EgyptAir's Adoption of eWOM as a Marketing Tool: Opportunities Realized and Obstacles Encountered

Hla Raouf Adel Elsbayee [a]   **, Prof. Wafaa Ahmed Elias** [b]**,**
Prof. Hussein Abdel Wahab Abdel Rady [c]

[a] *B. Sc. Tourism Studies, 2010*
Master degree, Tourism Studies – Minia University 2020
[b] *Prof. of Tourism Studies*
Faculty of Tourism and Hotels - Minia University
[c] *Prof. of Tourism Studies*
Faculty of Tourism and Hotels - Minia University

Keywords

Abstract

As the airline industry becomes increasingly shaped by digital platforms and user-generated content, electronic word of mouth has emerged as a vital marketing tool. This study aims to examine EgyptAir's adoption of eWOM strategies and evaluates both the opportunities it has realized and the obstacles it continues to encounter. The research focuses on EgyptAir utilizes online reviews, social media engagement, and customer feedback to shape its brand image and influence consumer decision-making. To achieve that, this study employed the descriptive-analytical approach, where a questionnaire was prepared and distributed online to a random sample of 407 EgyptAir staff: employees who have direct customer contact e.g. cabin crew, ground staff, customer service representatives, and reservation agents) are primary. Managers involved in training, quality control, and social media management are also crucial. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and SPSS V.25. The findings reveal several strategic benefits associated with eWOM adoption, including enhanced brand visibility, increased customer trust, improved service adaptation, and increased passenger engagement. These advantages contribute to EgyptAir's competitive positioning in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. However, the study also identifies critical challenges such as inadequate monitoring of digital conversations, limited integration of eWOM insights into CRM systems, and the risk of viral negative feedback. Moreover, organizational resistance to digital transformation and insufficient staff training hinders the airline's ability to maximize the potential of eWOM. The study concludes by offering practical recommendations to enhance Egypt Air's digital marketing capacity and fully leverage eWOM as a strategic communication and branding tool.

1. Introduction

In the digital age, the dynamics of marketing have shifted dramatically, placing increasing importance on customer-generated content and peer-to-peer communication **(Li et al., 2017)**. Among the most powerful trends transforming marketing strategies across industries is electronic word of mouth (eWOM) defined as the sharing of opinions, reviews, and experiences about products or services through digital platforms such as social media, travel websites, blogs, and online forums. For service-oriented industries like aviation, where brand perception and customer satisfaction play crucial roles in consumer decision-making, eWOM is no longer optional—it is essential **(Lee and Park, 2021)**. As one of the leading national carriers in the Middle East and Africa, EgyptAir has taken important steps toward digital transformation in recent years. Recognizing the growing influence of online passenger experiences and reviews, EgyptAir has begun to integrate eWOM into its marketing and communication strategies. This includes monitoring customer comments on platforms like Trip Advisor, leveraging its official social media channels for customer engagement, and encouraging digital feedback to enhance service quality and public trust **(EgyptAir, 2024)**.

However, the adoption of eWOM is not without its challenges. Managing real-time feedback, addressing negative reviews, ensuring authenticity, and integrating eWOM insights into decision-making systems like Customer Relationship Management (CRM) remain complex tasks **(Rana et al., 2021)**. These challenges are further complicated by organizational resistance to change, limited technical capacity, and the need for skilled personnel capable of handling digital interactions with speed and professionalism **(Calisir et al., 2016)**. This research seeks to examine the extent of EgyptAir's use of eWOM as a marketing tool, exploring the benefits gained, such as improved customer loyalty, brand advocacy, and service refinement, as well as the obstacles faced in implementing a consistent and effective eWOM strategy. By analyzing EgyptAir's efforts, the study aims to contribute to a better understanding of how legacy airlines in emerging markets can optimize eWOM in building a customer-centric and digitally resilient brand identity.

2. Literature Review

In today's world, services' industries like aviation have become an information-oriented industry **(Verma et al., 2021).** Online marketing has become widely used to innovatively target consumers on varying geographic scales in a rapid and relevant manner **(Tumer et al., 2019).** Previous studies have shown that firms with strong social media marketing "SMM" strategies are able to leverage these platforms to increase brand awareness, brand loyalty, and WOM advertising through existing customers, resulting in increased purchase intentions (**Seo and Park, 2020).** In recent studies, 93% of consumers indicated that online reviews (a type of eWOM communication) significantly influence their purchase decision **(Tata et al. 2019). Gruen et al. (2006)** showed the impact of customer-to-customer online know how exchange on customer value and loyalty. Word of mouth (WOM) becomes a significant and influential information source regarding tourism destinations and travel decision-making process **(Reyes-Menendez et al., 2020).** Airline companies can use market brand positioning to identify major strengths and weaknesses within their services such as comfort to seats, cleanliness, check in and boarding, airline image, and travel cost and time **(Ayat, Z. and Manuel R., 2020).** Therefore, the study conducted by **(Lucini et al., 2020)** based on content analysis of online opinions of airline customers, determines the dimensions of customer satisfaction, making a forecast of the possibility of recommending the airline or not. It is a very interesting study because it is based on the qualitative and quantitative opinions that customers share on the internet which reflect the influence of eWOM quality and quantity**.** Developing a strategy for the social media is important in order to strengthen the relationship with customers and increase market share as it plays a vital role as a key information channel **(Xiang Z, Gretzel , 2010).** A previous study showed that almost 90% of airline companies have at least one social media platform which the company uses to publishes its information, as a well-planned social media strategy can generate positive outcomes with minimum financial costs. In contrast, ignoring social media can lead to a negative image and a negative outcome as a result **(Grančay M, 2014).**

According to **the statistics generated by social bakers (2020)** on usage levels of social media in the Egyptian aviation industry based on Facebook fans as of September 2020, EgyptAir has the largest number of Facebook fans, totaling 1,425,844 followed by Nesma Airlines with 466,630 fans along with Nile Air has

378.667 fans, Air Cairo with 104.546 fans and Al-Massria Airlines with 91.095 fans. Compared to foreign airlines, the usage of social media in marketing and the awareness of its importance in Egyptian private airlines seem to be low considering the small size of its fans. Thus, the use of airline social media by passengers is likely to increase continuously, and obviously this will increase the use of social media and the influence of eWOM in Egyptian private airlines' marketing strategies in Egypt. Brand affect is defined as the likelihood of a brand to create a positive or negative emotional reaction for the consumer as a result of its use or interaction **(Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2002).** It can be interpreted as the affection component of brand attitude, which represents the overall evaluation of the consumer towards the brand **(Wu & Wang, 2011).**

Positive emotions have been found to improve brand affect and decrease the extent to which WOM influences brand attitude. The affect towards a brand is positive for which the potential pleasure derived is higher **(Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2002).** This suggests that unsatisfactory services can increase a consumer's willingness to engage in negative eWOM behavior, which will result in more negative affect towards a brand. Research has shown that brand affect is a strong influence of brand loyalty but is a more spontaneous and less deliberately reasoned construct **(Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).** Brands that make the customer "happy", "joyful" or "affectionate" cause a stronger attitudinal and emotional commitment. (**Howard & Gengler, 2001**) found that one person's affect can influence another person's evaluations and this has significance in understanding consumption related outcomes in interpersonal interactions**. (Dick & Basu, 1994)** proposed that purchase intent increases when consumers have a more positive brand affect due to the emotional connection with the brand **(Anuwichanont & Rajabhat, 2011). (Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006)** found that brand affect influences the level of word of mouth towards the brand, which is further supported by the research conducted by **(Scarpi, 2010).**

This section Represent EgyptAir's efforts to enhance customer relationships and improve electronic word of mouth quality in order to achieve passenger satisfaction. These efforts include the following initiatives:

2.2 Positive and Negative EWOM in Airline industry.

Ratings shared via social media influence customers' purchasing behavior therefore, their income and competitiveness **(Rodríguez, D et al., 2015).** Moreover **Chen, Y. (2010)** claimed that the customers' general attitudes towards an airline have a positive effect to their loyalty. In the air travel industry, companies make a lot of efforts to build influential brand images aiming to increase passengers' trust. Research has shown that willingness to engage in negative eWOM is highly influential in determining brand attitude **(Wu & Wang, 2011).**

Fourie et al. (2006) discussed That the factors that drive the decision-making process of a traveller in their selection of an airline include service expectation, service perception, service value, passenger satisfaction and airline image. Since carriers are aware of complaining and angry customers, it is necessary to examine their willingness to engage in negative eWOM after service failures of full service or low-cost carriers **(Tuzovic & Mangold, 2008).** An online social media platform like Twitter facilitates the exchange of travel information which can express real-time issues concerned with airline service failure, which could change a potential customer's decision-making process (**Sreenivasan et al, 2012**). Travel products, and more specifically, airline services are high risk purchases, which prompt airline users to base their decisions on recommendations and reviews of individuals who have experienced and are more knowledgeable of the airline, thus influencing their purchasing decisions (**Xiang and Gretzel, 2010**). After a service failure, the consumer's level of brand attitude, which is measured by their level of brand trust, brand affect and consumer purchase intent is negatively impacted **(Wu & Wang, 2011**). Negative eWOM engaged in by unsatisfied consumers could affect the attitudes of online-users, thus becoming a threat to a company's brand **(Shang, Chen & Liao, 2009).** Also, in a study conducted by **East, Hammond and Lomax (2008)** it was stated that negative eWOM could have twice as much impact on purchase intent than positive eWOM. **Goldsmith (2008)** defined eWOM as every internet based communication about the usage or characteristics of something (products, services, or a company).According to **Henning et al., (2004),** The arrival and expansion of the internet have extended consumer's comments posted on the internet and has provided consumer's opportunities to offer their consumption related advises by engaging in electronic word-of-mouth eWOM (**Henning, et al., 2004),** he also explained eWOM

by using six dimensions, These dimensions consist of positive self-enhancement, social benefits, helping the company, advice seeking, concern for another consumer, and venting negative feelings.

2.3 Electronic Marketing

Daily E-Marketing campaigns which provide all EGYPTAIR customers by all updates concerning EGYPTAIR news, Sales Promotions for all online markets...etc., those campaigns have been announced through all EGYPTAIR online Channels: EGYPTAIR website, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn **(EgyptAir, 2021)**.

2.3.1 <u>Market Research Department</u>

- Department which collects customer feedback via different types of surveys to measure customer satisfaction and enhance services in order to meet customer expectations.

- EgyptAir started with the Mystery Shopper survey where Frequent Flyer customers evaluate the service besides evaluating level of service from employees. It was launched 1st of July 2019 till 2nd of March 2020 with total no. of responses 1,400 pax.

- After that Safety Precautions Feedback on 25th March 2020 with total no. of 3,331 passengers.

- Then, on 29th May 2020 EgyptAir created a survey asking about customers willingness to travel during Covid-19 with total no. of 6,452 pax.

- Last but not least, Overall Customer satisfaction feedback launched April 2021 till present, handling all touch points that cover all EGYPTAIR customers with total response of 48,344 passengers. **(EgyptAir Annual Report 2020/2021).**

2.3.2 <u>Customer Relationship Management (CRM)</u>

Customer relationship management is a system for managing EGYPTAIR's interaction with its customers by following-up customers data and communicating with customers, aiming to improve the services and strengthen relationships with our customers.

2.4 E-COMMERCE DEVELOPMENTS Which has a role in checking customer opinions Website and mobile applications Revamp:

EgyptAir website is also considered one of the official channels for publishing press releases. EGYPTAIR website available in 7 languages for 35 countries plus a worldwide page for the rest of countries. **(EgyptAir, 2021).**

Adding Codeshare information to **Online Chabot** on EGYPTAIR website where customers get the information clearly and smoothly. EGYPTAIR is working under the umbrella of Star Alliance to develop several digital projects, complementing with Star Alliance Digital Vision to be the most digitally-advanced global airline alliance, delivering seamless travel experiences such as: EGYPTAIR enables customers to select free seats on entire journey during online booking process on Star Alliance Members.

- Keeping abreast of the latest designs for creating websites (Web Design) in order to make the company's website and mobile applications more user-friendly and more attractive to
- customers.
- Enhancing EGYPTAIR mobile application performance and rating.
- Facilitating website content modifying and adding process by EGYPTAIR E-Commerce staff. **(EgyptAir Annual Report, 2019/2020)**

2.5 <u>Customer Services General Management and Achievements</u>

Choosing qualified Traffic Officers to work at the Call center, in order to:

- Answer incoming calls and respond to customers' emails and inquiries.
- Provide positive and seamless experience to our customers.
- Technical supervision of restarting and re-equipping EGYPTAIR call center of EGYPTAIR Airlines at the administrative complex building in all locations (Cairo /Alexandria / Jeddah / Dubai….)
- Organizing training courses for EGYPTAIR employees in line with state digital transformation and modern management theories like "Learn Management Solution – cyber security – Agile– Microsoft team" and IT sector employees on the ISO 9001-2015 requirements.
- Operating and activating the Proof Point program to protect the company's websites on social media platforms.

- EGYPTAIR activated new service "keep me informed "which aims to notify the customers via SMS or emails with any schedule change may occur to their flight **(EgyptAir Annual Report 2020-2021)**.

3. Methodology

The researcher used the descriptive-analytical approach, in which they tried to assess the role of staff to improve electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) in EgyptAir, since it is the most appropriate approach to describe the phenomenon in question. In this approach, the researcher is trying to describe the subject of the study, analyze the data, and compare, explain, and assess, hoping to reach meaningful generalizations to increase and enrich knowledge on the subject.

3.1 Data collection

The researcher used the descriptive analytical approach, where online surveys were used to gather data, and they were designed in a way that was pertinent to the circumstances in order to reduce the number of unreliable responses. They were distributed to 407 EgyptAir staff: employees who have direct customer contact (e.g., cabin crew, ground staff, customer service representatives, and reservation agents) are primary. Managers involved in training, quality control, and social media management are also crucial. during three months from September to December 2024. The statistical analysis of the responses was carried out via SPSS v25.

3.2 Questionnaire Design and Measure

This research aims to examine EgyptAir's adoption of eWOM strategies and evaluates both the opportunities it has realized and the obstacles it continues to encounter. To achieve that, this research employed a method of descriptive analytical methodology by using a questionnaire tool. A survey consisting of six sections was used as a data collection tool. The first section includes the staff s' demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational level, and years of experiences). The second section includes Data Related Study. The third section included 18 variables representing EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth. The fourth section included 4 variables representing EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers. The fifth section included 8 variables representing Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth. The sixth section included 9 variables representing the challenges that face EgyptAir in assessing electronic word

of mouth. The questionnaire items were anchored according to the Three-Point Likert Scale: "1 = disagree," "2 = neutral," and "3 = agree." **(Likert, 1932).**

Data Processing and Analyzing

The first stage is necessary to prepare the data for analysis and allow the results to be meaningfully evaluated. This stage entails verifying and coding the quantitative data. Qualitative data can be evaluated using both software tools and manual analysis processes.

The collected information was processed and analyzed. This involved editing, coding the responses, categorizing, tabulating the data, and doing statistical computations such as frequencies, percentages, and other factors. The relevant statistical processes, as well as the employment of appropriate significance tests, are carried out to ensure the drawing of conclusions about the study. After collecting the questionnaire lists, the researcher analyzed all of the data using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS V.25) which included frequencies, percent, means, standard deviation, rank, attitude, correlation analyses, and charts of questionnaire respondents.

3.3 Data Validity and Reliability

3.3.1 Data Validity

To validate the data collecting instrument used in this study in terms of readability, format, and ability to measure the study's components, the researcher distributed the questionnaire instrument to a sample of EgyptAir staff. The questionnaire was then modified and refined based on the domain experts' views and suggestions. Furthermore, the experts expressed interest and communicated with the researcher about the questionnaire instrument, which adds to its validity.

3.3.2 Data Reliability

Before proceeding with further analysis, reliability testing was carried out to verify uniform measurement across the various questions in the questionnaire. Indeed, measure dependability refers to instrument's stability and consistency. As a result, this method establishes reliability by assessing the internal consistency of the research instrument, such as the questions (items) in the questionnaire that are typically offered. Cronbach's Alpha is one of the most commonly used measures for determining a scale's dependability, with an index ranging from 0 to 1. The research should aim for values closer to 1.0, as Alpha values demonstrate that the study's

instrument is robust and repeatable. However, it is worth noting that in the social sciences, a threshold value of 0.7 is deemed acceptable.

Table (1) Cronbach's Alpha Value

Variables	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Validity Coefficient*
EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth	18	0.991	0.995
EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers	4	0.997	0.998
Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth	8	0.997	0.998
The challenges that face EgyptAir in assessing electronic word of mouth	9	0.999	0.999
Total	**39**	**0.974**	**0.987**

* Validity coefficient = $\sqrt{}$ Reliability coefficient

In order to measure the internal consistency and reliability of the study's constructs. Cronbach's alpha (α) measure was used. The scales' reliabilities were measured and the Cronbach's Alpha of all scales in Table (1) ranged from 0.991 to 0.999, and for total questionnaire items was (0.974), This indicates acceptable Cronbach's Alpha values for all scales, as values above 0.7 are considered acceptable in social sciences."

4. Results

The following part explains the results concerning the six sections representing the role of staff to improve electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) in EgyptAir.

4.1 Descriptive analysis

In this section, the researcher relied mainly on the descriptive analysis to get the means and the standard deviations for the study constructs along with their items. The items were measured using a Likert-type scale as follows.

First Section: Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Table 2: Demographic profile of sample elements

Variable		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender			
	Male	286	70.3
	Female	121	29.7
age group			
	Less than 30	22	5.4
	31 – 40 years old	55	13.5
	41 – 50 years old	231	56.8
	51 – 60 years old	88	21.6
	Over than 60	11	2.7
Educational level			
	Bachelor's degree	187	45.9
	Master's Degree	110	27.0
	Ph.D. Degree	110	27.0
Years of experiences			
	Less than one year	22	5.4
	1-2 years	22	5.4
	2-5 years	66	16.2
	5-7 years	154	37.8
	More than 7 years	143	35.1

As shown in Table (2), the presentation of the research findings begins with a brief demographic description of respondents by gender, with males (70.30%) outnumbering females (29.70%) in this sample. In the analysis, the age category Between 41 - 50 years old had the most respondents (56.80%), followed by 51 – 60 years old (21.60%). In terms of education level, the most typical degree is a Bachelor's Degree, which is held by (45.90%) of respondents, while (27%) of respondents have a Master's Degree and Ph.D. Degree. Concerning years of experience, the results shows that 37.80% of the respondents have from 5 to 7 years of experience and 35.10% of the respondents have more than 7 years of experience.

Section Two: Data Related Study

The following figure shows the number of times respondents use social media platform. It is clear from the figure that 45.90% use social media platform about once a day
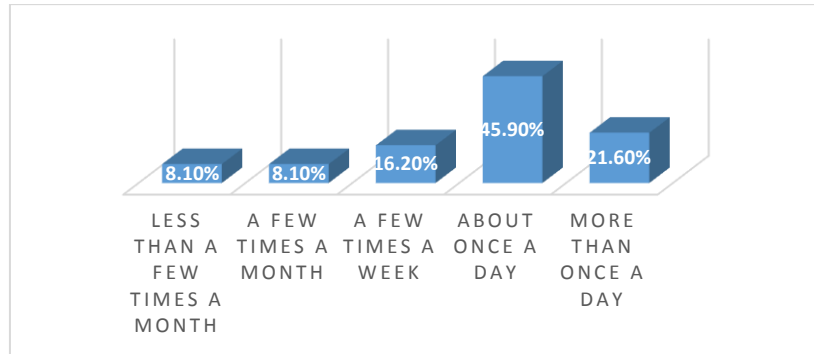

Fig1: Frequently use of online social media accounts? (working Use)

By asking the employees if they know the effectiveness of electronic word of mouth, 54.10% of them are high concentration with the effectiveness of electronic word of mouth, whereas 32.40% have medium concentration with the effectiveness of electronic word of mouth. see figure (2).
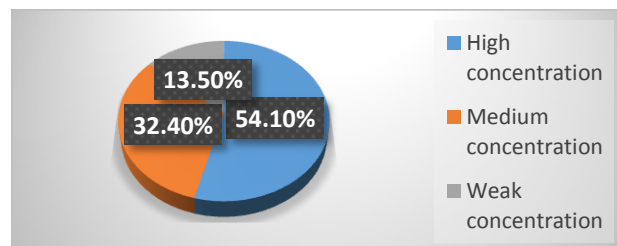

Fig 2: Employees awareness about the effectiveness of electronic word of mouth

The following figure shows that the most popular platform used by EgyptAir employees to promote their online word of mouth is Facebook, with a percentage of 45.90%.
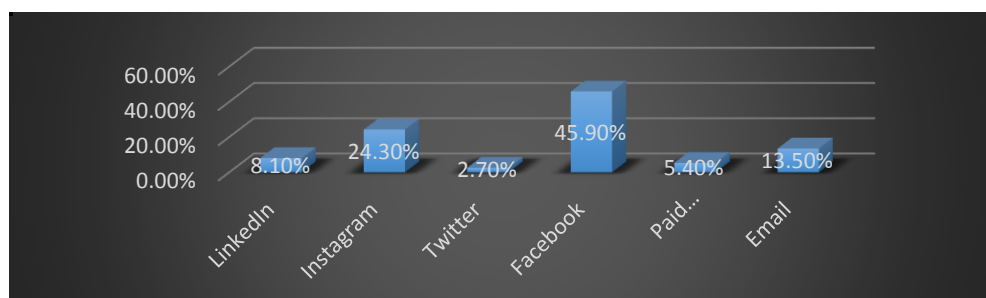

Fig 3: Assessing EGYPTAIR Usage of platforms and the platform where the airline mostly exists

By asking the employees if there are any training programs to enhance using social media roles, 81.10% of them are trained about enhancing using social media role programs, whereas 18.90% have not been trained about enhancing using social media role programs. See figure (4).
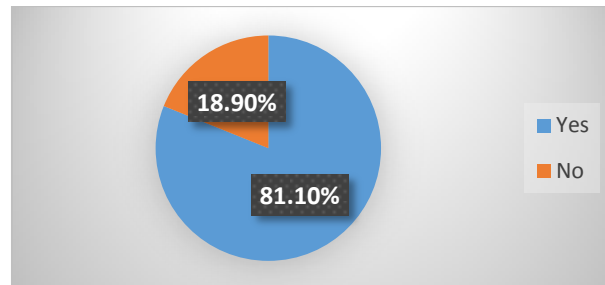

Fig 4: Presence of training programs to enhance using social media role

The following figure shows the opinions of the study sample. There is a special section to survey travelers' opinions and determine their level of satisfaction, with a rate of 75.10%.
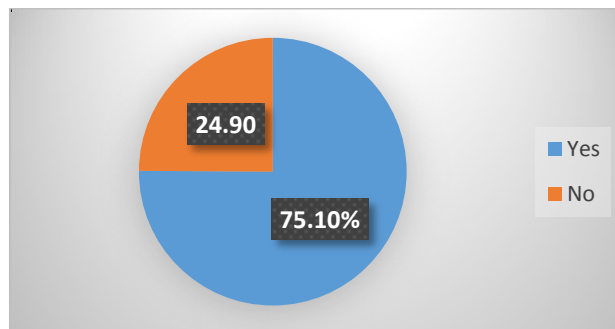

Fig 5: Presence of specific department for surveying travelers' opinions and addressing their satisfaction

The study sample's opinions revealed that EgyptAir uses user-generated content and allows passengers to create their own content at a rate of 70.90%.
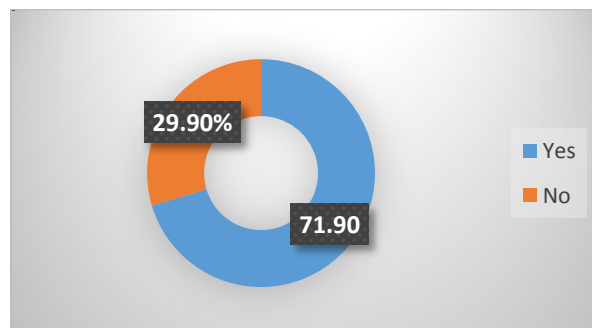
Fig 6: Existence of EgyptAir Use User-Generated content (UGC) OR passengers ability to create their own content

The following figure shows that EgyptAir regularly monitors the performance of its employees' efforts on social media using analytics tools to track metrics such as reach, engagement, and conversions by 59.90%.
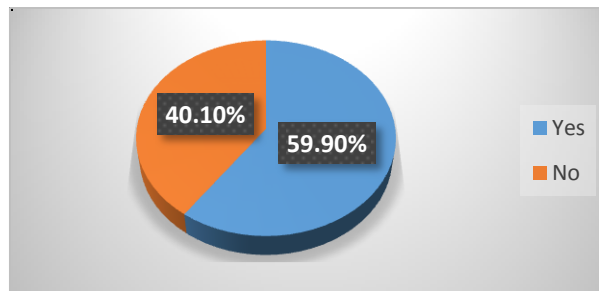
Fig 7: EgyptAir Monitoring the performance of your social media efforts regularly with using analytics tools to track metrics like reach, engagement, and conversions

Section Three: EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth

Table 3: efforts provided by different departments in order to improve electronic word of mouth

Variables	D	N	A	Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
Produces engaging and shareable content such as blogs, videos, and social media posts to encourage audience interaction.	75.4	20.4	4.2	1.29	.538	18	Dis agree
Designs campaigns to incentivize customers to leave positive reviews or share their experiences online.	14.7	11.3	74	2.59	.733	7	Agree
Collaborates with influencers to amplify brand visibility and encourage positive mentions.	15	10.6	74.4	2.59	.736	8	Agree
Provides prompt, helpful, and empathetic responses to customer inquiries and complaints, building trust and goodwill.	15	8.1	76.9	2.62	.733	1	Agree
Actively solicits and acts on customer feedback to improve experiences, leading to better reviews and recommendations.	14.7	11.3	74	2.59	.731	6	Agree
Converts dissatisfied customers into promoters by resolving issues effectively.	17.7	8.4	74	2.56	.775	15	Agree
Improves the quality of products or services based on customer reviews and feedback, ensuring a satisfying experience worth sharing.	14.5	14	71.5	2.57	.732	14	Agree
Introduces features or improvements that generate excitement and buzz	14	12.3	73.3	2.60	.722	3	Agree

Variables	D	N	A	Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
among users.							
Maintains strong relationships with clients to encourage positive testimonials and word of mouth.	13.8	15.5	70.8	2.57	.722	13	Agree
Develops initiatives that reward customers for referrals and online recommendations.	14	11.3	74.4	2.61	.721	2	Agree
Builds relationships with journalists, bloggers, and media outlets to enhance online visibility and credibility.	14	14	72	2.58	.728	11	Agree
Manages negative publicity to protect the brand's reputation.	14.3	11.1	74.7	2.60	.725	4	Agree
Encourages employees to share positive experiences about the company on their personal social media accounts.	14	13.8	72.2	2.58	.724	9	Agree
Trains staff in delivering exceptional customer experiences, which indirectly influences positive eWOM.	15	10.3	74.4	2.60	.736	5	Agree
Ensures compliance with regulations related to customer reviews, endorsements, and advertising claims.	16	13	71	2.55	.754	17	Agree
Helps establish trust by ensuring honest communication in eWOM efforts.	15	11.5	73.5	2.58	.737	12	Agree
Tracks and analyzes trends in customer sentiment to guide targeted eWOM improvement strategies.	15.2	13.5	71.3	2.56	.743	16	Agree
Identifies conversations about the brand online and responds or adapts accordingly.	14	14	72	2.58	.725	10	Agree
Total Mean				**2.51**			**Agree**

Table (3) presents the means and standard deviations of efforts provided by different departments in order to improve electronic word of mouth, which ranged between (2.62–1.29) compared with the total instrument mean (2.51). The statement "Provides prompt, helpful, and empathetic responses to customer inquiries and complaints, building trust and goodwill." came out on the first rank (mean ± SD =2.62 ± 0.733). The item "Produces engaging and shareable content such as blogs, videos, and social media posts to encourage audience interaction." came out on the last rank (mean ± SD =1.29 ± 0.538).

Section Four: EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers

Table 4: EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers

Variables	D	N	A	Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
Live Q&A sessions	12.5	14	73.5	2.61	.700	1	Agree
spotlighting Enthusiasts	13.3	12.3	74.4	2.61	.710	2	Agree
Engaging with aviation influencers and Enthusiasts	12.5	16.7	70.8	2.58	.704	4	Agree
Monitoring Trends and Sentiments	13	14	73	2.60	.708	3	Agree
Total Mean				2.60			Agree

Table (4) presents the means and standard deviations for EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers, ranging from 2.61 to 2.58. Compared to the overall mean of 2.60, the statement "Live Q&A sessions." achieved the highest ranking (mean = 2.61, SD =0.700). Meanwhile, the statement "Engaging with aviation influencers and Enthusiasts." ranked last (mean = 2.58, SD = 0.704).

Section Five: Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth?

Table 5: Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth

Variables	D	N	A	Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
Enhanced brand awareness: eWOM allows EgyptAir to reach a wider audience through online discussions and reviews. Positive feedback from satisfied customers spreads rapidly, increasing brand visibility and recognition.	11.3	14	73	2.59	.685	4	Agree
Increased customer engagement: Social media platforms and online review sites provide opportunities for EgyptAir to interact with customers directly. By responding to comments, questions, and concerns, the airline can build stronger relationships with its customers and demonstrate its commitment to customer service.	10.6	21.1	68.3	2.58	.676	5	Agree
Improved brand reputation: Positive eWOM can significantly enhance EgyptAir's brand reputation. Satisfied customers are more likely to share their positive experiences, leading to a more favorable perception of the airline. Conversely, negative feedback can damage the brand's reputation, emphasizing the importance of effective eWOM management.	10.8	20.4	68.8	2.58	.679	6	Agree

| Variables	D	N	A	Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
Increased customer loyalty: Customers who have positive experiences with EgyptAir are more likely to remain loyal to the airline and recommend it to others. eWOM can help foster a loyal customer base, leading to 10.8repeat business and increased revenue.	**10.8**	**18.9**	**70.3**	**2.59**	**.677**	**2**	**Agree**
Cost-effective marketing: eWOM is a relatively low-cost marketing strategy compared to traditional advertising methods. By leveraging online platforms and social media, EgyptAir can reach a large audience without significant financial investment.	**10.8**	**16.2**	**73**	**2.62**	**.673**	**1**	**Agree**
Real-time feedback and insights: eWOM provides valuable insights into customer perceptions, preferences, and pain points. By monitoring online discussions and reviews, EgyptAir can identify areas for improvement and make necessary	**10.8**	**20.9**	**68.3**	**2.57**	**.680**	**8**	**Agree**
Monitoring eWOM provides insights into customer preferences, pain points, and emerging trends, enabling EgyptAir to refine its services and remain competitive.	**10.1**	**20.9**	**69**	**2.59**	**.677**	**3**	**Agree**
Positive eWOM increases the airline's appeal to potential partners, such as tourism boards or other Star Alliance members, facilitating collaboration for mutual growth.	**9.3**	**24.6**	**66.1**	**2.57**	**.658**	**7**	**Agree**
Total Mean				**2.59**			**Agree**

Table No. 5 summarizes the attitudes, means, and standard deviation in Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth. The overall mean value of 2.59 showed Benefits. In addition, the greatest mean was for "Cost-effective marketing: eWOM is a relatively low-cost marketing strategy compared to traditional advertising methods. By leveraging online platforms and social media, EgyptAir can reach a large audience without significant financial investment.," with a value of 2.62 and a standard deviation of 0.673, while the lowest mean value was for "Real-time feedback and insights: eWOM provides valuable insights into customer perceptions, preferences, and pain points. By monitoring online discussions and reviews, EgyptAir can identify areas for improvement and make necessary," with a low mean value of 2.57 and a standard deviation of 0.680.

Section Six: the challenges that face EgyptAir in assessing electronic word of mouth

Table 6: The challenges that face EgyptAir in assessing electronic word of mouth

Variables	D	N	A	Mean	SD	Rank	Attitude
Volume and Velocity of Data: The sheer volume of online conversations about EgyptAir can be overwhelming. It's difficult to manually monitor and analyze all the comments, reviews, and social media posts.	34.4	40.3	25.3	1.85	.797	2	Neutral
Diversity of Platforms: eWOM is spread across numerous platforms, including social media, review websites, travel forums, and blogs. This makes it challenging to track and analyze all relevant conversations.	36.1	38.3	25.6	1.87	.790	1	Neutral
Sentiment Analysis Complexity: Accurately identifying the sentiment behind online comments can be difficult. Sarcasm, irony, and cultural nuances can make it challenging to determine whether a comment is positive, negative, or neutral.	34.2	40.8	25.1	1.84	.797	3	Neutral
False and Misleading Information: Fake reviews and misinformation can distort the overall perception of EgyptAir. Identifying and filtering out such content is crucial.	36.1	40.5	23.3	1.83	.781	4	Neutral
Language Barriers: EgyptAir operates internationally, and a significant portion of eWOM may be in languages other than Arabic. This requires accurate translation and analysis.	35.9	41	23.1	1.82	.781	6	Neutral
Lack of Standardization: There's no standardized approach to measuring eWOM. Different metrics and tools can lead to varying results and interpretations.	38.3	40.3	21.4	1.81	.763	7	Neutral
Real-time Monitoring: Keeping up with real-time conversations is essential. Delays in responding to negative feedback can amplify negative sentiment.	37.6	40.5	21.9	1.81	.769	9	Neutral
Data Privacy and Ethical Considerations: Collecting and analyzing customer data must comply with privacy regulations and ethical guidelines.	37.8	40.5	21.6	1.81	.766	8	Neutral
Resource Constraints: Implementing effective eWOM monitoring and analysis tools can be resource-intensive, requiring both financial and human resources.	35.4	40.8	23.8	1.83	.787	5	Neutral
Total Mean				1.83			**Neutral**

According to this table, respondents' The challenges that face EgyptAir in assessing electronic word of mouth and the most challenges are: "Diversity of Platforms: eWOM is spread across numerous platforms, including social media, review websites, travel forums, and blogs. This makes it challenging to track and analyze all relevant conversations.", "Volume and Velocity of Data: The sheer volume of online conversations about EgyptAir can be overwhelming. It's difficult to manually monitor and analyze all the comments, reviews, and social media posts." and "Sentiment Analysis Complexity: Accurately identifying the sentiment behind online comments can be difficult. Sarcasm, irony, and cultural nuances can make it challenging to determine whether a comment is positive, negative, or neutral." with mean 1.87, 1.85 and 1.84 respectively.

It is clear from the following figure, in terms of the opinions of EgyptAir employees regarding the extent to which they need assistance in developing a social media strategy or knowing the extent to which their presence on social media is able to face competition, and knowing the opportunities that they may miss, that 51.9% need development.
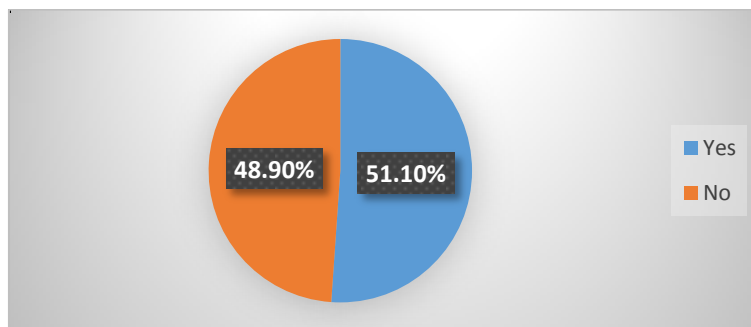
Fig 8: developing a social media strategy or seeing how your social media presence stands up to the competition, and seeing what opportunities you might be missing

4.2 **Pearson Correlation analysis**

Table 7: **Correlation between EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth and EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers**

		EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth	EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers
EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth	Pearson Correlation	. 1	.944**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	407	407
EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers	Pearson Correlation	.944**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	407	407

As seen in the table (7), there is a positive and significant relationship between EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth and EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers. The value of the Pearson correlation coefficient was (.944** - sig = 0.000). These results showed that there is a strong positive relation between EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth and EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers. This positive correlation indicates that as EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth increases, EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers increase.

Table 8: **Correlation between EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth and Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth**

		EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth	Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth
EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth	Pearson Correlation	1	.788**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	407	407
Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth	Pearson Correlation	.788**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	407	407

As seen in the table (8), there is a positive and significant relationship between EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth. The value of the Pearson correlation coefficient was (.788** - sig = 0.000). These results showed that there is a strong

positive relation between EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth and Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth. This positive correlation indicates that as EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth increases, Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth increase.

Table 9: Correlation between Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth and EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers

		Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth	EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers
Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth	Pearson Correlation	1	.828[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	407	407
EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers	Pearson Correlation	.828[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	407	407

As seen in the table (9), there is a positive and significant relationship between Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth and EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers. The value of the Pearson correlation coefficient was (.828[**] - sig = 0.000). These results showed that there is a strong positive relation between Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth and EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers. This positive correlation indicates that as Benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth increases, EgyptAir ever use a collaborative campaign with passengers increase.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

This research aims to examine EgyptAir's adoption of eWOM strategies and evaluates both the opportunities it has realized and the obstacles it continues to encounter. Hence, the research got that about half the employees approximately are high concentrated with the effectiveness of electronic word of mouth while others need to pay more concentration, according to the survey findings one of the most prevalent benefits of using EWOM was for "Cost-effective marketing" as eWOM is a relatively low-cost marketing strategy compared to traditional advertising methods. By leveraging online platforms and social media, EgyptAir can reach a large audience

without significant financial investment. And the most challenges that face EgyptAir in assessing electronic word of mouth is "Diversity of Platforms: eWOM is spread across numerous platforms, including social media, review websites, travel forums, and blogs" and the lack of Produces engaging and shareable content such as blogs, videos, and social media posts to encourage audience interaction. Furthermore, Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant strong positive relation between EgyptAir efforts to improve electronic word of mouth and the benefits which EgyptAir gained from electronic word of mouth.

Recommendations

1) EgyptAir Should make more effort to monitor the performance of social media with using analytics tools to track metrics like reach, engagement, and conversions

2) EgyptAir has to develop more initiatives that reward customers for referrals and online recommendations.

3) EgyptAir Should use more collaborative campaigns with passengers by Engaging with aviation influencers and Enthusiasts.

4) Awareness and training campaigns for employees due to the Lack of standardized approaches which measure EWOM by different metrics and tools can lead to varying results and interpretations.

5) EgyptAir Airlines should establish strong online connection strategies and efficient social media marketing plans to guarantee that prospective travelers will be properly and consistently informed about their services in a variety of electronic formats via social media networking sites, they ought to encourage positive e-WOM and give their clients more and better information.

6) Marketing directors of Egyptian airlines to keep in mind that e-WOM follows specific guidelines on the internet and that many travelers are able to sort through enormous volumes of information.

7) Based on the pilot study's result, it seems that Egyptian airlines are not frequently seen in blogs and travel-related social media groups.

References

- Anuwichanont, J. & Rajabhat, S.D.(2011). The Impact of Price Perception On Customer Loyalty In The Airline Context. Journal of Business & Economics Research, 9(9): 37-50.

- Ayat, Z. Ahmed and Manuel R. Díaz. (2020). Analyzing the Online Reputation and Positioning of Airlines. University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

- Calisir, N.; Basak, E.; Calisir, F. (2016) Key drivers of passenger loyalty: A case of Frankfurt–Istanbul flights. J. Air Transp. Manag, 53, 211–217.

- Carroll, B.A., & Ahuvia, A.C. (2006). Some Antecedents and Outcomes of Brand Love. Marketing Letters, 17(2): 79-89.

- Chaudhuri, A.; Holbrook, M.B.(2002) Product-class e_ects on brand commitment and brand outcomes: The role of brand trust and brand a_ect. J. Brand Manag., 10, 33–58.

- Chaudhuri, A.; Holbrook, M.B.(2001) The chain of e ects from brand trust and brand a ect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty. J. Mark. 2001, 65, 81–93.

- Chen, Y.S. (2010). The drivers of green brand equity: Green brand image, green satisfaction, and green trust. Journal of Business Ethics ,93.

- Dick, A.S. and Basu, K. (1994) Customer Loyalty: Toward an Integrated Conceptual Framework. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 22, 99-113. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0092070394222001

- East, R., Hammond, K., Lomax, W., & Robinson, H. (2005). What is the effect of a recommendation? The Marketing Review, 5(2), 145−157.

- EgyptAir . (2021), Organization Manual According to Integrated Management Systems, pp.10-11

- EgyptAir . (2024) , " EgyptAir Annual Report", 2019/2020 " , Available online at : http://www.EgyptAir .com , Accessed on (19 Oct 2024).

- EgyptAir . (2024) , " EgyptAir Annual Report", 2020/2021 " , Available online at : http://www.EgyptAir .com , Accessed on (19 Oct 2024).

- FourieC. et al. (2006). Determinants of selection of full-service airlines and low-cost carriers—A note on business travellers in South Africa. Journal of Air Transport Management (2006)

- Goldsmith, R. 2008. Electronic Word-of-Mouth, Ecommerce: Florida. Idea Group Reference Global.

- Grančay M (2014) Airline Facebook pages-a content analysis. European Transport Research Review 6: 213-223.

- Gruen, T. W., Osmonbekov, T., & Czaplewski, A. J. (2006). EWOM: The impact of customer-to-customer online know-how exchange on customer value and loyalty. Journal of Business Research, 59(4), 449-456. doi:10.1016/ j.jbusres.2005.10.004

- Hennig-Thurau, T., Gwinner, K.P., Walsh, G. and Gremler, D.D. (2004), ―Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: what motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the internet? Journal of Interactive Marketing,. https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.10073

- Howard, D. J., & Gengler, C. (2001). Emotional contagion effects on product attitudes. Journal of Consumer Research, 28, 189–201. https://doi.org/10.1086/322897

- Lee, S. Y., & Park, H. Y. (2021). A study on the effect of social networking marketing on the purchase intention in the airline. East Asian Journal of Business Economics (EAJBE),9(2), 55–73.

- Li et al. A hybrid approach based on fuzzy AHP and 2-tuple fuzzy linguistic method for evaluation in-flight service quality J. Air Transp. Manag, (2017).

- Lucini, F., Tonetto, L., Fogliatto, F., Anzanello, M. (2020). Text mining approach to explore dimensions of airline customer satisfaction using online customer reviews. Air Transport Management ,83. International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Management Volume 3, Issue 2, December 2020 62.

- Rana, N., Slade, E., & Dwivedi, Y. (2021). A Metaanalysis of the Factors Affecting eWOM Providing Behaviour. European Journal of Marketing, 55(4).

- Reyes-Menendez, R., Correia, B., Matos, N., & Adap, C. (2020). Understanding Tourism Online Consumer Behavior and eWOM Strategies for Sustainable Business Management. Sustainability, 12(8972).

- Rodríguez Díaz, M.; Espino Rodríguez, T.F.; Rodríguez Díaz, R.(2015). A model of market positioning base on value creation and service quality in the lodging industry: An empirical application of online customer reviews. Tour.Econ,21.

- Scarpi, D. 2010. Does Size Matter? An Examination of Small and Large Web-Based Brand Communities. Journal of Interactive Marketing, 24: 14-21.

- Seo, E. J., Park, J. W., & Choi, Y. J. (2020). The effect of social media usage characteristics on e-WOM, trust, and brand equity: Focusing on users of airline social media. Sustainability, 12(4), 1691.

- Shang, R.A., Chen, Y. & Liao, H. (2009). The value of participation in virtual consumer communities on brand loyalty. Internet Research, 16(4): 398-418.

- Social bakers. (2002). Egypt Social Marketing Report: Facebook starts in Egypt. Available at: https://www.soci albakers.com/s tatistics /facebook/pages/total/egypt/brands/airlines (Accessed on 02- Oct-2020).

- Sreenivasan, N.D., Lee, C.H. & Goh, D.H.L.(2012). Tweeting the friendly skies, investigating information exchange among twitter users about airlines. Library and information systems, 46(1): 21-42

- Tata, S. V., Prashar, S., & Gupta, S. (2019). An examination of the role of review valence and review source in varying consumption contexts on purchase decision. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2019.01.003.

- Tumer et al., (2019). M Tumer, I Aghaei, E Oney, YN Eddine - The impact of traditional and social media marketing on customers' brand trust and purchase intentions in the Turkish airline market. Journal of Research in Emerging Markets, 1 (4) (2019), 10.30585/jrems.v1i4.344

- Tuzovic, S. & Mamgold, G. 2008. Frequent (flier) frustration analysis of nonverbal cues, emotion and disloyal customer behaviour in negative electronic word-of-mouth communication.

- Verma, S., Yadav, N., & Chikhalkar, R. (2021). An Integrated Measure of eWOM Usefulness in the Leisure Travel: Conceptualisation, Scale Development, and Validation. Journal of Marketing Communications.

- Wu, P. C., & Wang, Y. C. (2011). The influences of electronic word-of-mouth message appeal and message source credibility on brand attitude. Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics, 23(4), 448-472. https://doi.org/10.1108/13555851111165020

- Xiang Z, Gretzel U (2010) Role of social media in online travel information search. Tourism management 31: 179-188.