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Article

Assessing the Effectiveness of Tourism Promotional Videos: Creativity, Emotional Impact, Perceived Quality, and Attitude Towards the Destination

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Abstract: Tourism promotional videos (TPVs) are widely used by destination management organizations (DMOs) in promotional campaigns. With the aim of opening new research perspectives in the field of tourism promotion, this article proposes a model for evaluating the effectiveness of TPVs—the Emovie model—conceptually anchored in studies on transformational and symbolic advertising. The model describes the interrelationship of four constructs: artistic value, positive emotional impact, perceived quality of the video, and perceived quality of the destination. The model was tested in three empirical studies carried out in parallel and using the same methodological procedures for quantitative analysis, applied to three samples totaling 674 individuals. The results show that the creativity and originality of TPVs elicit positive emotional reactions, resulting in favorable attitudes towards the message and the destination. This study is particularly important because it provides DMOs with a tool for evaluating the effectiveness of their promotional videos.

Keywords: tourism promotion; videos; artistic value; emotional impact; perceived quality; destination



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1. Introduction

The formation of a destination's image in the minds of potential tourists is largely based on information provided by image-forming agents (Gartner 1994; Tasci and Gartner 2007). Therefore, the quality and effectiveness of the messages sent out by DMOs are crucial to the success of their marketing efforts. DMOs use a wide range of instruments in their promotional campaigns, including advertisements in the media, media trips, sponsored television programs, participation in tourism fairs, direct marketing, and brochures. These traditional promotional tools are complemented by technological platforms that use audiovisual content as the preferred means of communication and that increasingly influence decision-making. In this context, video, which is used by 91 per cent of companies for promotional purposes (Video Marketing Statistics 2024), is becoming a fundamental tool in destination promotion campaigns, and is an important source of influence on tourists' decision-making (Cao et al. 2021).

In the field of audiovisual promotion, each DMO deals not only with competition from other destinations, but also with the myriad of audiovisual messages about its own destination that are emanating from other organizations and from consumers themselves. The coexistence of a myriad of videos about the same destination can generate a certain level of noise, reducing the effectiveness of the messages broadcasted by the DMOs. Therefore, only by effectively investing in the quality of the audiovisual content of their campaigns, making their videos “viral”, can DMOs make their own messages stand out. However, tourism studies have completely ignored the issue of the quality of the content of audiovisual campaigns promoting destinations. In fact, there is a deep divide between audiovisual tourism promotion practices, on the one hand, and scientific research agendas on the other. Nowadays, one of the biggest challenges for destination brands is to find creative forms of online communication capable of standing out in the complex digital noosphere, given

the immense proliferation of digital content generated by tourists, travelers, bloggers, and journalists. In this context, it is important to determine under what conditions the promotional videos of DMOs can have an impact on consumers. Despite the undeniable importance of promotional videos for tourism, the literature review shows that researchers have paid little attention to studying the persuasive effectiveness of videos as tourism image induction agents.

This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the conditions for the effectiveness of the messages contained in tourism promotional videos (TPVs). More specifically, it will focus on identifying the type of content in TPVs that is most likely to induce positive emotions and, thus, increase the effectiveness of the messages. The aim is to provide DMOs with a simple but reliable diagnostic assessment tool for TPVs, enabling them to pre-test different versions of their videos and choose, as the final version, the one most likely to impact their audiences.

To this end, a broad review of the literature on advertising techniques and persuasive communication was carried out, covering four interconnected aspects. Firstly, reference is made to hedonistic information technologies (Shayekina and Tleuberdinov 2012; Van der Heijden 2004; Hsu and Lu 2007), which characterize the Web 3.0 technological ecosystem, as an alternative to more traditional utilitarian information technologies [Van der Heijden 2004; Hsu and Lu 2007; Holsapple and Wu 2007]. Next, studies on psychological reactance to persuasion attempts are considered (Hannah et al. 1975; Bleier and Eisenbeiss 2015; Amarnath and Jaidev 2021; Chen et al. 2019). Thirdly, tourism studies are considered that highlight the role of emotions in the various stages of the tourist experience: before, during and after the trip (Aho 2001; Knobloch et al. 2017; Hosany et al. 2020). Lastly, studies on advertising carried out over the last three decades are considered, namely, studies on hedonic and emotional advertising appeals (Albers-Miller and Gelb 1996; Shayekina and Tleuberdinov 2012), studies on transformational advertising (Rossiter and Percy 1987; Johar and Sirgy 1991; Cutler et al. 2000), and Moriarty's model of symbolic advertising (Moriarty 1987).

The relevance and originality of this research lies in the study of the persuasive effectiveness of TPVs through the creation of an Effective Movie model ("Emovie model"), which aims to emphasize that emotions and affective dynamics are the core factor in the audiovisual tourism promotion process, as opposed to the excessive emphasis that has been placed on cognitive processes in tourism studies.

2. Conceptual Background

(A) Information technologies: productivity versus pleasure

The growing preference for online digital media over offline media is most likely related to the fact that the former allow for interactivity and playful sociability (Holsapple and Wu 2007). Several authors stress the hedonistic nature of online media, categorizing information technologies into two types: productivity-focused technologies versus pleasure-focused technologies (Van der Heijden 2004; Hsu and Lu 2007; Holsapple and Wu 2007). The evolution of the Internet to Web 2.0, and later to Web 3.0, is testimony to the paradigm shift in the media. Analog media (and Web 1.0) are productivity-focused technologies whose function is to acquire, store, retrieve, and distribute information, as well as to process the knowledge needed to perform relevant tasks, such as decision-making (Holsapple and Wu 2007). Tourism promotion brochures and catalogs are communication formats suited to productivity-focused technologies.

Pleasure-orientated communication technologies, on the other hand, incorporate hedonic elements, such as creative and enjoyable content, animated images, appealing sounds and esthetically pleasing visual layouts, and can also promote interactivity and playful involvement. These include online games, virtual worlds (e.g., *Second Life*), video sharing (e.g., YouTube), social networks and Internet Protocol Television. Audiovisual tourism promotion is beginning to take advantage of the immense possibilities offered by these technologies. The gamification of destinations, storytelling, and fictional plots are increasingly present in TPV.

(B) Concealing persuasive intent: from reactance to narrative transport

When a message is categorized as “advertising”, it is immediately met with reluctance from consumers, who avoid it whenever they can (Baek and Morimoto 2012; Dodoo and Wen 2019; Speck and Elliott 1997). The rejection of advertising can be explained by reactance theory. Reactance consists of a negative psychological response as a means of resisting attempts at persuasion, which are considered coercive, and which leads people to act in the opposite direction to the meaning requested in the message (Hannah et al. 1975; Bleier and Eisenbeiss 2015; Amarnath and Jaidev 2021; Chen et al. 2019). The individual attitude is, thus, inverted as a rejection of what is perceived to be a threat to personal freedom (Edwards et al. 2002). Therefore, in addition to zapping to avoid advertising messages, they may also encounter audience reactance. Furthermore, studies on persuasion show that the credibility of a message is lower the more evident the sender’s persuasive intent is (see Gotlieb and Sarel 1991), as illustrated in Figure 1.

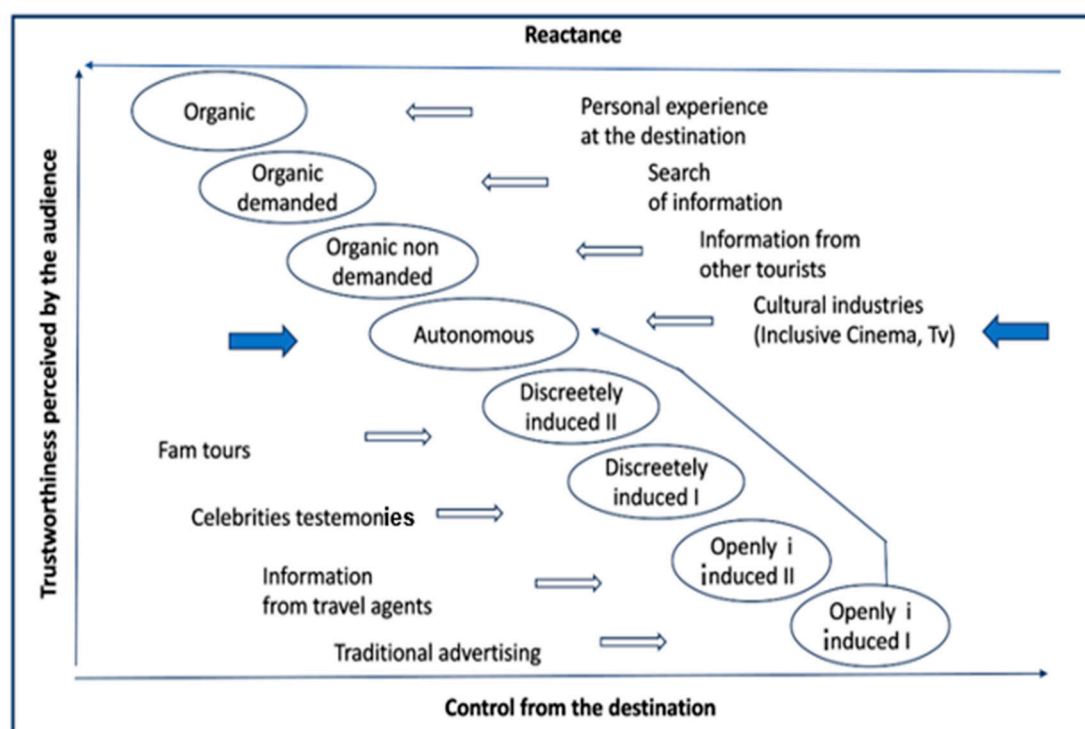


Figure 1. Credibility, reactance, and control of messages as factors in tourism image formation. Source: Adapted from Gartner (1994).

Tourism promotion through traditional forms of advertising is associated with a low level of credibility (Gartner 1994). In order to increase the credibility of the message, prevent reactance and generate a strong impact on audiences, destination promoters and the tourism industry are opting for more covert promotional techniques, using celebrity testimonials, product/brand placement methods in feature films and TV series (Araújo Vila et al. 2018; Araújo 2018) and, more frequently, the production of creative and fictional videos (Gong and Tung 2017).

The use of creative audiovisual productions with a strong emotional impact (especially when they take on a trailer format) not only makes it possible to conceal the persuasive intent through fictional plots, but also to create narrative transportation (Chen and Chang 2017; Green and Brock 2000), taking viewers into a fantasy world, arousing more intense and more positive emotional reactions and numbing the critical sense, thus generating a more positive attitude towards the message (Escalas 2004).

Through creative videos, tourism promoters seek to impress viewers (Hudson and Ritchie 2006) and persuade them to visit a given destination by mentally transporting

them to an experiential situation (Moyer-Gusé 2008). Good videos elicit positive emotional reactions in the minds of potential tourists (Schiffman et al. 2013), as well as numbing their critical sense (Escalas 2004). The use of creative images, stories, and plots can build an emotional connection between a destination and its potential visitors based on positive destination images (Morgan et al. 2002).

(C) The role of emotions in optimizing messages about tourist experiences

There is a broad consensus on the determining role of emotions in the tourist experience (Aho 2001; Bastiaansen et al. 2019; Hosany et al. 2020; Knobloch et al. 2017; Tussyadiah 2014). Emotions are fundamental in the various stages of the time cycle of the tourist experience:

1. Before the trip, emotions activate attention and motivation and shape expectations in the process of choosing the destination (Gnoth 1997);
2. During the trip, emotions vary from moment to moment and in each location, making it easier for tourists to adapt to each situation (Nawijn 2011);
3. After the trip, in the memories and social sharing of the experience, positive and negative emotions are reactivated in association with the recollection of certain events, thus contributing to their consolidation and perpetuation in memory (Bastiaansen et al. 2019; Hosany et al. 2020).

The relevance of emotions in tourism has been highlighted in a number of studies, for example, in holiday activities (Hosany and Prayag 2013); in experiences of participating in festivals in experiences of visiting theme parks (Bigné et al. 2005); adventure tourism (Faullant et al. 2011); shopping tourism (Yüksel and Yüksel 2007); tourism to heritage sites (Prayag et al. 2013); and visits to scenic spots (Wang and Lyu 2019).

To generate customer-based brand equity for destinations, tourists' emotional reactions are of paramount importance, as they are precursors to satisfaction with the destination (Faullant et al. 2011; Hosany et al. 2017), attachment to the destination (Yüksel et al. 2010), behavioral intentions regarding activities to be carried out at the destination (Prayag et al. 2013; Yüksel and Yüksel 2007), and the overall assessment of the destination's image (Prayag et al. 2017). In this sense, it can be said that emotions are fundamental to providing memorable tourist experiences in destinations (Moyle et al. 2019).

- Emotion as the centerpiece of promotional message processing

Studies on the quality of promotional materials have focused on identifying the most effective stimuli or the most appropriate communication mix to generate the desired effect on audiences. These include measuring the effect of endorsement (Van der Veen and Song 2014), evaluating celebrity images (Wang et al. 2002), or evaluating pictorial and textual stimuli (Walters et al. 2007). These studies use attitude towards messages, attitude towards the brand, or purchase intention as indicators of effectiveness. The researchers mentioned above focus only on how the manipulation of certain concrete advertising stimuli influences advertising effectiveness. However, in these studies, the mental processing of tourism promotion messages is treated as a "black box" mediating between consumers' exposure to promotional stimuli and the development of attitudes towards destinations, and is almost never considered (Li et al. 2018).

However, outside of tourism, the literature on advertising effectiveness emphasizes the importance of emotional responses in consumers' mental processing. According to Li et al. (2018), it has been empirically verified that emotion acts as an important precursor to consumer responses such as attitudes towards advertising and the brand (Holbrook and Batra 1987), brand interest (Morris et al. 2002), and purchase intention (Morris et al. 2002). More importantly, emotional reactions may, in fact, be a more reliable indicator of advertising effectiveness than cognition when the products or services are hedonic in nature (Johar and Sirgy 1991; Morris et al. 2002). Walters et al. (2012) found that the emotional reactions evoked by concrete images of tourism promotion are positively correlated with interest in the product and purchasing decisions. However, the tourism literature lacks

empirical studies on the role of emotions in tourism in general and tourism promotion in particular.

- The impact of emotional and creative messages on tourism promotion

The fact that tourism promotion strategies based on fictional, humorous, and emotional messages are generally successful is due, according to [Ge \(2019\)](#), to three complementary logics of consumer participation:

- (a) An economic logic based on the “attention economy”: The most valuable resource in the information age is not information, but the attention people pay to it ([Lanham 2006](#)); moreover, consumers tend to pay more attention to emotional and entertaining messages that generate involvement and commitment than to messages that extol the virtues of products ([Leung et al. 2017](#)).
- (b) A social logic that suggests that creative and entertaining messages are highly compatible with “networked individualism” ([Wellman et al. 2003](#)): Endorsing the symbolic meaning shared in creative and entertaining messages can contribute to the creation of a feeling of common affiliation in a brand community logic.
- (c) A cultural logic of participation based on the notion that hedonic messages on social networks serve as bricks of complex cultures that entice consumers to become involved in collective practices with which they identify ([Burgess and Green 2018](#)).

A good, creative promotional video with a strong emotional impact aims to impress viewers ([Hudson and Ritchie 2006](#)) and persuade them to visit a destination by transporting them to an experiential situation ([Moyer-Gusé 2008](#)). The greater the emotional impact generated by a video, the more likely it is to generate a “telepresence” effect ([Cao et al. 2021](#); [Hyun and O’Keefe 2012](#)), i.e., to create in the viewer the sensation of “being there” ([Steuer 1992](#)). A video with a good creative storyline and a strong emotional slant has the ability to elicit telepresence and the viewer’s involvement with the destination, thanks to a mechanism of narrative transportation ([Cao et al. 2021](#); [Green and Brock 2000](#)), defined as the viewer’s immersion in the story ([Gong and Tung 2017](#)). Narrative transportation involves images, affect, and focus of attention ([Green and Brock 2000](#)).

In order to make TPVs more effective, DMOs tend to focus increasingly on fictional content, which more easily arouses emotional reactions in the minds of potential tourists ([Schiffman et al. 2013](#)). The use of images and stories in fictional TPV can build an emotional connection between the destination and viewers, leading (potential) tourists to form positive images of the destination ([Morgan et al. 2002](#)). Thus, displaying images, emotions, and stories in a fictional VPT is more effective in capturing tourists’ attention ([Chen et al. 2019](#)).

(D) Advertising appeals, types of formats, and types of advertising

Although tourism literature has never systematically examined the persuasive content of TPV messages, it is possible to learn valuable lessons from advertising studies and transpose these lessons into analyzing the effectiveness of TPVs (Figure 2). In this context, studies on types of advertising, as well as types of advertising formats and advertising appeals, are particularly important.

- Utilitarian and rational versus hedonic and emotional advertising appeals

Authors who have analyzed the content of advertising messages like [Shayekina and Tleuberdinov \(2012\)](#) highlight two categories of advertising appeals contained in these messages: (1) utilitarian and rational appeals, the aim of which is to highlight the superiority, quality, economy, value, or performance of a product. With this type of appeal, an attempt is made to focus the consumer’s attention on the product’s attributes; (2) hedonic and emotional appeals, the primary aim of which is to emphasize the emotional and experiential dimension of consumption, leading the consumer to identify with the product. In this sense, the messages include stimuli with an emotional impact in order to induce positive feelings in audiences. It should be noted that these two types of advertising appeals can be combined in the same message and, therefore, when analyzing the content of messages, it makes sense to consider a continuum of variations and hybrid situations, the opposing

poles of which are “pure” messages that convey only utilitarian and rational appeals, and only hedonic and emotional appeals.

- Literal visual advertising versus symbolic visual advertising

[Moriarty \(1987\)](#) proposed a categorical model for analyzing the content of print advertising, establishing a dichotomy between literal advertising formats versus symbolic advertising formats. The literal format uses the following rhetorical means: (1) identification (identification of the brand, logo or packaging); (2) description of components, attributes, shape, and appearance; (3) comparison between “before” and “after”; (4) comparison with other competing brands; and (5) demonstration, which consists of information on how to use the product. In contrast, the rhetorical devices of the symbolic model are (1) association with lifestyles, typical situations, and people, characters, or celebrities; (2) metaphors (allegorical use, unexpected substitution based on similarity with some attribute); (3) storytelling (use of narrative, drama and plot); and (4) esthetics (use of artistic expression, abstractions, and esthetic patterns). Later studies corroborated the applicability of [Moriarty’s \(1987\)](#) model to other media such as television and radio ([An 2007](#); [Cutler et al. 2000](#)).

- Informational versus transformational or experiential advertising

The dichotomies mentioned above—1. productivity-focused vs. pleasure-focused technologies; 2. utilitarian and rational vs. hedonic and emotional appeals; 3. literal vs. symbolic formats—are fully in line with the classic categorization of advertising formats, namely, informational vs. transformational or experiential advertising ([Puto and Wells 1984](#); [Rossiter and Percy 1987](#); [Johar and Sirgy 1991](#); [Cutler et al. 2000](#)). For these authors, informational advertising consists of informing about the key functional benefits that are considered important to consumers. It emphasizes the qualities of the product and sometimes specifies certain advantages compared to competing products. In contrast, transformational advertising consists of inducing a high level of emotional involvement in the consumer that facilitates greater acceptance of the product. Transformational advertising presents and emphasizes experiences of consuming the product, highlighting its benefits in terms of lifestyle, status, health, well-being, etc.

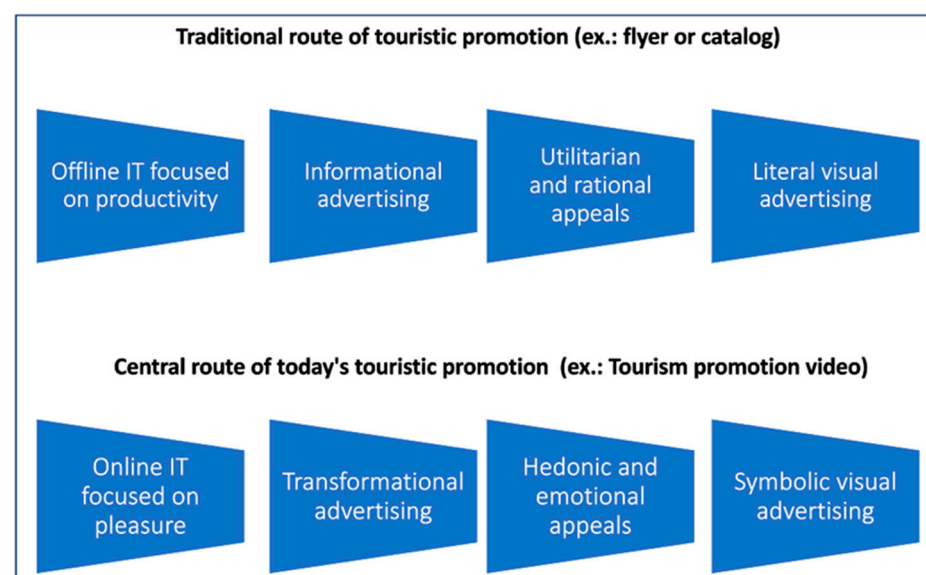


Figure 2. Tourism promotion modalities. Source: authors.

Considering that, in today’s digital ecosystem, people’s attention to messages is an increasingly precious economic resource ([Lanham 2006](#)), investment in the creativity and originality of TPV content has been considered a decisive factor in defining success formulas. It is, therefore, possible to delineate two distinct, albeit complementary, paths in

the field of tourism promotion (Figure 2): on the one hand, a more traditional path, which was predominant or almost exclusive before the digital age, in which promotion focused consumers' attention on the attributes of the destination; and, on the other, a dynamic and more creative path, which uses digital channels, competes for virality (consumer endorsement), and invests in narrative transport to generate the sensation of telepresence and the emotional attachment of audiences to the destination. This study on the effectiveness of VPTs fits into this second option.

(E) Empirical model and hypotheses

Applying the theoretical contributions in the field of advertising, presented above in the literature review, to the field of tourism allowed the authors to create a model for evaluating the effectiveness of tourism videos, the Effective Movie model ("Emovie model"). This acronym suggests the fusion of the term's "emotion" and "movie". The Emovie model emphasizes the role of emotion as a core factor in the audiovisual tourism promotion process, as opposed to the excessive emphasis that has been placed on cognitive processes in tourism studies (see Figure 3). The validation of this model could provide DMOs with a simple but reliable diagnostic assessment tool for TPVs, enabling them to pre-test different versions of their videos and choose as final versions those most likely to impact their audiences.

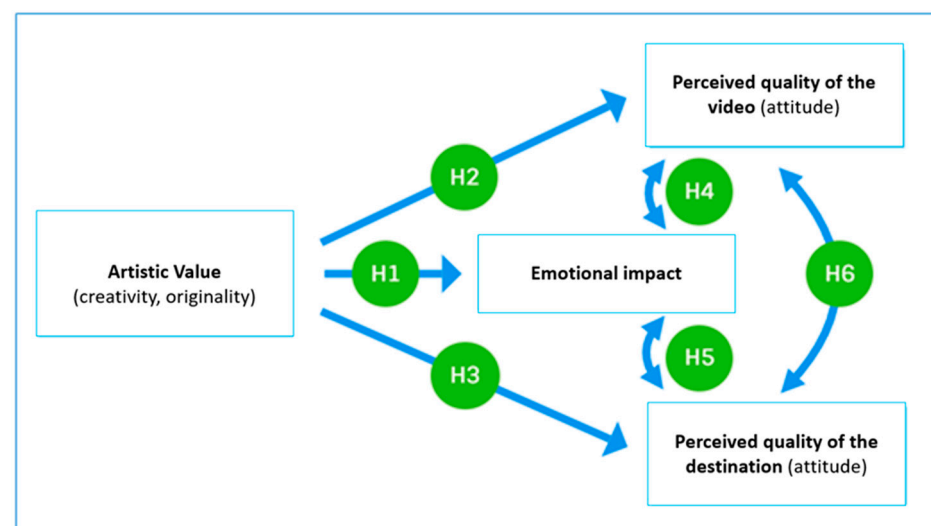


Figure 3. Model for evaluating the effectiveness of tourism videos (Emovie model). Source: Own elaboration based on Cadet et al. (2017) and Escalas (2004).

The validation of the Emovie model presupposes the empirical testing of the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1). *The artistic value of a VPT directly and positively influences its emotional impact on the viewer. It is hypothesized that there is a positive correlation between perceptions of the creativity and originality of videos and the intensity of the positive emotions felt by viewers when watching these videos.*

Hypothesis 2 (H2). *The artistic value attributed to a VPT positively influences its perceived quality. Thus, videos rated as being very creative and very original are rated as being higher quality videos, and vice versa.*

Hypothesis 3 (H3). *The artistic value attributed to a VPT positively influences the perceived quality of the destination promoted in the video. In other words, there is a positive correlation between evaluations of the creativity and originality of VPTs and evaluations of the perceived quality of the destinations promoted by these VPTs.*

Hypothesis 4 (H4). *The positive emotional impact of a VPT directly and positively influences the perceived quality of that VPT. In other words, there is a positive correlation between the “emotional impact” and “perceived quality of the video” variables.*

Hypothesis 5 (H5). *The positive emotional impact of a VPT directly and positively influences the perceived quality of the destination described in that VPT. In other words, there is a positive correlation between the “emotional impact” and “perceived quality of the video” variables.*

Hypothesis 6 (H6). *There is a positive correlation between the perceived quality of the VPT and the perceived quality of the destination that these VPTs promote.*

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Empirical Studies, Stimulus Material, and Operationalization of the Constructs

The validation of the VPT effectiveness assessment model was carried out in three empirical studies implemented in parallel, using six films competing in ART&TUR—International Tourism Film Festival (Viseu 2020) as the stimulus material. Each study investigated two different films, but using the same methodology: the same data collection script, the same questionnaire, and a film evaluation grid common to the various festivals in the CIFFT—International Committee of Tourism Film Festivals (CIFFT) network, of which the ART&TUR Festival is a member.

It is important to note that the promotional films that take part in the CIFFT network festivals feature content that essentially corresponds to the symbolic advertising format, as described by Moriarty (1987), namely, the association with lifestyles or celebrities, use of metaphors and storytelling, emphasis on esthetic elements, and a soundtrack (music) with a strong emotional impact. In addition, these films have the following common attributes: (i) they are short videos (2 to 4 min) that can be easily circulated on social networks; (ii) they have a high level of creativity, both in terms of music and soundtrack and in terms of image; (iii) are of a high standard of originality, emphasizing the symbolic and emotional aspects that propitiate narrative transport in order to induce attachment to the destination and telepresence; (iv) leave the characterizing attributes of destination images in the background; and (v) focus the attention of their audiences on narratives with creative and fictional plots, which arouse imaginary dreamlike relationships with the destination.

This study used archive material from the 2020 edition of the ART&TUR Festival, as it was the year in which there were films with very similar characteristics, namely, (1) all 6 films were equally rated by the Festival jury (overall average of 88 points out of a maximum of 100, resulting from the assessment of a panel of 27 international jury members); (2) all 6 films promote tourist destinations; and (3) they incorporate original music, which is likely to have an emotional impact on viewers. Furthermore, as shown in Table 1, it was possible to pair the films 2 by 2, based on the following three criteria: (a) music with a strong emotional and nostalgic impact—films 1 and 2; (b) strong emphasis on tourist sociability: young couple versus family with children—films 3 and 4; (c) cultural contrast—focus on native culture versus focus on an exotic culture—films 5 and 6. Three parallel studies were therefore organized, each using two films as stimulus material, with the aim of gauging the validity of the Emovie model.

However, the six films differed in two significant parameters, namely, the countries of origin and types of tourist experiences: film 1: Norway, showing close-ups and nature landscapes; film 2: Croatia (Rijeka), emphasizing cultural experiences in an urban context; film 3: Portugal (Algarve), with a great diversity of landscapes and locations; film 4: Spain (Costa Dorada), with images that show an atmosphere of tranquility and joy; film 5: Portugal (Algarve), with an emphasis on active tourism—cyclists riding along a cycle path; film 6: Japan (Takahama), with a strong emphasis on mystical experiences in natural surroundings.

Table 1. Videos used in the three studies and their characteristics.

Study	Video Selection Criteria	Title	Destination; Year of Production; Duration	Type of Experience (Main Emphasis)
1	Music with a strong emotional and nostalgic impact	1. <i>"Norway. Seasons"</i>	Noruega (whole country); 2020; 5'27"	Close-ups: nature landscapes
		2. <i>"Rijeka – I miss you"</i>	Rijeka (Croácia); 2019; 4'15"	Cultural experiences in na urban context
2	Sociability: young couple versus family with children	3. <i>"O Algarve Fica-te bem"</i>	Algarve (Portugal); 2020; 2'03"	Great diversity of landscapes and places
		4. <i>"Turisme en Familia"</i>	Costa Dorada (Spain); 2019; 2'10"	Na atmosphere of tranquility and joy
3	Focus on native culture versus focus on na exotic culture	5. <i>"Rota Eurovelo 1"</i>	Algarve (Portugal); 2019; 2'44"	Active experiences along a cycle path
		6. <i>"Reconnect your Zen"</i>	Takahama (Japan); 2020; 3'04"	Mystical experiences in natural surroundings

Source: Authors.

Regarding the operationalization of the constructs, the same evaluation grid was used to assess the dimensions of "artistic value" and "video quality", as has been adopted annually at the ART&TUR Festival and other festivals in the CIFFT network. The "artistic value" construct was operationalized by assessing the "originality" and "creativity" dimensions. Six items were included in the evaluation of the "video quality" construct: "image/photography", "music", "voice", "soundtrack", "editing", and "overall quality". The four dimensions of Russell's Circumplex model (Rossiter and Percy 1987) were used to operationalize the "emotional impact" construct, namely, "relaxation: tranquility, calm, quiet" and "enthusiasm: exciting, joy", as positive valence emotions; and "stress: oppression, restlessness" and "melancholy: sadness, depression, apathy", as negative valence emotions. Finally, to measure the "destination quality" construct, respondents were asked to consider the extent to which the video promotes the following destination values: "responsible tourism", "sustainable tourism", and "encouraging the adoption of tourism practices".

3.2. Data Collection

A questionnaire was drawn up for data collection, in which all items in the four constructs were assessed on 10-point Likert scales (from 0 = "absent" or "nil" to 9 = "excellent" or "very strong impact"). The questionnaire also included five variables to characterize the respondents: age, gender, educational qualifications, marital status, and municipality of residence.

In each of the 3 studies, for half of the sample, the data collection process followed the following sequence: 1. viewing of video A; 2. evaluation of video A; 3. viewing of video B; 4. evaluation of video B. For the other half of the sample, the sequence was as follows: 1. viewing of video B; 2. evaluation of video B; 3. viewing of video A; 4. evaluation of video A.

The data collection took place in a controlled environment (research rooms of CITUR—Centre for Research, Development and Innovation in Tourism—Polytechnic of Leiria), since the respondents watched the films on the interviewers' computers. The first step in planning the data collection was to schedule 8 telephone interviews a day, over the course of 5 weeks. The interviewers, a total of 10 research fellows spread across the three studies, were trained in advance so as to maintain a similar approach, both during the interview scheduling phase and during the face-to-face meetings.

3.3. Sample

All of the respondents live in the Centro de Portugal region. As shown in Table 2, Study 1 included 254 participants, mostly young women with higher education. In Study 2, 202 people took part, with a more balanced distribution in terms of age and gender. Study

3, with a total of 218 respondents, also shows an age pattern with a strong predominance of the younger and mostly female segment. These were convenience samples whose structure was conditioned by the relative difficulty of finding people available to meet the interviewers in good time. However, the hypothesis tests (*t*-test for the “gender” variable and one-way ANOVA for the “age differences” variable) of the mean differences in the four constructs of the model show that there are no significant mean differences according to gender and age. We therefore believe that the unbalanced sample structures in these two variables do not pose a threat to the internal validity of the studies. Furthermore, the aim of this research is to try to validate the Emovie model in 3 studies carried out in parallel, with similar samples, in order to gauge the consistency of this model and not exactly to extrapolate the conclusions to the Portuguese population.

Table 2. Characterization of the samples.

	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Age						
From 16 to 23 years old	134	52.8	87	43.1	112	51.4
From 24 to 45 years old	88	34.6	79	39.1	78	35.8
More than 45 years old	32	12.6	36	17.8	28	12.8
Gender						
Female	159	62.6	107	53.0	139	63.8
Male	95	37.4	95	47.8	79	36.2
Marital status						
Single	205	80.7	143	70.8	121	55.5
Marries	42	16.5	46	22.8	78	35.8
Divorced or widowed	7	2.8	13	6.5	19	8.7
Academic qualifications						
Primary or secondary	91	35.8	102	50.5	107	49.1
Higher education	163	64.2	100	49.5	111	50.9
Sample size (total)	254	100	202	100	218	100

Source: Authors.

3.4. Reliability of the Constructs

In order to guarantee the reliability of the constructs included in the Emovie model, the respective reliability analysis (Cronbach’s α) was carried out. According to [Murphy and Davidshofer \(1988\)](#) and [Malhotra \(2007\)](#), the level of reliability estimated by the Cronbach’s α coefficient is considered acceptable when it exceeds 0.60. As shown in Table 3, the reliability is higher than the criterion in 23 of the 24 reliability tests carried out, and only in the evaluation of one of the six videos (Video 2) is the reliability level of the “positive emotional impact” construct one hundredth below the recommended criterion ($\alpha = 0.59$).

Table 3. Reliability analysis (Cronbach’s α) of the constructs.

	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3	
	Vídeo 1	Vídeo 2	Vídeo 1	Vídeo 2	Vídeo 1	Vídeo 2
Artistic Value	0.95	0.89	0.95	0.94	0.96	0.92
Positive emotional impact	0.64	0.59	0.63	0.61	0.70	0.67
Percieved quality of video	0.89	0.90	0.89	0.82	0.94	0.89
Percieved quality of destination	0.94	0.92	0.91	0.90	0.91	0.89

Source: Authors.

4. Results

Table 4 shows the average scores for the four constructs and the variables that make up each of these constructs.

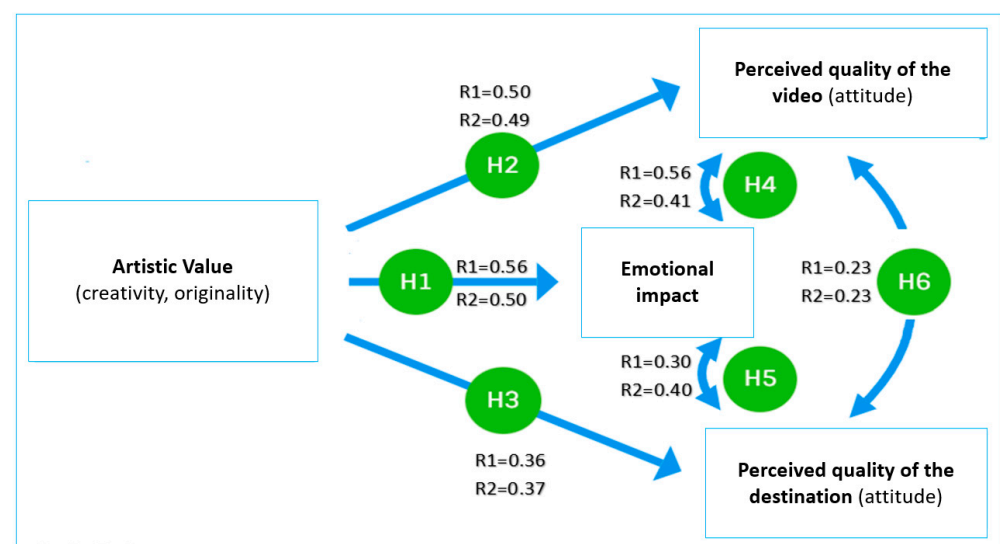
Table 4. Average means of the variables used to assess the six videos.

	Study 1		Study 2		Study 3	
	Vídeo 1	Vídeo 2	Vídeo 1	Vídeo 2	Vídeo 1	Vídeo 2
Artistic value	6.12	6.67	6.49	6.42	6.49	6.71
Originality	6.09	6.58	6.47	6.33	6.45	6.64
Creativity	6.16	6.75	6.51	6.50	6.52	6.78
Positive emotional impact	6.53	6.37	7.00	6.90	6.27	7.03
Relaxation	7.39	5.98	7.45	6.27	7.12	7.24
Enthusiasm	5.67	6.77	6.55	7.53	5.42	6.82
Perceived quality of video	6.53	6.89	7.22	7.22	6.98	7.32
Image	8.30	7.78	7.92	7.63	7.09	7.36
Voice	5.41	6.44	6.74	6.93	6.76	7.06
Music	5.61	6.25	6.79	4.96	6.60	6.99
Sound effects	5.66	6.38	6.88	5.95	7.42	7.66
Editing	7.53	7.43	7.53	7.29	7.46	7.72
Overall Quality	7.44	7.54	7.45	7.48	7.07	7.65
Perceived quality of destination	7.28	6.29	6.29	6.97	7.03	1.28
Responsible tourism	7.32	6.28	6.30	6.93	7.09	7.44
Sustainable tourism	7.35	6.07	6.14	6.78	7.10	7.79
Good practices at destination	7.19	6.54	6.44	7.20	6.49	6.71

Source: Authors.

When evaluating each of the six videos, the four constructs that make up the Emovie model were correlated (Figures 4–6). Invariably, positive correlations were obtained with significance levels of 0.001. Thus, the correlation between “artistic value” and “emotional impact” showed Pearson’s r values of 0.56 (video 1), 0.50 (video 2), 0.70 (video 3), 0.57 (video 4), 0.71 (video 5), and 0.63 (video 6). Thus, based on the data from the three samples, Hypothesis 1 was corroborated in the evaluation of the six films.

Hypothesis 2, which advocates a positive correlation between “artistic value” and “perceived video quality”, was also corroborated in the six evaluation situations, with Pearson’s r values of 0.50 (video 1), 0.49 (video 2), 0.71 (video 3), 0.63 (video 4), 0.56 (video 5), and 0.42 (video 6).

**Figure 4.** Pearson correlations—Films 1 and 2. Source: Authors.

Similarly, as predicted in Hypothesis 3, there were positive correlations between the variables “artistic value” and “perceived quality of the destination”, namely, 0.36 (video 1), 0.37 (video 2), 0.62 (video 3), 0.56 (video 4), 0.61 (video 5), and 0.64 (video 6).

The data from the three empirical studies also provide empirical evidence to support the hypotheses that “positive emotional impact” correlates with “perceived video quality” (Hypothesis 4) and “perceived destination quality” (Hypothesis 5). The Pearson’s r values that corroborate Hypothesis 4 are as follows: 0.56 (video 1), 0.41 (video 2), 0.71 (video 3),

0.54 (video 4), 0.52 (video 5), and 0.48 (video 6). As for the empirical evidence supporting Hypothesis 5, the following correlations were observed: 0.30 (video 1), 0.40 (video 2), 0.55 (video 3), 0.54 (video 4), 0.61 (video 5), and 0.56 (video 6).

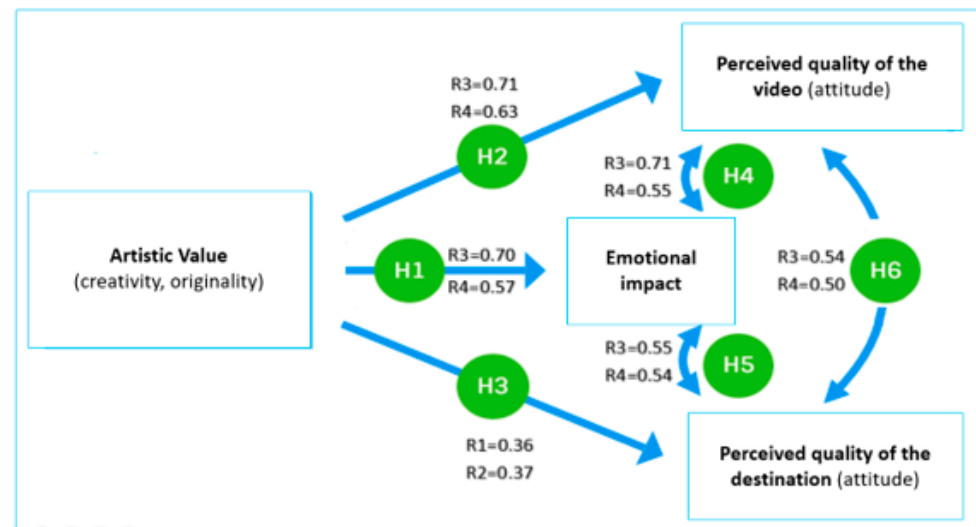


Figure 5. Pearson correlations—Films 3 and 4. Source: Authors.

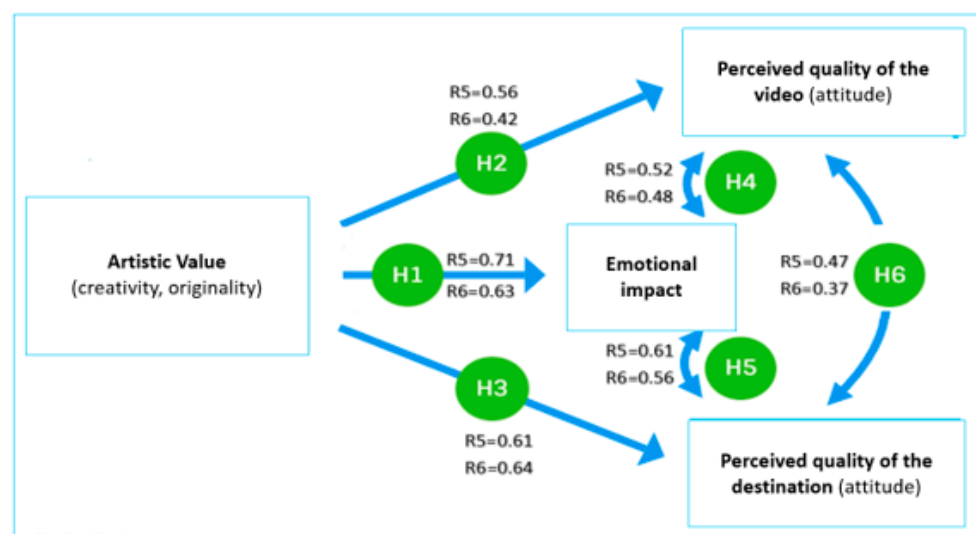


Figure 6. Pearson correlations—Films 5 and 6. Source: Authors.

The assumption that the perceived quality of the video and the perceived quality of the destination are positively correlated (Hypothesis 6) also finds empirical corroboration in the three studies and in the evaluation of the six videos: Pearson's r of 0.23 (video 1), 0.23 (video 2), 0.54 (video 3), 0.50 (video 4), 0.47 (video 5), and 0.37 (video 6).

5. Discussion

In the light of the data obtained in three simultaneous and parallel studies involving the viewing and evaluation of six videos, strong positive correlations were invariably found between the evaluation of the “artistic value” construct of PTVs, operationalized through the “creativity” and “originality” evaluations, and the “emotional impact” construct induced by these PTVs, operationalized through the “enthusiasm” and “relaxation” variables. The correlation coefficients ranged from a minimum of 0.50 (video 2) to a maximum of 0.71 (video 5). This provides empirical corroboration for the idea that the creativity and

originality of VPTs tend to favor narrative transport and elicit positive emotional reactions (Chen and Chang 2017; Green and Brock 2000), resulting in favorable attitudes towards the destination. The results obtained are in line with studies that argue that narrative transport, as a persuasive mechanism, has an important effect on consumer beliefs and attitudes since it reduces the degree of reactance and cognitive dissonance (Chen and Chang 2017). Audiovisual promotion with a strong emotional and cognitive slant seems to be more effective than traditional audiovisual promotion.

Likewise, the attitude towards VPTs, operationalized in this study as the perceived quality of each of the six videos, depends directly on the respective evaluations in terms of artistic value (Hypothesis 2) and positive emotional impact (Hypothesis 4), thus corroborating the data from previous studies (Chen and Chang 2017; Escalas 2004) regarding the role of narrative transport that takes viewers into a fantasy world, arousing more intense and more positive affective reactions and less critical thoughts, translating into a more positive attitude towards the message. Betting on so-called “storytelling”, i.e., fictional narratives, has the purpose, on the one hand, of preventing the activation of the reactance system and, on the other, of activating the audience’s imagination and arousing narrative transport, i.e., leading the audience to “live the story”, “emotionally merge with the message”, “live the pains and joys of the characters”, etc., or “to be part of the scene”.

With regard to the empirical confirmation of Hypotheses 3, 5, and 6, the results of this study are quite surprising. The “perceived destination quality” construct was operationalized using the following questionnaire items: “Rate the extent to which the video reinforces the following destination values: “Responsible Tourism” (item 1), “Sustainable Tourism” (item 2) and “Good Practices in the Destination” (item 3)”. However, the content of the six videos evaluated reveals nothing about the quality of the destinations in terms of good practices, sustainable tourism, or responsible tourism. Furthermore, at least three of the six videos used as stimulus material promote destinations that were unknown to the majority of the participants (Rijeka, Costa Dorada, and Takahama). Despite this, the evaluation of all of the videos revealed positive and significant correlations between the “perceived quality of the destination” construct and the other constructs in the model (“artistic value”, “emotional impact”, and “perceived quality of the video”). Plausible explanations for the systematic occurrence of this type of illusory correlation can be found in cognitive psychology, specifically in the cognitive processes of inference (Pezlar 2014) or the halo effect (Leuthesser et al. 1995), which consists of study participants making assumptions about attributes of the destination not provided in the message. Therefore, the artistic value and emotional impact of creative tourism promotion videos seem to stir the tourist imagination of those surveyed (Amirou 1995), inviting them to dream of extraordinary experiences in a more or less distant place. Moreover, the results obtained in this study, and particularly the positive correlations between the constructs of “artistic value” and “emotional impact” on the one hand, and the construct “perceived quality of the destination” on the other, are fully in line with advertising theories that advocate the advantages of the symbolic format (Moriarty 1987; An 2007; Cutler et al. 2000), the use of hedonic and emotional appeals (Shayekina and Tleuberdinov 2012), and the advantages of using the transformational format (Rossiter and Percy 1987; Johar and Sirgy 1991; Cutler et al. 2000).

6. Conclusions

This article describes the testing of a model for evaluating the effectiveness of TPVs (the Emovie model). To empirically validate this model, three parallel studies were carried out in which six TPVs were evaluated, two in each study, with a wide variety of content. The model proved to be valid in all six cases, demonstrating that the audiovisual promotion of destinations that focus on creativity leads to greater emotional involvement from audiences, which translates into more positive attitudes towards messages and destinations, as recommended by Escalas (2004).

Although the concepts discussed in this article have been partially studied in the areas of advertising and tourism, specifically the role of emotions in the pre-travel phase

(Hosany et al. 2017; Hosany et al. 2020), few studies have evaluated the effectiveness of VPTs and none have studied the correlation between the constructs “artistic value”, “emotional impact”, and “perceived quality” (of the video and the destination). This research, therefore, makes an important contribution to this area of knowledge, presenting new research perspectives.

In practical terms, and knowing that DMOs promote their destinations worldwide through online videos, it is important to know the factors that guarantee the effectiveness of destination promotion campaigns, in order to optimize the content of audiovisual messages. In this sense, in order for DMOs to communicate effectively with consumers in their target segments, it is recommended that advertising campaigns rely on creativity and originality in order to stimulate emotions that are favorable to accepting the promotional message, reducing the likelihood of activating the reactance mechanism (which translates into critical distancing and questioning of the sender’s intentions) and ensuring a high level of emotional involvement with the destination itself. As Irimías et al. (2021) argue, the more viewers are immersed in the world of dream and fantasy, the stronger the intention to travel. In other words, VPTs that focus on engaging fictional narratives (storytelling) stimulate the creation of strong emotional bonds and favor the image of the destination, which translates into a pre-disposition to travel.

The Emovie model offers those in charge of the audiovisual companies, tourism, and tourism film festivals a reliable and easy-to-use tool for evaluating the effectiveness of their TPVs. From the point of view of tourism promotion, it is important that the evaluation criteria of the TPV used by juries of the various festivals are compatible with the evaluation criteria of the consumers who make up the target segments of the DMOs’ communication campaigns. Ultimately, the value and quality of a TPV depend on its ability to generate a certain persuasive impact on a given audience.

However, in order to conclusively validate the Emovie model, it will be important to replicate the studies with samples from different countries and using other TPV as stimulus material. Considering that this model has been validated on Portuguese samples of films pre-selected by a jury at a festival in the CIFT network, it is suggested that similar studies could be carried out at other tourism film festivals in the same network (which has similar festivals that share the same basic characteristics, namely, independent juries and international films with an exclusive focus on tourism and a strong link to academia in that both some board members and some jury members are researchers in this field).

Nevertheless, this research opens up avenues for further studies into the importance of fictional creativity in TPVs as a way of ensuring narrative transport and telepresence, thus creating fantasy worlds in the minds of potential tourists and provoking intense affective reactions that arouse cognitive and affective loyalty (Oliver 1999) and induce feelings of telepresence at the destination.

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Institutional Review Board Statement: When research is conducted in our department and, more specifically, when anonymous questionnaires are applied there is always an informed consent presented to the participants before they start filling in the questionnaire. At the beginning of the questionnaire there is the following information: [This survey is being carried out by Citur research center and aims to find out about the drivers of success in Tourism Promotional Videos. Your response to this questionnaire is a valuable contribution to this study. It is anonymous and takes between 3 and 5 minutes to complete. This survey fully complies with Article 13 of the European Regulation on the Protection of Personal Data Reg. EU 201/679. Thank you in advance!].

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

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