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Effect of Influencer Marketing on Travelers' Destination and Hotel Choice: The Moderating Role of Advertising Duration

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Abstract: Research examining the effectiveness of influencer marketing and online video advertising is sparse in tourism marketing literature. Hence, this study examines the comparative effectiveness of celebrity vs. expert influencers on travelers' attitudes, brand love, and behavioral intentions from the perspective of a destination and a hotel. The moderating role of video advertising duration between influencer type and attitude is also examined. Two experiments were conducted using a 2 (influencer type: celebrity and expert influencer) x 2 (video advertising duration: long-duration and short-duration bumper ads) between-participants factorial design to test the proposed hypotheses. The results established that celebrity influencers featuring in long-duration video ads (vs. short-duration bumper ads) will substantially affect brand attitude, brand love, and behavioral intention more than ads (long-duration and short-duration) featuring expert influencers. Thus, this study demonstrates the importance of celebrity influencers and long-duration video ads in tourism marketing.

Keywords: Advertising duration; Influencer marketing; Attitude; Behavioral intentions; Brand love.

1. Introduction

Advertising (ads) plays a crucial role in attracting tourists to a destination (Kim et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2017). In today's digital era, destination-marketing organizations (DMO) benefit more by employing online advertising than traditional marketing strategies (Hays et al., 2013). Video advertising is the fastest-growing digital advertising format (Goodfellow, 2017). In addition to employing celebrities in video ads, marketers are now using expert influencers in their ad campaigns to establish an immediate connection with that influencer's followers (Nair, 2019; Group.m, 2021). However, as fewer studies examine the comparative efficacy of celebrity and expert influencers (Jin et al., 2019; Schouten et al., 2020), marketers are unsure about the outcome of employing these endorser types in campaigns. Moreover, social media influencers' effectiveness in advertising campaigns remains understudied in academic literature (Lou & Yuan, 2019; Schouten et al., 2020) and more so in tourism research (Ge & Gretzel, 2018; Magno & Cassia, 2018).

Employing celebrities and expert influencers in online video advertising is a common practice. The current study is significant as the effectiveness of celebrity influencers vis-à-vis expert influencers is contested in academic literature (Jin et al., 2019; Schouten et al., 2020), adding to the problem of the DMO. Video advertisements running beyond 60 seconds are referred to as LDA-long-duration ads (Sen, 2015). YouTube also offers short-duration (six seconds) bumper ads (SDA) to marketers aiming at capturing the increasingly limited attention span of the modern-day consumer (Liao, 2016). Marketing literature has also contested the effectiveness of SDA vis-à-vis LDA both on traditional and digital platforms (Mord & Gilson, 1985; Trivedi, 2017; Llewellyn 2018; Varan et al., 2019), making

it essential to examine the efficacy of video advertising duration from the travelers' perspective. Also, there are conflicting academic findings regarding the efficacy of LDA vis-à-vis SDA (Varan et al., 2019; Trivedi 2017), making it difficult for DMO's to optimize their video advertising spending.

Effective advertising strategy influences tourists' attitudes and intentions (Kim et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017). Celebrity endorsement is an established strategy to improve advertising effectiveness (Ohanian, 1990; Chen, 2001; Balakrishnan & Kumar, 2011). Brands endorsed by traditional celebrities enjoy higher market acceptance (Ohanian, 1990). However, the rise of social media channels like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, to name a few, has resulted in domain expert individuals attracting numerous followers online. These experts become influencers owing to their knowledge and skill in a given domain (Schouten et al., 2020). Marketers employ these expert influencers to elicit desirable consumer behavior (Lou & Yuan, 2019). Extant studies have shown that effective online advertising significantly affects travelers' attitudes and intentions (Byun & Jang, 2018; Trivedi & Roza, 2019). Drawing from the theory of reasoned action, literature posits a significant relationship between attitude and behavioral intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). However, recent advances in academic literature assert that passionate emotions like brand love are a stronger predictor of consumers' intentions (Batra et al., 2012; Karjaluo et al., 2016). Hence, the authors observe the effect of influencer type and online video advertising duration on brand love and behavioral intentions.

Given the growing importance of video advertising and influencers in tourism marketing, this research encompasses two studies. The first study focuses on observing the effectiveness of influencers (celebrity influencer v/s travel expert influencer) on travelers' attitude towards the destination, destination brand love, and behavioral intentions. The moderating role of video advertising duration (long-duration v/s short-duration advertising) between influencer type and attitude towards the destination is also examined. The second study was conducted in the context of a hotel brand to generalize the findings of study one. The effectiveness of influencers (celebrity influencer v/s travel expert influencer) was observed on travelers' attitudes towards the hotel brand, hotel brand love, and hotel booking intentions. The moderating role of advertising duration (long-duration v/s short-duration) between influencer marketing and hotel brand attitude was examined.

This research makes critical contributions to advertising and tourism literature. First, we extend advertising literature by extending the source attractiveness model (McGuire, 1985). Second, we build on tourism literature by exploring the effect of source models on consumer behavior in the case of destination marketing & observe the effectiveness of influencers (celebrity vis-à-vis expert) on the traveler's attitude, brand love, and booking intentions for a destination and a hotel. Thirdly, drawing from the ABC theory, the current study tries to build that influencer marketing and advertising duration are critical contextual factors that can lead to travelers' affective (brand love) and conative (booking intentions) responses.

The other sections of this paper are structured as follows: In the literature review section, the authors discuss the extant studies focused on celebrity and expert influencers, advertising, and advertising duration, attitude, behavioral intention, and brand love leading to a conceptual framework and hypotheses. The authors discuss the research design, sampling details, stimulus design, and statistical tools used in studies one and two and arrive at an empirical result in the methodology and data analysis section. Finally, the authors discuss the theoretical and managerial insights derived from the empirical analysis in the conclusion and discussion section.

2. Literature Review

In this section, we outline the critical literature relating to our study. We outline the independent variables – celebrity and expert influencers, then move on to the moderating variable of advertising duration, the mediator variable of attitude, and dependent variables of consumer responses (brand love and behavioral intentions).

2.1 Celebrity and expert influencers

Advertisements endorsed by traditional celebrities (famous owing to their presence in movies, sports, and other public domains) result in a more favorable consumer response than ads without endorsement (Roger, 1983; Ohanian, 1990; Clark & Horstman, 2003). A celebrity endorser is defined as "any individual who enjoys public recognition and uses this on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement" (McCracken, 1989, p. 310). In today's digital era, a new trend of online celebrities has emerged. These online celebrities, also known as influencers, are defined as individuals who possess significantly more than average potential to influence others due to attributes such as frequency of communication, personal persuasiveness, and centrality to a social network (Abidin, 2018). They play a vital role in shaping millennial consumers' attitudes and behavior (Trivedi & Sama, 2020).

In contrast to traditional celebrities who have gained public recognition because of their professional talent, social media influencers (from now on called 'expert influencers') have gained fame by successfully branding themselves as experts on social media platforms (Khamis et al., 2016). By enthusiastically sharing self-generated content on topics like travel, fitness, food, and fashion, they have gained a large follower base, turning their online social presence into a primary profession such as 'travel blogger' or 'expert influencer' (Jin et al., 2019).

The practice of using endorsement in advertising has its roots in the source models. The source credibility model (Hovland & Weiss, 1951) was a pioneer explaining the association between celebrities and marketing results. It posited that celebrities perceived as trustworthy and expert by consumers led to favorable consumer response. Hovland & Weiss's (1951) study defined source expertise as "the extent to which a communicator is perceived to be a source of valid assertions" (p. 21). Going further, McGuire (1985) established the source attractiveness model, which posited that consumers' perceived likeability, familiarity, and similarity with the endorser results in a favorable consumer response. Multiple seminal studies focused on these models have established their efficacy in increasing advertising effectiveness (Hovland & Weiss 1951; McGuire 1985; Meenaghan 1994). Although a celebrity's credibility and social attractiveness are essential factors in celebrity endorsement success, expert influencers' appeal is determined by the extent to which they build their "personal" brand attractiveness through their efforts.

Marketers have used both traditional celebrities and online domain experts as influencers in marketing communications (Jin et al., 2019). However, academic literature has remained inconclusive about the comparative effectiveness of either of the models (Biswas et al., 2006; Bhatt et al., 2013; Ohanian, 1990; Trivedi, 2018). This research gap is significant because marketers aim to achieve maximum return on investments and employ either of the two influencers for endorsements (Trivedi & Sama, 2020). Few studies have found expert influencers to be effective (Schouten et al., 2020; Jin et al., 2019), whereas other studies have established the efficacy of celebrity endorsers (Trivedi, 2018). Most of these studies have focused on the fashion industry. Moreover, it was observed that the effectiveness of the influencer type varies with the category of a product endorsed (Trivedi & Sama, 2020).

2.2 Advertising duration (LDA and SDA)

Online advertising or digital and internet advertising encapsulates the use of the internet to communicate marketing messages to the target audience. Technology advancement is forging the way for the rise of new media and communication channels, hence changing the landscape for advertising and marketing (Försch & de Haan, 2018; Gardner & Lehnert, 2016). The expansion of the internet among mobile, digital devices magnified the number of ways in which an ad can be

presented to a consumer. Digital advertisements are videos, images, or perhaps something in between (e.g., GIFs or short animations).

Extant literature has exhibited a significant effect of ads on consumer behavior (Aaker & Stayman, 1990; Brown & Stayman, 1992; Hwang et al., 2011; Trivedi, 2017). The advertiser needs to ensure that their target audience notices the ads to make the advertising work. Hence, the advertisers employ various tactics like using different ad appeals, spreading the ads across media channels, engaging celebrities and influencers to endorse the product, and exhibiting long-duration and short-duration ads (Balakrishnan & Kumar, 2011; Mord & Gilson, 1985; Ohanian, 1990; Varan et al., 2019). However, extant literature remains inconclusive regarding the effectiveness of long-duration ads (LDA) vis-à-vis short-duration ads (SDA) (Fulgoni 2018; Varan et al., 2019).

The majority of the studies in advertising duration have compared the efficacy of 30-second ads vis-à-vis 15-second ads. The findings suggest that 30-second ads are more effective over 15-second ads, especially towards boosting ad likeability, attitude towards the ad, advertising involvement, recall, and attention (Mord & Gilson, 1985; Fabian, 1986; Singh & Cole, 1993).

All the above-stated studies focused on T.V. advertising. However, as the digital channels started offering a platform for the long-duration ads (ads more than 60-seconds in duration), marketers started creating the LDA to attract attention. Hence, in a more recent study, Trivedi (2017) examined the efficacy of 90-second ads and established that these LDA exhibit a significant effect on consumers' message involvement, attitude towards the ad, and purchase intentions. However, it is essential to note that consumers' attention span has been reduced to 8-seconds (Liao, 2016).

In 2018, YouTube introduced 6-second non-skippable bumper ads (Fulgoni, 2018). The prior studies on YouTube have established the efficacy of skippable ads over non-skippable ads (Logan, 2013; Pikas & Sorrentino, 2014). However, bumper ads are non-skippable and contradicted the earlier studies proposing long-duration ads to be more effective. Hence, it is crucial to observe the efficacy of short-duration ads (Fulgoni, 2018; Varan et al., 2019).

2.3 Attitude and consumer responses

The Attitude-Behaviour-Context (ABC) theory (Guagnano et al., 1995) provides a fundamental theoretical underpinning for this study. ABC theory has been used in extant tourism and hospitality literature to propose theoretical frameworks (Yadav et al., 2019). This theory posits that contextual factors can influence an individual's behavior in addition to attitude. Belk (1975) proposed multiple contextual factors, including community expectations, temporal perspectives, personal values and feelings, and advertising. These contextual factors clubbed with attitude help explain consumer behavior (Schultz et al., 1995).

2.3.1 Attitudes

Attitude is explained as "an individual's evaluation of an object such as a branded product" (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 16). Attitude and behavioral intentions are widely used to predict the acceptance of a product or service in a market (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989). Intentions are explained as "an individual's assessment of the likelihood that they will buy the advertised brand in the future" (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). The more favorable an individual's attitude, the stronger their intention to act (Mackenzie & Lutz, 1989). On these lines, research in the tourism sector has also examined tourists' attitudes and intentions towards a tourism product/service to predict the actual tourist behavior (Chan et al., 2017; Reza Jalilvand et al., 2012; Trivedi & Roza, 2019; Yadav et al., 2019). Several researchers established the attitude toward the brand (A.B.) as a mediator between advertising stimuli and marketing variables like purchase intentions (Gresham & Shimp 1985; MacKenzie et al.,

1986; Trivedi & Sama 2020). Rajumesh (2014) and Garg and Joshi (2018) also established the mediating role of attitude for purchase intention. Hence in the present study, we propose that travelers' attitude towards hotel/destination mediates the relationship between influencer type and behavioral intentions as a crucial metric to examine the effectiveness of tourism marketing programs.

2.3.2 Brand love

Scholars have also emphasized that brand love is an influential variable that has a significant association with consumers' decision-making (Islam & Rahman, 2016; Vernuccio et al., 2015) and actual purchasing behavior (Hegner et al., 2017). Carrol and Ahuvia (2006, p. 81) defined brand love as "the degree of passionate, emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name." Brand love includes "multiple cognitions, emotions, and behaviors which consumers organize into a mental prototype" (Batra et al., 2012, p. 2). The importance of strong affective constructs like brand love has increased in marketing as marketers aim to build an emotional relationship with consumers rather than promote their unique selling proposition (Trivedi & Sama, 2020).

Literature has identified several antecedents to brand love, including brand trust, brand attitude, customer experience, brand attachment, self-expressiveness, and social-interactive engagement (Albert & Merunka, 2013; Alex & Joseph, 2012; Sarkar & Sarkar, 2016; Vernuccio et al., 2015). Literature has also identified several significant consequences of brand love, including loyalty, brand acceptance, word-of-mouth, willingness to pay a premium, resistance to negative information, and higher brand engagement (Batra et al., 2012; Bauer et al., 2009; Carrol & Ahuvia, 2006; Kang 2015; Thomson et al., 2005). As such, brand love can be described as a more potent form of consumer-brand relationship (Kohli et al., 2014; Huber et al., 2015). However, recent marketing literature has expressed brand love as a more vital determinant of attitude than behavioral intention (Karjaluoto et al., 2016; Batra et al., 2012). Research by Batra et al. (2012) also found that attitude, as opposed to emotion, is a crucial antecedent of brand love. Customers' attitudes towards brands positively impact long-term consumer-brand relationships (Chaudhari & Holbrook, 2001). Multiple studies have found that attitude, as opposed to emotion, is a crucial antecedent of brand love (Batra et al., 2012; Sarkar, 2014).

Moreover, as the importance of brand love grows steadily, there is a need to conduct more studies involving this affective variable in different consumer-brand scenarios (Vernuccio et al., 2015; Palusuk et al., 2019). A study focused on hotel brands by Wang, Qu, and Yang (2019) focused on the effect of travelers' love for the hotel's sub-brand on their love for the corporate hotel brand. The study established a traveler's love for the sub-brand as an antecedent to love for the corporate hotel brand. In another study focused on luxury hotels, Godfrey (2017) established that the superior customer experience offered by luxury hotels results in travelers loving luxury hotels. In a qualitative study focused on exploring the antecedents and consequences of destination brand love, Aro et al. (2018) established the role of brand experience, tourist-dependent antecedents, and brand-dependent antecedents as antecedents to brand love. However, studies associating brand love and tourist attitude are limited in extant tourism and hospitality literature (Aro et al., 2018).

3. Hypothesis Development

The literature in the tourism sector has called for examining the effectiveness of celebrity versus influencers in various advertising campaigns (Kim et al., 2012; Magno & Cassia, 2018), on brand attitudes and brand love (Palusuk et al., 2019), with a specific focus on long-duration (vs. short-duration) video adverts. To address this gap, this study examines the effect of celebrity and expert influencers on travelers' attitudes, as a mediator, to brand love, moderated by advertising duration. We propose a moderated mediated conceptual framework as depicted in Figure 1, and based on the previous literature, we develop two hypotheses as outlined below.

Fulgoni (2018) and Varan et al. (2019) have stated that given the younger audience (with low attention span) on digital channels, short-duration ads are proving to be similar in efficacy compared to 30-second ads. SDA also resulted in ad involvement likeability, a favorable attitude towards the ad, and higher ad attention (Trivedi et al., 2020; Varan et al., 2019). However, academic research comparing the 90-second long-duration ads vis-à-vis 6-second bumper ads on YouTube is limited (Fulgoni, 2018; Trivedi et al., 2020; Varan et al., 2019). Moreover, studies related to advertising effectiveness in travelers' destination choice (Byun & Jang, 2018) and hotel room bookings (Assaf et al., 2015) are limited. We predict that celebrities and influencers featuring in long (versus short) video adverts will have different effects on brand attitudes and brand love, leading to Hypothesis 1 (H1):

H1: Celebrity influencers featuring in long-duration video ads (vs. short-duration bumper ads) will substantially affect brand attitude, brand love, and behavioral intention more than ads (long-duration and short-duration) featuring expert influencers.

Some studies have established a direct relationship between marketing communications and consumers' behavioral responses (Arli, 2017), especially in marketing through social media platforms. However, the second school of thought has established that the attitude mediates the relationship between online communications and behavioral response (Trivedi & Rozia, 2019). Arli (2017) suggested that it is critical to observe if online communications directly affect behavioral intention in different contexts. Hence, the researchers intend to test this relationship and propose the following Hypothesis 2:

H2: The relationship between influencer marketing and a) brand love and b) behavioral intention will be explained by a moderated mediation effect involving advertising duration as the moderator and attitude as the mediator.

The authors present a conceptual framework, as depicted in Figure 1 below:

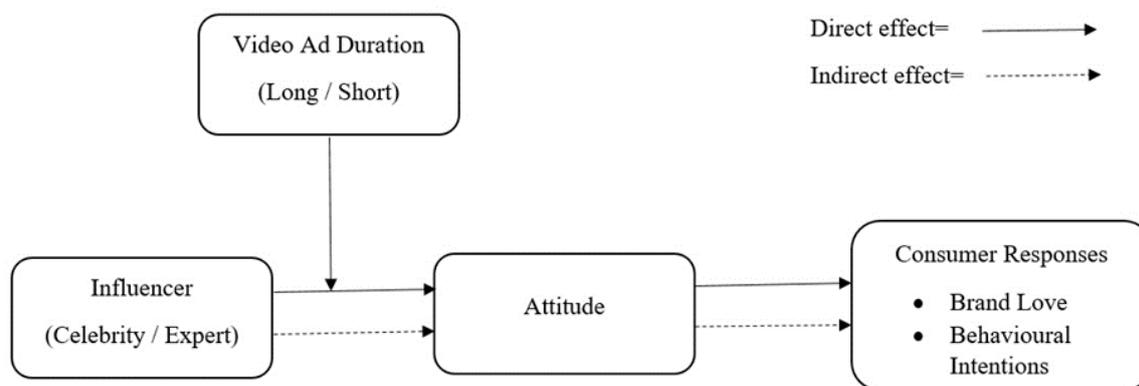


Figure 1. Author's Proposed Conceptual Framework.

4. Study One Method and Results

4.1 Method

A 2 (influencer type: celebrity and expert influencer) x 2 (advertising duration: long-duration and short-duration bumper ads) between-participants factorial design was executed to test the proposed hypotheses.

4.2 Sample and design

Extant literature has established that millennials (individuals born between 1980-1995) are active users of YouTube in most developed and developing economies, including India (Cooper, 2019). This consumer cohort relies on digital channels for travel and tourism-related information (Chan et al., 2017). They also engage with influencers the most (Mediakix, 2019). For conducting study 1, we invited 240 young adults via e-mail who had completed university education (professional degree) to participate voluntarily. One hundred eighty-eight participants agreed to contribute to the study, out of which 49% were females, and 51% were male participants. These participants were either working for a firm (89%) or self-employed (11%). Forty-three percent of participants reported an income up to INR 5,00,000 (664.847 USD) and the balance (57%) reported an income between INR 5,00,001 (665.847 USD) - INR 10,00,000 (13,326.702 USD). The participants hailed from across different cities in India. The participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions in a 2 (advertising duration: long-duration or short-duration bumper ads) x 2 (influencer type: celebrity or expert influencer) between-participants design.

4.3 Participants, experimental stimuli and manipulations

Google forms with embedded videos were sent to the participants. Participants were asked three filter questions to confirm their suitability for the study. Only those participants who qualified as millennials, followed influencer content for travel destinations, and were regular viewers of YouTube for tourism-related videos were chosen for the study. After this screening, the participants were asked to read the given situation and instructions. Participants were requested to imagine themselves in a situation wherein they patronize a fictitious destination named "Vivian City." All the participants were informed that this hypothetical city is a magnet for shoppers, businesses, and travelers enjoying adventure alike. The fictitious name given to this city ensured that awareness of the destination brand did not affect consumer perceptions (Chan et al., 2017). The screenshots of the video ads featuring the influencer and celebrity marketing Vivian City are given in Appendix B.

Advertising duration was manipulated based on long-duration and short-duration bumper ads. The long-duration ad was of ninety seconds duration and the short-duration (bumper ad) was of six seconds duration. Both the ads were made as non-skippable ads and presented as pre-roll ads to a tourism-related video. The ads were created by editing several existing videos. Both the video ads were branded with the name and logo of Vivian City to increase the realism of the experimental setting (Chan et al., 2017). The images used in the video did not reveal a specific famous location, hence avoiding any biases.

Influencer type was manipulated based on celebrity and travel expert influencers. A well-known Indian cinema male superstar was shown describing his experience of visiting Vivian City in a YouTube video. The video mirrored the above-given description of Vivian City. Though the superstar enjoys global recognition and millions of social media followers, a brief bio introducing the celebrity was presented to the participants. Then, the same video featuring a well-known male travel expert influencer was created. This influencer enjoyed a high number of followers on YouTube. However, the influencer's brief bio was shared with the participants.

To check the manipulation of advertising duration, the participants were asked to opine on the duration of the ad (1= short-duration, 7 = long-duration). The ease of processing the information given in the video was also tested (1= difficult to process, 7= easy to process). To check for the manipulation of influencer type, the participants were asked to opine on the status of the endorser (1= celebrity, 7= travel expert influencer). Finally, we asked the participants about their idea on the realism of the situation (1= unrealistic, 7=realistic).

4.4 Measures

Following the given experimental stimuli, the participants completed a series of adapted questions measuring their attitude towards the destination ($\alpha = 0.858$; Schouten et al., 2020), destination brand love ($\alpha = 0.837$; Vernuccio et al., 2015), and destination visit intentions ($\alpha = 0.929$; Trivedi & Roza, 2019). Involvement was included as the control variable to avoid any confounding effects due to travelers' tourism involvement. Participants were requested to answer three items describing their tourism involvement ($\alpha = 0.791$; Gwinner & Swanson, 2003) (1 = not important, 7 = very important). The measurement scales are provided in Appendix A.

4.5 Results

A two-way ANOVA for the manipulation checks (duration of the ad, influencer type, ease of processing the information in the video ad, and scenario realism) established the manipulations to be effective. Then, a two-way ANOVA was conducted on attitude towards the destination. The results revealed a main effect of advertising duration ($F(1,184) = 25.981, p < .05$) and the main effect of influencer type ($F = 13.256, p < .05$). Two-way interaction between advertising duration and influencer type was also noted ($F = 6.763, p < .05$). Specifically, the attitude towards the destination was more favorable in the case of LDA's featuring celebrities ($M = 15.700$) than SDA's featuring celebrities ($M = 14.200$). In contrast, in the case of expert influencers, attitude towards the destination remained unaffected by the advertising duration (long-duration $M = 13.850$ and short-duration $M = 13.600$). Figure 2a depicts this result in a graphical form.

A two-way ANOVA was performed on destination love. The results revealed a main effect of advertising duration ($F = 13.974, p < .05$) and the main effect of influencer type ($F = 25.320, p < .05$). Two-way interaction between advertising duration and influencer type was also noted ($F = 18.427, p < .05$). Specifically, the destination love was more favorable in long-duration ads featuring celebrities ($M = 16.100$) than short duration ads featuring celebrities ($M = 14.262$). In contrast, in the case of expert influencers, attitude towards the destination remained unaffected by advertising duration (long-duration $M = 13.962$ and short-duration $M = 13.995$). Figure 2b depicts this result in a graphical form.

A two-way ANOVA was performed on destination booking intention. The results revealed a main effect of advertising duration ($F = 14.175, p < .05$) and the main effect of influencer type ($F = 27.312, p < .05$). A two-way interaction between advertising duration and influencer type was also noted ($F = 7.406, p < .05$). Specifically, the destination booking intention was more favorable in long-duration ads featuring celebrities ($M = 15.754$) than in short duration ads featuring celebrities ($M =$

14.200). In contrast, in the case of expert influencers, destination booking intention remained unaffected by advertising duration (long-duration $M = 13.850$ and short-duration $M = 13.600$). Figure 2c depicts this result in a graphical form.

The PROCESS Macro (Hayes, 2013) model 7 was used to test the moderated mediation effect. PROCESS Macro integrates the conditional moderated mediation model and confirms the significance of the interaction effects at different values of the moderator (Hayes, 2013).

To conduct the test, influencer type was the independent variable, advertising duration was entered as the moderator, attitude towards the destination was the mediator, and destination-booking intention was entered as the dependent variable.

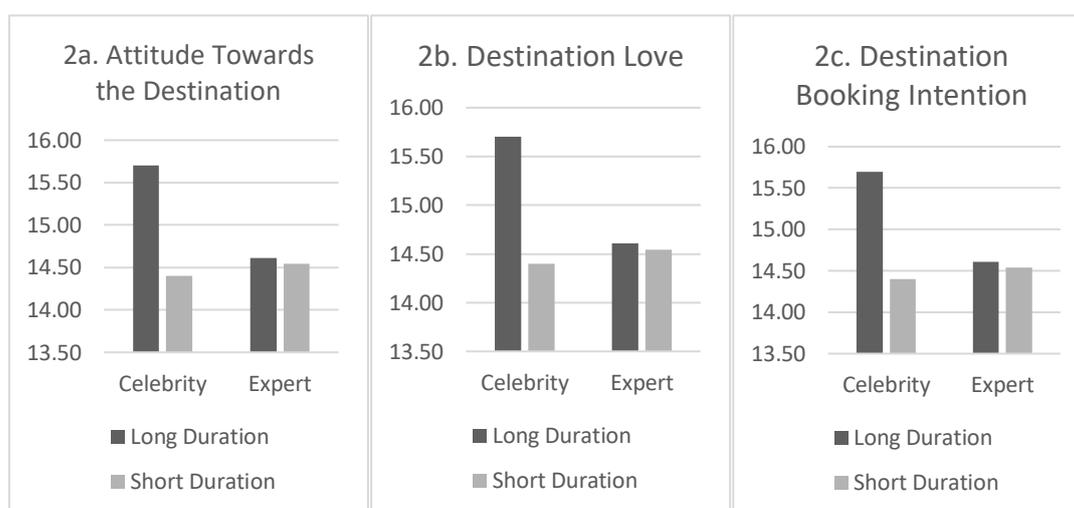


Figure 2. Effect of Influencer Type and Duration on the Dependent Variables.

Influencer type exhibited a significant effect on attitude towards the destination ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped lower level confidence interval (LLCI) = 0.307, bootstrapped upper level confidence interval (ULCI) = 0.601). Advertising duration exhibited a significant effect on attitude towards the destination ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.305, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.704). The interaction item between influencer type \times advertising duration also exhibited a significant effect on attitude towards the destination ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.467, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.864). However, for the outcome variable destination booking intention, the direct effect of influencer type was insignificant ($p = 0.304$) while attitude towards the destination exhibited a significant effect on destination booking intention ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.485, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.885).

Further, the index of the moderated mediation was found to be significant (bootstrapped LLCI = 0.310, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.873). Finally, the conditional indirect effect of influencer type on destination booking intention at various levels of advertising duration was observed. It is notable that for long-duration ads, the conditional indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.453$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.408, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.747). For short-duration ads also, the conditional indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.303$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.205, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.525). This indicates that

the effect of influencer type on destination booking intentions, mediated by the attitude towards the destination, is stronger in the case of long-duration ads.

Then, the moderated mediation analysis was conducted for destination love as the dependent variable. Influencer type, advertising duration, and the interaction item between influencer type and advertising duration significantly affected the attitude towards the destination. However, for the outcome destination love, the direct effect of influencer type was insignificant ($p = 0.151$), while attitude towards the destination exhibited a significant effect ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.700, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.988).

Further, the index of the moderated mediation was found to be significant (bootstrapped LLCI = 0.570, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.872). Finally, the conditional indirect effect of influencer type on destination love at various levels of advertising duration was observed. It is notable that for long-duration ads, the conditional indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.503$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.440, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.735). For short-duration ads, the conditional indirect effect was also significant ($\beta = 0.435$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.415, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.876). This indicates that the effect of influencer type on destination love, mediated by the attitude towards the destination, is stronger in the case of long-duration ads.

5. Study Two Method and Results

A second study was conducted from the perspective of a hotel brand with the same independent variables to generalize the findings of Study 1 for the hospitality industry. The effect of advertising duration was observed on the hotel brand's attitude, resulting in favorable consumer responses including a) hotel brand love and b) hotel booking intentions.

5.1 Method

A 2 (influencer type: celebrity and expert influencer) \times 2 (advertising duration: long-duration and short-duration bumper ads) between-participants factorial design was executed to test the proposed hypotheses.

5.2 Sample and design

Like the first study, millennials were observed to be appropriate participants due to their usage and trust in social media platforms to make hotel booking decisions (Xiang et al., 2014). As such, we invited another pool of 240 young adults via e-mail who had completed university education (professional degree) to participate voluntarily. One hundred seventy-six participants agreed to contribute to the study, of which 57% were females, and 43% were male participants. All the participants worked for a firm (91%) or were self-employed (9%). Forty-nine percent reported their annual income up to INR 500,000 (664.847 USD) per annum. 59% of employees reported their annual income between INR 500,001 (665.847 USD) - 10,00,000 (13,326.702 USD). The participants hailed from different cities in India. The participants were randomly assigned to one of the four conditions

in a 2 (advertising duration: long-duration or short-duration bumper ads) × 2 (influencer type: celebrity or expert influencer) between-participants design.

5.3 Participants, experimental stimuli, and manipulation

Google forms with embedded videos were sent to the participants. Participants were asked three filter questions to confirm their suitability for the study. Only those participants who qualified as millennials, followed influencer content for hotels, and were regular viewers of YouTube for hotel-related videos were chosen for the study. After this screening, the participants were asked to read the given situation and instructions. A fictitious hotel brand name, "Leisure and Pleasure," was created. The participants were informed that the hotel was located in an international city known for shopping, business, and adventures. The hotel was described as offering multiple facilities like a swimming pool, gym, restaurant, and comfortable and hygienic rooms. The fictitious name given to this hotel ensured that awareness of the hotel brand did not affect consumer perceptions (Chan et al., 2017). The screenshots of the video ads featuring the celebrity and the influencer are presented in Appendix B.

Advertising duration was manipulated based on long-duration (ninety seconds) and short-duration bumper ads (six seconds). Both the ads were made as non-skippable ads and presented as pre-roll to a tourism-related video. The ads were created by editing several existing video ads, and both the ads were branded with the name and logo of the "Leisure and Pleasure" hotel to increase the realism of the experimental setting (Chan et al., 2017). The images used in the video did not reveal a specific famous hotel brand, hence avoiding biases.

Influencer type was manipulated based on the celebrity and travel expert influencer. A well-known female Indian cinema superstar was shown describing the experience of staying with the said hotel brand. The video mirrored the above-given description of the hotel. Though the star enjoyed global recognition and millions of social media followers, a brief bio introducing the celebrity was presented to the participants. Then the same video was created featuring a well-known male travel expert influencer. This influencer enjoyed a high number of followers on YouTube. However, the influencer's brief bio was shared with the participants. The manipulation check procedure was conducted in the same way, as described in study 1.

5.4 Measures

Following the given experimental stimuli, the participants completed a series of adapted questions measuring their attitude towards the hotel brand (adapted from Schouten et al., 2020), hotel brand love (adapted from Vernuccio et al., 2015), and hotel booking intentions (adapted from Trivedi & Roza, 2019). Similar to study 1, Cronbach's alpha values were above 0.70 and valid (Nunnally, 1978). Involvement was included as the control variable to avoid any confounding effects due to travelers' tourism involvement. Participants were requested to answer three items describing their tourism involvement (adapted from Gwinner and Swanson (2003)) (1 = not important, 7 = very important). The measurement scales are provided in Appendix A.

5.5 Results

A two-way ANOVA for the manipulation checks (duration of the ad, influencer type, ease of processing the information in the video, and scenario realism) established the manipulations to be effective. Then a two-way ANOVA was conducted on attitude towards the hotel brand. The results revealed a main effect of the advertising duration ($F(1,172) = 22.969, p < .05$) and a main effect of the influencer type ($F = 12.733, p < .05$). A two-way interaction between advertising duration and influencer type was also effective ($F = 16.064, p < .05$). Specifically, the attitude towards the hotel brand was more favorable in the case of long-duration ads featuring celebrities ($M = 16.109$) than SDAs featuring celebrities ($M = 14.258$). In contrast, in the case of expert influencers, the attitude towards the hotel brand remained unaffected by advertising duration (long-duration $M = 13.959$ and short-duration $M = 13.983$). Figure 3a depicts the result in graphical form.

A two-way ANOVA was performed on hotel brand love. The results revealed a main effect of the advertising duration ($F = 20.431, p < .05$) and a main effect of the influencer type ($F = 12.688, p < .05$). A two-way interaction between advertising duration and influencer type was also effective ($F = 6.643, p < .05$). Specifically, the hotel brand love was more favorable in the case of long-duration ads featuring celebrities ($M = 15.568$) than short duration ads featuring celebrities ($M = 14.336$). In contrast, in the case of expert influencers, the hotel brand love remained unaffected by advertising duration (long-duration $M = 14.619$ and short-duration $M = 14.542$). Figure 3b depicts the result in graphical form.

A two-way ANOVA was performed on hotel booking intention. The results revealed a main effect of the advertising duration ($F = 11.682, p < .05$) and a main effect of the influencer type ($F = 22.865, p < .05$). A two-way interaction between advertising duration and influencer type was also effective ($F = 5.949, p < .05$). Specifically, the hotel booking intention was more favorable in the case of LDAs featuring celebrities ($M = 15.700$) compared to SDAs featuring celebrities ($M = 14.400$). In contrast, in the case of expert influencers, the hotel booking intention remained unaffected by advertising duration (long-duration $M = 13.351$ and short-duration $M = 13.210$). Figure 3c depicts the result in graphical form.



Figure 3. Effect of Influencer Type and Advertising Duration on the Dependent Variables.

The PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2013) model 7 was used to test the moderated mediation effect. Similar to study 1, influencer type was the independent variable, advertising duration was entered as the moderator, attitude towards the hotel brand was the mediator, and the hotel-booking intention was entered as the dependent variable.

Influencer type exhibited a significant effect on attitude towards the hotel brand ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.278, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.643). Advertising duration also exhibited a significant effect on attitude towards the hotel brand ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.292, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.552). The interaction item between influencer type \times advertising duration also exhibited a significant effect on attitude towards the hotel brand ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.710, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.993). However, for the outcome variable hotel booking intention, the direct effect of influencer type was insignificant ($p = 0.538$), while attitude towards the hotel brand exhibited a significant effect on hotel booking intention ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.620, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.835). Further, the index of the moderated mediation was found to be significant (bootstrapped LLCI = 0.799, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.935). Finally, the conditional indirect effect of influencer type on hotel booking intention at various levels of advertising duration was observed. It is notable that for long-duration ads the conditional indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.623$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.521, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.808). For short-duration ads also the conditional indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.336$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.235, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.483). This indicates that the effect of influencer marketing on hotel booking intentions, mediated by the attitude towards the hotel brand, is stronger in the case of long-duration ads.

Then, the moderated mediation analysis was conducted for hotel brand love as the dependent variable. Influencer type, advertising duration, and the interaction item between influencer type and advertising duration significantly affected the attitude towards the hotel brand love. However, for the outcome of hotel brand love, the direct effect of influencer type was insignificant ($p = 0.195$), while attitude towards the hotel brand exhibited a significant effect ($p = 0.000$, bootstrapped LLCI = 0.213, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.434). Further, the index of the moderated mediation was found to be

significant (bootstrapped LLCI = 0.324, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.957). Finally, the conditional indirect effect of influencer type on hotel brand love at various levels of advertising duration was observed. It is notable that for long-duration ads, the conditional indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.801$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.502, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.926). For short-duration ads, the conditional indirect effect was also significant ($\beta = 0.418$; bootstrapped LLCI = 0.298, bootstrapped ULCI = 0.625). This indicates that the effect of influencer marketing on hotel brand love, mediated by the attitude towards the hotel brand, is stronger in the case of long-duration ads.

6. Brief Summary of Results Obtained in Studies One and Two

In both the current studies (destination and hotel), celebrity influencers featuring in long-duration advertising exhibited a more substantial effect on travelers' attitudes, brand love, and booking intentions. This leads to acceptance of H1. The result is similar to a study conducted by Trivedi and Sama (2020), which established celebrity influencers to be effective over expert influencers in the case of the consumer electronics category. However, as the effectiveness of influencer marketing varies category-wise (Jin et al., 2019; Trivedi & Sama, 2020), these results add significant value to the tourism marketing literature.

In both the studies (destination and hotel), attitude mediated the relationship between influencer marketing and travelers' affective and conative response. Advertising duration moderated the relationship between influencer marketing and attitude, establishing a moderated mediation effect. This result helps accept H2. The effect of influencer marketing on behavioral intentions, mediated by attitude, was found to be stronger in the case of long-duration ads. This result is different from the finding of Arli (2017), where online communications exhibited a direct effect on consumers' behavioral intentions. The result obtained in this research helps establish the mediating role of attitude between influencer marketing and booking intentions, establishing that travelers' affective response will be an antecedent to their behavioral intentions while executing influencer marketing campaigns.

The results obtained in studies one and two are similar in explaining the effectiveness of influencer type and advertising duration.

7. Discussion and Conclusions

7.1 Contribution to theory

This study contributes to the theory from three perspectives. First, there is limited research examining the impact of celebrity vis-à-vis expert influencers on consumer behavior. Extant literature is inconclusive about the comparative impact of the type of influencers (Bhatt et al., 2013; Biswas et al., 2006; Ohanian, 1990; Trivedi, 2018). Thus, this research explored the effect of source models on consumer behavior in the case of destination marketing & observed the effectiveness of influencers (celebrity vis-à-vis expert) on the traveler's attitude, brand love, and booking intentions for a destination and a hotel. The results established the importance of celebrity influencers in both cases (destination and hotel). The celebrity influencers featuring in long-duration advertising exhibited a more substantial effect on travelers' attitudes, brand love, and booking intentions. This finding contributes to the theory of the source attractiveness model (McGuire, 1985), which posited that source attractiveness leads to positive feelings towards the endorsed products.

Second, the moderating role of advertising duration (long-duration vis-à-vis short duration) between influencer type and attitude was also examined. Drawing from the ABC theory and the results obtained, it can be stated that influencer marketing and advertising duration are critical contextual factors leading to traveler's affective (brand love) and conative (booking intentions) responses.

Third, the fact that long-duration video ads were more effective than short-duration video ads explain the efficacy of long-duration video ads towards generating an affective and conative response from the potential traveler. Thus, this finding also contributes to the theory of reasoned action, which posits a significant relationship between attitude and behavioral intentions (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). This result supports the finding by Trivedi (2017), where long-duration ads exhibited a significant effect on consumer attitude and behavioral intentions. However, the current findings are different from the results obtained by Varan et al. (2019), where short-duration ads were found to be narrowly as effective as long-duration ads. The current results contribute significantly because extant tourism literature has fewer studies on destination advertising strategies.

Moreover, attitude mediates behavioral intentions in long-duration video ads. These findings are similar to the results of Gresham and Shimp (1985), MacKenzie et al. (1986), and Trivedi and Sama (2020). They established attitude as the mediator between advertising stimuli and purchase intentions. This finding also supports Rajumesh's (2014) and Garg and Joshi's (2018) findings, where the role of attitude as a mediator on purchase intention was established.

Further, the expert influencers appear to have a slightly stronger effect in a short duration than celebrities because of two reasons. First, the younger audience has a low attention span on digital channels (Fulgoni, 2018; Varan et al., 2019). Second, SDA also increased ad involvement likeability, a favorable attitude, and higher ad attention (Trivedi et al., 2020; Varan et al., 2019).

Extant tourism industry literature has limited studies focused on examining the effectiveness of influencers (Magno & Cassia, 2018). Also, studies examining the effectiveness of various advertising strategies in destination marketing are limited (Byun & Jang, 2018). Hence, the results obtained add significant value to the pool of literature in tourism marketing.

7.2 Contribution to practice

The use of online marketing is steadily growing in the tourism industry. Hence, drawing from the results obtained in this research, marketers can choose to employ celebrity influencers to target millennials. Celebrities in the campaigns will result in consumers' positive attitudes towards the destination and hotel, resulting in stronger affective relationships (in the form of destination and hotel brand love) and booking intentions. However, in SDA, an expert influencer can also play an essential part in various social media platforms as SDA has greater ad attention among the young audience. Influencer marketing and video advertising are crucial to the success of tourism campaigns.

As the practice of online video advertising grows, marketers need to choose from YouTube's various advertising formats. The results obtained in this study exhibit the advantages of long-duration ads (90 seconds) over bumper ads (six-second short-duration ads). Tourism marketers advertising on YouTube can use LDAs, which may lead to consumers forming a positive attitude towards the destination and hotel, finally resulting in their behavioral intention. Hence, tourism marketers may derive a significant return on their investments in online marketing by employing celebrity influencers in LDAs for millennials.

7.3 Limitations and future scope

Though this study presented unique findings, it is not free from limitations. Consumers usually watch ads in a cluttered environment, whereas the video ads were shown during a tourism-related video while collecting data. This limitation may affect their perception of the ads differently in natural vs. experimental settings. This study only looked at the young population. Future research can look at other cohorts of populations. The current study only considered YouTube as a platform. Researchers can study different social media platforms in prospective studies as celebrities and social media experts are employed extensively in various social media. Owing to the nature of the study, the current study only used fictitious brands as stimuli. Future studies can take authentic destinations and hotels as stimulants to increase the study's external validity.

The current study chose an expert influencer and an attractive celebrity influencer. However, the level of trust for that expert and attractive celebrity influencer can differ among consumers. Given the high level of affection for celebrities in developing markets, a comparative study between developed and developing markets could be an interesting future study. Therefore, future studies can explore other variables like trust as potential moderators in the study focused on influencer marketing. Future studies can also observe the effect of influencer marketing on more vital affective variables like destination admiration and loyalty.

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Appendix A: Question Items for Study One and Study Two

Note: Seven-point semantic differential scales wa used for the dependent variable (attitude towards the brand) and a seven-point Likert scale was used for brand love and booking intentions in both the studies.

Study 1

Attitude towards the brand:

"Vivian City" is a bad.....good destination

I dislike...like "Vivian City" destination

Visiting "Vivian City" destination is an unpleasant...pleasant experience

Brand love:

I am passionate about visiting "Vivian City" destination

The "Vivian City" is an awesome destination

I love "Vivian City" destination

Hotel booking intention:

I will book a visit to "Vivian City" destination for my next travel

I will actively search for a visit to "Vivian City" when I will plan my next travel

In spite of other options, I will try to prefer booking a visit to "Vivian City" for my next travel

Study 2

Attitude towards the brand:

"Leisure and Pleasure" hotel is a bad...good hotel brand

I dislike...like "Leisure and Pleasure" hotel brand

Hotel "Leisure and Pleasure" is of bad quality...good quality

Brand love:

I am passionate about "Leisure and Pleasure" hotel brand

"Leisure and Pleasure" is an awesome hotel brand

I love "Leisure and Pleasure" hotel brand

Hotel booking intention:

I will book a "Leisure and Pleasure" hotel for my next travel

I will actively search for a "Leisure and Pleasure" hotel when I will plan my next travel

In spite of other options, I will try to prefer booking a "Leisure and Pleasure" hotel for my next travel

Appendix B: Video Screenshots and Bio of Celebrities and Expert Influencers

Vivian City: Celebrity and influencer video screenshots (influencer images blurred for publication purposes).

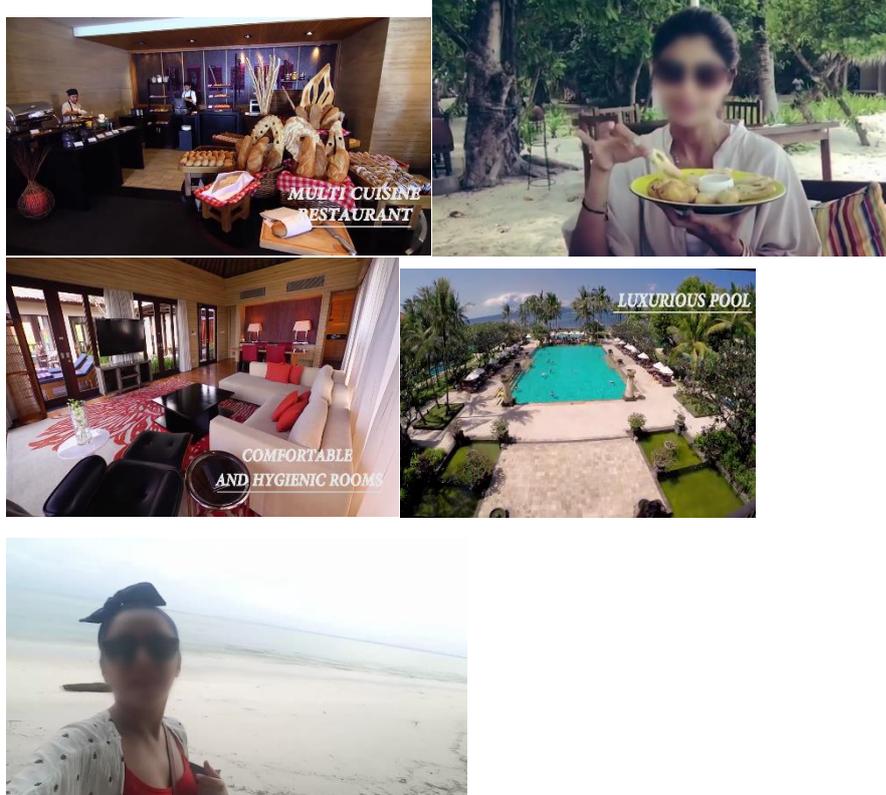


Brief bio of celebrity and influencers for study one: The researcher selected an Indian male film celebrity with a massive following on YouTube for study one. He has 25 million followers on YouTube. He is part of popular Indian movies and campaigns.



A female Indian expert influencer with a YouTube following of 2.5 million was selected as an expert influencer for study one. She makes travel content for her channel. She is also part of various influencer marketing campaigns and video ads.

Hotel Leisure and Pleasure: Celebrity and influencer video screenshots (influencer images blurred for publication purposes).



Brief bio of celebrity and influencers for study two: An Indian female film celebrity with a following of 22 million on YouTube was selected. Also for study two, an Indian female expert influencer with a following of 2.5 million on YouTube was selected.



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