespread reach and accessibility. Its ability to attract tourists, build a positive mental image, and provide measurable data makes it a highly effective promotional channel. However, the relatively low ranking of marketing research highlights a gap in utilizing social media for strategic purposes. This may be attributed to the reliance on specialized agencies for such studies, which provide developers with tools and information to optimize the marketing capabilities of social networks.

**The results related to the difficulties that public relations practitioners face in promoting Jordanian tourism.**

**Table 6. The most prominent difficulties facing PR practitioners in the tourism sector**

Difficulties	Agree		Not agree		Average
	F	%	F	%	
Lack of dedicated and dedicated public relations practitioners to conduct measurement and follow-up	114	62.60	51	28.00	2.53
You need to follow up on social networks for a large	92	51.10	57	31.70	2.34

Difficulties	Agree		Not agree		Average		
	F	%	F	%			
number of employees to promote Jordanian tourism							
The difference and diversity of users of social networks poses a challenge due to the diversity of their desires and needs	89	48.60	65	35.50	29	15.80	2.33
Lack of technological expertise among workers in the tourism sector	87	47.80	63	34.60	32	17.60	2.30
The difficulty of measuring the effectiveness of surfers on social networks	82	45.10	71	39.00	29	15.90	2.29
Difficulty communicating with users of social networks on all sites at the same time.	76	41.80	81	44.50	25	13.70	2.28
The language difference between social network surfers poses a challenge to accessing information to promote Jordanian tourism	80	43.70	58	31.70	45	24.60	2.19
The increase in tourist sites on social networks creates difficulty in achieving the spread rates of promoting Jordanian tourism	75	41.00	66	36.10	42	23.00	2.18
Inability to solve technological problems related to the use of social networks	67	36.60	78	42.60	38	20.80	2.16
The promotional message about tourism in Jordan did not reach the public through social networks	58	31.70	70	38.30	55	30.10	2.02

Table 6 indicates the challenges faced by PR practitioners in the tourism sector when using social networks to promote Jordanian tourism. The arithmetic averages of these difficulties range from 2.02 to 2.53. The most significant challenge, with the highest average of 2.53, was the lack of dedicated PR specialists responsible for conducting measurement and follow-up activities. This highlights a critical shortage of personnel specifically trained to manage and evaluate social media efforts effectively. The second-highest challenge, with an average of 2.34, was the need for a large number of employees to monitor and manage communication networks for promoting Jordanian tourism. This underscores the resource-intensive nature of social media management, particularly in maintaining consistent and impactful engagement. The third-ranked difficulty, averaging 2.33, was the diversity of social network users and their varied needs and preferences, which poses a challenge for practitioners in creating universally appealing content.

A lack of technological expertise among workers in the tourism sector was identified as another major issue, with an average of 2.30. This was closely followed by difficulties in measuring the effectiveness of audience interactions on social networks, which averaged 2.29. Challenges related to language differences among social network users, which averaged 2.28, further complicated efforts to deliver effective promotional content to diverse audiences. The inability to resolve technological issues associated with social media use was also highlighted, with an average of 2.16, ranking among the lower difficulties. The least significant challenge, with an average of 2.02, was the inability to solve broader technological problems related to the use of social networks.

These findings indicate that the primary difficulties faced by PR practitioners stem from a lack of human resources, insufficient technical expertise, inadequate infrastructure, and limited training opportunities. The diversity of social media platforms and their varied functionalities further complicate efforts, creating challenges for both practitioners and their audiences in achieving cohesive and effective communication strategies. This finding is consistent with Sawir et al.'s (2024) study, which found that digital PR in tourism promotion faces some obstacles that limit its use.

### **Conclusions**

The findings of this study emphasize the critical role of PR in driving communication and promotional activities in the tourism sector. Based on the results, there is a pressing need to develop a comprehensive theoretical framework for PR tailored specifically to tourism. This framework should address the multifaceted nature of PR, emphasizing the importance of fostering relationships with diverse public sectors, facilitating the exchange of tourism experiences, and shaping perceptions, attitudes, and opinions throughout the tourism journey. The study revealed that visual content, such as photos and videos, is the most effective element in promoting tourism. With 88.5% of practitioners leveraging images and 80.9% using videos, the findings highlight the growing reliance on visual materials to engage audiences and create compelling narratives about tourist destinations. This underscores the need for a PR framework that prioritizes visual storytelling and leverages the interactive characteristics of social media platforms.

A refined approach to tourism PR should focus on achieving two-way communication, mutual responsibility, and understanding as the foundation for relationship-building programs. This aligns with the findings that interactive methods, such as tracking user engagement and analyzing feedback, are the most valued tools for evaluating the effectiveness of social media campaigns. Such an approach ensures that PR strategies are audience-focused, adaptable, and data-driven. Additionally, the study highlights several challenges faced by PR practitioners, including a lack of specialized personnel, insufficient technical expertise, and diverse audience needs. These barriers underscore the necessity of investing in training programs, technical infrastructure, and tools to support effective social media use. Addressing these challenges will enable practitioners to better utilize social networks for promotional purposes and ensure more cohesive communication strategies. Despite these challenges, the field study findings show that PR activities dominate communication efforts in the tourism sector, indicating their critical role in shaping public perceptions and attracting tourists. For instance, 53.6% of practitioners rated social networks as highly important, while 60.6% emphasized the use of both Arabic and English to cater to diverse audiences. These results illustrate the sector's dependence on PR as a central communication strategy and its potential to address global tourism markets effectively.

### **Practical and Theoretical Implications**

The practical and theoretical implications of this study highlight the strategic importance of PR in the tourism sector, particularly in enhancing two-way communication and leveraging social media as a key tool for tourism promotion. Practically, the study provides insights into the importance of using visual content such as images and videos in promotional campaigns, while noting the need to address challenges associated with limited technical expertise, resource constraints, and diverse audience needs. Theoretically, the need arises to develop a specialized framework for tourism PR that focuses on mutual understanding, accountability, and data-driven decision-making, which enhances promotional efforts and contributes to sustainable growth in the sector.

### **Recommendations**

The study can be enhanced by focusing on some aspects that may contribute to improving the effectiveness of PR in Jordanian tourism. It is possible to suggest expanding the scope of the research to include studying the impact of PR in attracting tourists from specific markets, such as Arab or European markets, with an analysis of the differences in targeted communication strategies. The increasing role of digital technology, such as artificial intelligence and data analytics, in improving PR strategies and customizing promotional messages according to consumer behavioral data can also be explored. Moreover, the importance of public-private partnerships in enhancing Jordan's image as a tourist destination can be highlighted, and innovative communication strategies can be developed that take into account the social and economic challenges that tourism may face in the future. The impact of modern technology such as artificial intelligence on enhancing the effectiveness of promotional campaigns in the sector can also be studied.

### **The limitations of the study**

The limitations of this study are that it focuses on analyzing the vital role of PR in the Jordanian tourism sector, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other tourism sectors in different geographic regions. Also, the use of qualitative

methodology and case study approach may be limited in providing deep insights but are not easily scalable on a larger scale. In addition, the study faces challenges related to limited research resources, such as limited technical expertise in using some digital PR tools, as well as limitations related to the diversity of local and international audience needs.

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