The effects of e-marketing in enhancing customer loyalty in Moroccan hotels: The moderating role of social media

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Abstract: *Web 2.0, Web 3.0 and Web 4.0 have personalized the forms of communication on the Internet and are an essential tool for hotels to improve their online marketing techniques. In this study, hotels have been chosen as an exemplary area since it is one of the key sectors and plays the role as the locomotive of the national economy. Moreover, the Covid-19 health crisis has shown its important role and the impact of its collapse on the whole Moroccan economy. Building and maintaining brand loyalty is an essential theme for any company that wants to meet the competitiveness challenge. This study aims to measure the impact of mix-marketing on the customer loyalty in Moroccan hotels, in addition to showing the moderating role that social media can play in this relationship. The results of the research showed that e-marketing does not significantly influence, through its mix (product, price, promotion and place), customer loyalty, whether it is attitudinal or behavioral, combined or separated. Nevertheless, social media play the moderator role in the relationship between e-marketing and attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. In light of these findings, the companies should review their e-marketing strategies, including all of its components. It also must taking advantage of the opportunities offered by social media to strengthen customer loyalty and renew the brand image in the mind of customers.*

Key Words: **E-marketing, social media, customer, loyalty, hotels**

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditional marketing is no longer able to achieve its objectives in terms of targeting, because of its very high costs (financial investments), and requires a lot of time (time consuming), and the mobilization of human resources. Moreover, the return on investment (ROI) of traditional marketing tools is hardly satisfactory. As a result, most companies are forced to change their strategy by integrating new marketing channels. One of the methods in vogue in the era of communication and information technology is electronic marketing, particularly e-marketing on social media. The latter appears to be an effective, fast and less expensive tool for their communication strategies. The e-marketing on social media allows to target more diversified and wider socio-professional categories. Since it allows to target many customers through the marketing mix on this channel, to influence the consumer choice, and at the same time to achieve the objectives of an effective communication strategy, in record time. Therefore, the main characteristic of social media is interaction, that allows companies to respond to the expectations, concerns and complaints of customers by establishing a permanent contact with them on social media platforms in order to make them more loyal.

Indeed, marketers have used several levers to strengthen and maintain customer loyalty to their brands, including brand awareness, traditional marketing through the marketing mix, and new marketing methods, such as sponsorship, events, digital marketing and social media marketing (Keller, 2008; Kotler & Keller, 2007).

Indeed, e-marketing is currently part of the marketing strategies of some of the companies, whatever the nature of their activity (primary, secondary or tertiary sector). It is generally deployed on various digital media: website, social media, emailing... Brands rely on the advantages of information and communication technology to efficiently convey their messages to the public. Hence, economic actors find themselves obliged to give great importance to digital marketing and digital tools, as today millions of people have access to the Internet and are connected to various social media platforms on a daily basis (Gaikwad & Kate, 2016).

Social media are a set of applications connected to the Internet that can provide a solid technical foundation, such as Web 2.0, that enables value creation, and contributes to and enhances the exchange of user-generated content (UGC) (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). More so, in the era of experiential digital marketing and web 3.0 and 4.0, online social interaction can be facilitated by immersive technologies, such as 3D and 4D, avatars, augmented reality, etc. (Batat, 2016).

Today, social media are an unavoidable communication tool, close to users, which are part of a logic of sharing and proximity (Marrone & Gallic, 2018). Also, the appearance of stories and lives within social media promotes the construction of an increasingly close link between the company and users. A good way to use the same tools as the latter, while emphasizing directness, transparency, responsiveness and modernity (Marrone & Gallic, 2018). They help to attract new customers or retain them, and engage them more through digital channels. In fact, social media has different forms: blogs, social bookmarking, microblogging, podcasts, wikis, social blogs, images, notes and videos, etc. (Ismail, 2017).

Marketing via social media is increasingly deployed on mobile phones, tablets and smartphones, differs from traditional marketing in three specific ways:

- Real time: the information is sent at a precise moment and can be adapted to the consumer's location in real time;

- Influence: information can reach customers at the moment they make a purchase decision;

- Dissemination: consumers take their mobile phones with them everywhere; the message sent is at their fingertips (Kotler, Keller, & Manceau, 2015).

In the current economic and business environment characterized by accelerated technological change, Big Data and Artificial Intelligence (AI), the tourism sector is at the heart of the digital transition and its activities have been digitized at high speed. Indeed, transactions and booking operations are increasingly carried out electronically. Hotels today are making huge efforts to attract new customers. But the challenge for these tourism businesses, like all business activities, is to build and strengthen customer loyalty. It has become a major problem faced by marketing management. Brand loyalty can be regarded as the goal of any manager. It symbolizes the high consumers brand attachment and expresses his brand identity (Keller, 2008).

Therefore, the tourism industry is no exception, the current trends created by new information and communication technologies. In fact, almost hotels have accounts on social media and deploy marketing strategies by organizing digital communication activities to promote their products and services. The goal of this strategy is to reach a large number of consumers in record time, because social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube...) can continuously transmit detailed and instant information about products and services to customers, whether they are or not part of a virtual community, because with the help of Facebook algorithms, brands can invade accounts that are not even subscribers to their pages.

In order to strengthen the relationship of trust with their customers, hotels exploit the tools provided by social media: interactivity, connectivity, communication, updated content, reaction to the opinions and comments of community members, etc. These are mechanisms that traditional marketing lacks.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

In spite of the importance given to the traditional methods of customer loyalty, the permanent concern of companies operating in the tourism sector remains the improvement of their performances by relying on the information and communication technology. Moreover, customer loyalty is a serious concern for most brands. Since the challenge they face is not only to acquire new customers, but also to retain them. The digital revolution has made websites more and more modern and efficient, and with specificities capable of fulfilling their missions in communicating or responding to the customers needs. Nevertheless, they remain powerless to reach customers directly. The appearance and development of social media have come to remedy this imperfection. The dichotomy between websites and social media has been annihilated by making the boundaries between the two tools increasingly porous. The development of social media has been an ideal way for companies that have chosen the outbound marketing strategy. Given the growing number of social media users worldwide, brands are imposing themselves on the social media users, thanks to the powerful referencing (SMO) and sponsoring pages have succeeded in entering the personal accounts of social media users by appearing on the news feed of the user's Facebook account. Website marketing is compatible with the brand strategies that have chosen inbound. While for those who have chosen outbound marketing, social media offer undeniable advantages allowing them to push marketing and commercial actions towards the consumer in order to strengthen the loyalty between the customer and his hotel via the social media themselves or through direct referral to its website; a relationship particularly in a context characterized by the low use by consumers of social media in online shopping. This reluctance is due to the lack of trust, as well as the lack of confidence in technology and e-commerce among the majority of Moroccans. It is from this observation that our research aims to answer the problem that aims to know the impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty and show the moderating role of social media in this relationship.

"How does e-marketing impact hotel customer loyalty and the moderating role of social media?"

Research objectives

The aim of the present research is to identify the impact of e-marketing on the hotels customer loyalty in Morocco, as well as the moderating role that social media can play in modifying the relationship between hotels and their customers.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how online customer loyalty can be achieved through the use of interactive digital marketing tools, such as social media. Also, if the hotels could target new customers through this channel.

By analyzing the concepts of customer loyalty and social media used by the tourism sector; the aim is to question the approaches adopted by marketers in their quest for customer loyalty and suggest how the use of social media could improve it. Moreover, social media are now an integral part of the daily life of an augmented consumer and empowered customer, as they are ubiquitous in almost all areas. In addition, this study aims to analyze the efficiency of social media in targeting a heterogeneous and heteroclite audience, in terms of age groups, interests, professional categories... The results of this research would help hotels to achieve their goals by strengthening customer loyalty and implement a more effective marketing strategy, and this, by using social media as a marketing tool.

Research questions

The research arises a series of questions:

➢ How much e-marketing do hotels rely on?

➢ What is the scale of use of social media by hotels?

➢ How loyal are the customer of these hotels?

➢ Does e-marketing influence the customer hotel loyalty?

➢ What are the constraints of using social media as a marketing tool to improve customer relations and loyalty?

➢ What are the advantages of social media marketing over other marketing methods?

➢ Does the moderating role of social hotels impact hotel loyalty in Morocco?

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- **Concept of e-marketing**

The definition of e-marketing varies from researcher to another. Researchers have not agreed on a single definition for e-marketing. This disagreement is due to the difference in the researchers' views and interests.

E-marketing can be defined as a set of tools and techniques used to bring goods or services to the market through a digital medium or network. It has different characteristics than traditional marketing. It creates new specific advantages to this new marketing strategy to exploit the opportunities offered by the macroeconomic environment through new information and communication technologies (Lee et al., 2012). Indeed, e-marketing makes use of modern technology, such as the Internet, CD, mobile phone and/or interactive TV in the execution of marketing activities in order to achieve the marketing objectives.

- **Components of the marketing mix for the tourism service**

The marketing mix is a set of comprehensive and integrated marketing activities, which intervene to perform a marketing function according to the marketing plan already in place. It consists of 4Ps: product, price, place and promotion (communication) for any good or service. Nevertheless, other elements can be added to the marketing mix to reinforce its capacity to influence, and this, in harmony with the specific characteristics of the services to become 7P:

a- Product: includes quality level, content or functionality, design (colors, format, etc.), related services (e.g. warranty or after sales service), packaging, etc.

b- Price: includes promotions (discounts or rebates), perceived value, quality/price ratio, sales conditions (payment terms), distribution chain, volumes (differences between retail and wholesale prices)...

c- Place: this refers to the points of sale, communication capacity, temporal advantages, positioning, form and appropriation, distribution channels, the points of sale, number of sales representatives, accessibility to the product...

d- Communication (promotion): includes advertising, personalized sales, public relations, distribution (flyers, leaflets, posters...), direct marketing (email, telemarketing...), etc.

- **Notion of social media**

The concept of social media embraces several definitions according to the literature field, which reflects the scope and importance of this means of communication. They are sites or platforms on the Internet that offer their users the possibility of interacting, exchanging information, opinions and ideas as well as the problems they face, through profiles, photo albums, chat rooms, chatbot, etc. Social media can also be defined as a set of techniques for establishing online contact and carrying out conversations and interaction between individuals. They also allow users to store their personal information and build relationships and share information, and form virtual communities. They are platforms specific to desktop and mobile phone using the technology of the 2nd and 3rd generation of the web (Web 2.0, Web 3.0 and Web 4.0) that allow users to participate and identify themselves geographically (GPS technique), generate user-created content (UGC) and cooperation between them and constitution of networks and communities, with a maximum number of users (El Ouirdi et al., 2014).

Therefore, social media can be defined as interactive electronic social sites or platforms that provide a virtual space for users to exchange and interact through the following characteristics: context, content, virtual community, connectivity and the execution of business transactions.

- **Communication**

Social media offer the possibility of communication and contact between the organization's website and its users. Communication consists of sending information to all the beneficiaries. As for the interaction between the website and its users, the organization's website must be able to diffuse information on a large scale to the beneficiaries, in addition to using the tools of connectivity with other electronic sites.

In their research, Teng et al. (2017) pointed out that electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) refers to recommendations and suggestions made by customers for certain services or products. They said that word of mouth, especially on social media, has a great impact. Because word of mouth will quickly reach customers and affect customers' purchasing decisions.

On his part, Zizka (2017) found that companies in the hospitality industry are spreading their messages to stakeholders through social media. He also found dual-channel communication is an effective way to achieve successful communication through social media. However, most companies operating in the hotel industry use one-way communication. For example, social networking

platforms are mainly used to disseminate messages and information.
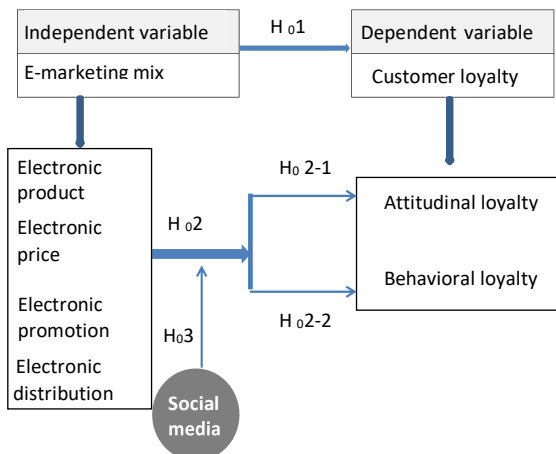
- **Customer loyalty**

In their study, Rehnen et al. (2017) concluded that using different methods will increase customer loyalty. This study aims to understand how these methods affect customer loyalty. Their result is that a policy that uses reward participation strategies will greatly increase customer loyalty, not just reward transaction value. However, there is a problem with providing incentives that may undermine the value of the product provided. Therefore, companies need to protect themselves from any negative effects of rewards.

On the other hand, true loyalty comes from the nature and intensity of the relationship between the customer and the organization through various behaviors practices evaluating this relationship. This is behavioral loyalty.

In fact, customer loyalty can be defined as a customer's purchase behavior or repetitive purchase at the same organization (Camilia et al., 2013).

The dimensions of customer loyalty consist of:

a- Behavioral loyalty is the customer's desire to commit to buying or consuming the product's specific service and not to change his purchases' behavior to a competing company, despite its attempts to influence his preferences or decisions;

b- Attitudinal loyalty is achieved through the evaluation of the product and its different characteristics from other competing products;

c- Perceived loyalty has several aspects that reflect the extent of the customer's perception product. Therefore, the customer expresses his desire and willingness to pay a high price to acquire the product, despite its highest price compared to competitors' prices (Donnellyn, 2009).

4. RESEARCH MODEL
The research hypotheses

Based on the research model and the literature review, the following hypotheses were formulated to test the research variables.

- **First hypothesis**

H_01: E-marketing-mix (product, price, promotion and place) has no statistically significant impact on customer loyalty (attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty) to hotels in Morocco.

- **Second main hypothesis**

H_02: E-marketing-mix has no statistically significant impact on attitudinal loyalty to hotels in Morocco.

From this hypothesis, two sub-hypotheses are formulated:

- H_02-1: E-marketing-mix has no statistically significant impact on attitudinal loyalty.

- H_02-2: E-marketing-mix has no statistically significant impact on behavioral loyalty to hotels in Morocco.

- **Third main hypothesis**

H_03: Social media (context, content, community, customization, communication, connectivity) have no statistically significant impact on improving customer loyalty to hotels in Morocco.

- H_03-1: Social media (context, content, community, customization, communication, connectivity) have no statistically significant impact on improving customer attitudinal loyalty to hotels in Morocco.

- H_03-2: Social media (context, content, community, customization, communication, connectivity) have no statistically significant impact on improving behavioral loyalty to hotels in Morocco.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

- **Method**

To carry out this study, we used the probabilistic principal components factor analysis (PCA) since this methodology does not only describe the phenomenon, but rather analyzes, measures and explains the data in order to arrive at a precise description of the phenomenon or the problem and its results, and to propose solutions and recommendations to solve it.

- **Study population**

We determined the scope of the target population of the study consisting of customer hotels in Morocco, and given the difficulty of determining the size of the target population because of the considerable number of individuals, we consider that the indeterminate population; hence the size of the indeterminate representative sample according to Sekaran (2003) is 386 individuals.

The method chosen to collect the data is a survey, through the administration of a questionnaire on the Internet. The online survey is conducted through a link shared on the social media (Facebook), the most used application in Morocco where the target audience responds to the questionnaire. This application is considered a powerful communication channel; where Internet users are encouraged on Facebook to answer the questionnaire, as well as the respondents consist of different age groups. The online survey helps to collect data in an efficient manner and the various tools help to exploit the results accurately. Moreover, one of the reasons for using online surveys is to exploit the results in a faster and easier manner. In addition, the constraints of travelling to different geographical areas are eliminated, and time and costs are considerably reduced. The use of the social media platform to collect survey data is justified by the population and its size, and the results are easy to generalize, given the sample size.

Therefore, we administered an online questionnaire to obtain the required number. Thus, we collected 413 questionnaires, of which 20 were invalid and 369 questionnaires are analyzed.

6. Results research

Reliability of the measuring scale

Principal component analysis was used to test the validity of the hypotheses

- **Statistical methods**

In order to analyze the data and obtain the results, this study used the following statistics: Mean, Standard deviation, correlation coefficient, multiple regression, and hierarchical multiple regression... to test the effect of correlation of two independent variables with the dependent variable.

Data processing was done by SPSS, tables 1, 2 and 3 show the results of internal consistency of the study variables:

Table-1: Reliability test results of e-marketing

Variable	Dimension	Cov. (%)	KMO
E-marketing	Product	31.897	0.725
	Price		
	Promotion		
	Place		

Table-2: Reliability test results for social media

Variable	Dimension	Cov (%)	KMO
Social media	context	52.10	0.750
	Content		
	Virtual communities		
	Customization		
	Communication		
	Connectivity		

Table-3: Customer loyalty reliability test results

Variable	Dimension	Cov (%)	KMO
Customer loyalty	Attitudinal loyalty	53.222	0.686
	Behavioral loyalty		

- **Reliability of the study tool**

In order to test the reliability of the research tool, Cronbach's "Alpha" test measures the internal consistency of the scale, and we get the overall value α=88.61. This is a very high ratio and above the acceptable value, which has a value of 0.60. The higher it is, the stronger the validity, that is, as long as it is close to 1, or 100%, it indicates the degree of validity of the study tool. The following table shows the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient values for all variables in the study.

Table-4: Cronbach's Alpha values

Study variable	Reliability coefficient (Cronbach's Alpha)
E-marketing	84.32
Product	87.43
Price	85.95
Promotion	82.10
Distribution	86.57
Customer loyalty	83.67
Attitudinal loyalty	73.75
Behavioral loyalty	80.22
Social media	87.50
Context	84.36
Content	86.36
Virtual community	82.23
Personalization	87.09
Communication	75.75
Connectivity	82.40
Overall validity	89.51

- **Hypothesis testing**

To test the hypotheses of this study on the impact of the independent variable (E-marketing) on the dependent variable (customer loyalty), we choose parametric tests to determine this effect because they are most suitable for analyzing the collected data, and their use involves satisfying two basic conditions:

- a- Absence of strong correlation and multi-collinearity between independent variables;

- b- Normally distributed data.

To verify the first condition, we proceeded to calculate the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the Tolerance, while the second condition will be satisfied by calculating the symmetry coefficient (Skewness). After processing the data through SPSS, we obtained the following results (Table 5).

Table-5: Test results (VIF Coef.) and the Tolerance threshold and Skewness Coef.

E-marketing	VIF	Tolerance	Skewness
Product	1.434	0.702	0.267
Price	1.743	0.454	0.609
Promotion	1.828	0.532	0.755
Place	1.694	0.687	0.448

Tolerance is defined as the proportion of variance in the independent variable that is not explained by another independent variable. A high tolerance corresponds to a low degree of collinearity. The threshold of 0.3 is recommended. Thus if the value of VIF exceeds 10 and the value of Tolerance threshold is less than 0.05 means that there is a problem related to high collinearity and multicollinearity between the independent variables. While if the value of the Skewness coefficient reaches 1 or more, it means that the data are not normally distributed.

The results obtained (Table 5) show that all the values of VIF are less than 10, and the values of Tolerance are greater than 0.05 and the values of Skewness are less than 1. Therefore, we can conclude that the required conditions are met.

First main hypothesis

To test this hypothesis, and using multiple regression, we obtained the following results (Table 6).

Table 6: Results of the test of the impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty

Dependent variable	Model		ANOVA			Coefficient				
	R	R²	F	df	Sig. F		B	Stand error	t	Sig.
Customer loyalty	.003 ᵃ	.000	.004	1	.845 ᵇ	E-marketing	.003	.071	.059	.954

a. Predicted values (constants) b. statistical significance at threshold ($p \leq 0.05$)

The ANOVA table attests to the absence of a statistically significant impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty in its two combined dimensions (attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty) in Moroccan hotels. The correlation coefficient R=003 indicates that there is no correlation between e-marketing and customer loyalty, while the determination factor is 0.00 ($R^2 = 0.00$). We can conclude that e-marketing does not explain customer loyalty and it is explained by other variables not included in this study.

Fisher's F value is 0.004 at the significance level (Sig. =.845). This is a non-significant value and indicates that the regression model is non-significant at the level ($p \leq 0.05$) and 1 degree of freedom (dl).

The table also shows that the value (B = .003) with a standard error (.071) and the value of (t = .059) at the level of significance (Sig. = .954), which confirms the non-significance of the coefficient at the level ($p \leq 0.05$).

We conclude that the null hypothesis is accepted and we reject H $_1$.

Second hypothesis

"E-marketing-mix (product price, promotion and place) has no statistically significant impact at the threshold (α ≤ 0.05) on customer loyalty (attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty) of Moroccan tourism companies."

This hypothesis was tested by multiple regression and Table 7 shows the results of the test.

Table 7: Results of the test on the impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty

Dependent variable	Model Summary		ANOVA			Coefficient				
	R	R²	F	df	Sig. F	Model	B	Standard error	t	Sig.
Customer loyalty	.045 a	.002	.110	4	.955 b	Electronic product	.024	.093	.334	.732
						Electronic price	.086	.143	.576	.565
						Electronic promotion	.021	.076	.192	.876
						Electronic distribution	-.110	.189	-.534	.543

a. Predicted values (constants) b. statistical significance at threshold ($p \le 0.05$)

The results showed that there is no statistically significant impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty in Moroccan hotels. This is evident from the value of F = .110. A non-significant value at the significance level ≤ 0.05. This also explains that the test is unsatisfactory at degree of freedom 4. While the value of R^2 = .002 means that e-marketing (4PE) explains only 0.2% of the variables involved in customer loyalty, while 99.8% is due to other explanatory variables not included in the model. Also the correlation coefficient (R= 0.045) indicates that there is not a strong positive relationship between e-marketing and customer loyalty.

The results of the partial analysis of this hypothesis show that not all e-marketing elements will affect customer loyalty. This explains why e-marketing has no effect on customer loyalty in terms of student test (t) and Beta value. The latter recorded insignificant values at the significance level ≥ 0.05, respectively (.334), (.576), (.192), (-.534) and (.024), (.086), (.021), (-.110). These are the values of the significance level greater than 0.05 (≥ 0.05).

We conclude that the null hypothesis is accepted and we reject hypothesis H1.

Test of the first sub-hypothesis of the second main hypothesis

This is to test the first sub-hypothesis of the second main hypothesis of this study, which is expressed as follows:

"H_02-1: The e-marketing mix (product, price, promotion and place) has no statistically significant effect on the Moroccan hotels' attitude loyalty at the threshold (α ≤ 0.05)." Table 8 shows the results of this test.

Table 8: Results of the test of the impact of e-marketing with its four dimensions on the attitudinal loyalty

Dependent variable	Model Summary		ANOVA			Coefficients				
	R	R²	F	df	Sig. F	Model	Beta (B)	Std error	t	Sig.
Attitudinal loyalty	.061 a	.004	.235	4	.91 b	Electronic product	.012	.091	.256	.816
						Electronic price	.056	.179	.266	.745
						Electronic promotion	.046	.078	.712	.476
						Electronic distribution	-.115	.219	-.504	.534

a. Predicted values (constants) b. Statistically significant impact at threshold ($p \le 0.05$)

The results obtained indicate the absence of a statistically significant impact of e-marketing on the attitudinal loyalty in Moroccan hotels. Since the Fisher's (F) test statistic whose value is .235, is considered as a non-significant value at the significance level ≤ 0.05. Indeed, statistically, the regression model is considered good if the value of Fisher's (F) is too high or the value of "p-critical" significance tends to zero at a significance level of 5%. Thus, the regression model is insignificant at df 4. The value in the R column (Table 8) denotes the linear correlation coefficient or the linear linkage strength between the endogenous (customer loyalty) and its predicted values (e-marketing mix). If R is close to (+1) or (-1), there is a strong correlation. In this case R=.061, it is a sign of poor quality of the model in question.

As for the explanatory power of the model as a whole where the contribution of the variables of the model to the explanation of the customer loyalty R^2. In our model, the R^2 is .004, i.e. the e-marketing elements explain only 0.4% of the variables affecting the attitudinal loyalty, while 99.6% are explained by other variables not included in this model.

From the results of the partial analysis of this hypothesis, it appears that not all elements of the e-marketing-mix influence attitudinal loyalty. This explains the absence of the influence of e-marketing on attitudinal loyalty, where the values of Beta (β) and Student's test (t) are insignificant

at the significance level α ≤ 0.05%, which are respectively (.012), (. 056), (. 046), (-. 115) and (.256), (.266), (.712), (-.504); and these are values at the significance level ≥ 0.05. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis (H1).

Testing the second sub-hypothesis of the second main hypothesis

This sub-hypothesis states that "$H_0$2-2: E-marketing with four dimensions has no statistically significant impact at the threshold (α ≤ 0.05) on behavioral loyalty in Moroccan hotels". And Table 9 shows the results.

Table 9: Results of the test on the impact of the e-marketing mix on behavioral loyalty

Dependent variable	Model Summary		ANOVA			Coefficients				
	R	R ^{2}	F	df	Sig. F	Model	Beta (B)	Std error	t	Sig. T
Behavioral loyalty	.057 ª	.001	.221	4	.942 ᵇ	Electronic product	.023	.093	.360	.720
						Electronic price	.148	.178	.786	.417
						Electronic promotion	-.042	.093	-.349	.757
						Electronic distribution	-.123	.186	-.558	.562

b. Predicted values (constants) b. Statistically significant impact at threshold (p≤0.05)

Table 9 shows the absence of statistically significant impact of e-marketing on the behavioral loyalty of customers in Moroccan hotels. This is apparent in the value of Fisher's (F) test whose value is .221, which represents a non-significant value at the 5% significance level (α≤0.05). This can also be deduced as non-significance of the degrees of freedom (df) 4 model. While the value of R ^{2}= .001, which means that e-marketing with its four dimensions explain only 0.1% of the variables acting on behavioral loyalty, while 99.9% of loyalty is due to other variables not studied in this model. For the linear correlation coefficient (R), it is .057 which indicates the absence of a positive relationship between e-marketing and behavioral loyalty.

The results of the partial analysis of this hypothesis show that not all elements of e-marketing influence behavioral loyalty, which explains the lack of an influence of e-marketing on behavioral loyalty, given the values of Beta (β): .023; .148; -.042; -.123 and the values of Student's test (t): .360; .786; -.349; -.558. These values at significance level ≥ 0.05.

Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis.

• **Test of the third main hypothesis**

To test the third main third hypothesis and its two sub-hypotheses, we used hierarchical regression to confirm or reject this hypothesis.

$H_0$3: Social media (context, content, community, customization, communication, connectivity,) have no statistically significant impact at the threshold (α ≤ 0.05) on improving customer loyalty in Moroccan hotels.

Table 10: Results of hierarchical multiple regression analysis of the impact of social media in improving e-marketing of customer loyalty

a. Statistically significant impact at the threshold (α≤0.05)

Dependent variable	Independent variables	First step			Second step		
		β	t	Sig.	β	t	Sig.
Customer loyalty	E-marketing	.003	.059	.955			
	E-marketing x social media				.673	5.654	.000
	R	.003 ª			0.356		
	R 2	0.000			.085		
	ΔF	.005			32.129		
	Sig. ΔF	.955			0.000		

The results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis (Table 10) based on two models. The results of the first model based on the first step show the value of correlation coefficient R= .004 which means that there is no positive relationship between e-marketing and customer loyalty. Also, they show the absence of a statistically significant impact of the variable of e- marketing on customer loyalty, since the value of Fisher's test (F= .005) at the significance level (Sig. = .955) is greater than 0.05. While the value of the coefficient of determination (R ^{2} = 0.000). This value indicates that e-marketing does not explain customer loyalty by any variable.

For the second step, the introduction of the moderator variable (social media) in the regression model, where the value of the correlation coefficient R increased to become R= 0. 356 (same for the coefficient of determination R ^{2}, where its value increased by 8.5%, and this rate is statistically significant. Since the value of ΔF= 32.129 at the significance level (Sig. ΔF= 0.000), which is less than (0.05). As for the value of Beta (β= .673) of social media, and the value of Student's test (t=5.654) at the significance level (Sig. = 0.000). This explains the difference caused by the moderating role of social media on customer loyalty of Moroccan tourism companies, where the explanatory power of the independent variable (social media) is 8.5%, which increased from 0.00% to 8.5%.

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Testing the first sub-hypothesis of third hypothesis

We will test the following hypothesis:

H_0 3-1: Social media (context, content, community, customization, communication, connectivity) have no statistically significant impact at the threshold ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on improving the attitudinal loyalty of customers of Moroccan hotels. Results of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis show the moderating role of social media in improving the impact of e-marketing on the attitudinal loyalty of customers in Moroccan hotels (Table 11).

Table 11: Results of the analysis of the moderating role of social media

Dependent variable	Independent variables	First step			Second step		
		β	t	Sig.	β	t	Sig.
Attitudinal loyalty	E-marketing	-.021	-.225	.830			
	E-marketing x social media				.675	5.654	.000
	R	.021 [a]			0.232		
	R^2	0.000			.081		
	ΔF	.036			32.543		
	Sig. ΔF	.843			0.000		

a. Statistically significant impact at the threshold ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

The results shown in Table 11 are based on the two-model hierarchical multiple regression analysis. Indeed, the results of the first model in the first step showed that the correlation coefficient is 0.021 (R = .021), which demonstrates that there is no positive relationship between e-marketing and attitudinal loyalty of customers. They also proved the absence of a statistically significant impact of the e-marketing variable on customer loyalty, since the Fisher's F test value is F=.036 at the Sig. = .843 significance level, which is greater than 0.05; also, the value of the coefficient of determination R^2= 0.000. The result is that e-marketing does not explain the customer loyalty in Moroccan hotels.

In the second step where the moderator variable (social media) was introduced into the regression model, there was an increase in the value of the correlation coefficient to become R= .232. The same change was observed for the coefficient of determination R^2= .081, which rose by 8.1%, and it is a statistically significant rate, while the value of Fisher's F is 32.543 at the significance level of 0.000 (Sig. ΔF= 0.000), which is less than 0.05. The Beta (β) value is .675 (β= .675) of social networks, and Student's test value (t=5.654) with a significance level of 0 (Sig.= 0.000). This confirms the significant impact of social media on improving the influence of e-marketing on the attitudinal loyalty of customers in Moroccan tourism companies,

where the explanation rate improved by 8.1% from 0.00% to 8.1%.

Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

Test of the second sub-hypothesis of the third hypothesis

$H_0$3-2: Social media (context, content, community, customization, communication, connectivity) have no statistically significant impact at the threshold ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) on improving the behavioral loyalty in Moroccan hotels. The results of the test are shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Results of the test on the impact of social media in improving customer loyalty

Dependent variable	Independent variables	First step			Second step		
		β	t_c	Sig.	β	t_c	Sig.
Behavioral loyalty	e-marketing	.018	-.343	.734			
	E-marketing X social media				.532	4.606	.000
	R	.018 [a]			0.215 [b]		
	R^2	0.000			.052		
	Δ R^2	0.000			.047		
	ΔF	.126			20.232		
	Sig. ΔF	.746			0.000		

a. Statistically significant impact at the threshold ($\alpha \leq 0.05$)

Table 12 shows the results of hierarchical multiple regression analysis based on two models. The results of the first model based on the first step where the value of R (R= .018), which means the absence of a positive relationship between e-marketing and behavioral loyalty. Also, the results show the absence of statistically significant impact of the e-marketing variable on behavioral loyalty, since the value of Fisher's test (F= .126) with a significance level (Sig. = .746), which is greater than 0.05. As for the value of determination R^2= 0.000, it means that e-marketing does not explain the behavioral loyalty of customers in Moroccan hotels.

On the other hand, as for the model at the second step, where the moderating variable (social media) was introduced into the regression, the value of the correlation coefficient increased by becoming (R= .215), and the same for the value of the coefficient of determination R^2, which increased by 5.2%, and this rate is statistically significant, where the Fisher's F value (ΔF= 20.232) with significance level (Sig. ΔF= 0.000), which is less than 0.05. The Beta value (β= .532) of social media and that of Student's test (t=4.606) with significance level (Sig. = 0.000). It can be deduced that the impact of social media in improving the influence of e-marketing on behavioral loyalty is significant, where social media explain 5.2% of customer loyalty in Moroccan hotels. This rate is statistically significant, in that Fisher's F value (ΔF = 20.232) at the significance level of

0.000 (Sig. ΔF = 0.000), which is less than 5%. While the Beta value (β = .532) of social media and Student's t value (t= 4.606) at the significance level (sig.= 0.000). This confirms the significant impact of social media on improving the influence of e-marketing on behavioral loyalty, where they contributed to the improvement of the rate of explanation of customer loyalty in Moroccan hotels by 5.2% from 0.00% to 5.2%.

Given these results, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis.

7. DISCUSSION

The results obtained show that, according to the respondents' answers, the Moroccan hotels have a relatively high level of product development. The customer accesses information about the requested service is at a lower cost. The hotel under study still needs to revise its pricing policy. Because the results obtained do not show that the price policies are widely accepted by customers, as long as the average price level applicated by these companies does not meet the customer's ability to evaluate product quality. These companies carry out promotional activities from time to time to meet customer prices expectations and attract those who are hesitant about the prices adopted by these companies in exchange services.

Hotels have a wide range of options in their e-marketing mix, as it helps them to modify the advertising content, with the possibility of implementing advertising campaigns that promote their services and at the same time deny the false information spread by their competitors that aim to turn prospects and customers in their favor.

Tourism companies lack effective electronic channels to promote their products or services. In fact, the results of the study show that the level of efficiency of the channels they have is modest, since their electronic distribution sites do not allow customers to obtain diversified discounts. In addition, these sites are not so efficient in presenting benefits to customers, such as the search section, the price comparison, access to information on the services, on their expectations and needs of customers, the problem of proximity...

The results also indicate that the social media, website should be provided with tools and functionalities capable of bridging social media platforms, or if they already had them, they fall short of customer expectations. They are unable to handle multiple requests at the same time and do not allow the beneficiary to interact optimally with the inputs and outputs. In addition, there is a lack of a comprehensive presentation of the services offered.

Social media platforms provide relevant information, as well as they present reliable, complete and accurate information to brand.

Social media allow their users to create virtual communities. Thus, the study showed that these communities constitute an important communication space between individuals who share the same objectives and interests. They also allow the creation of bilateral or multilateral discussion rooms...

Like all other characteristics of social media, the hotel customers have high levels of customer connectivity. These sites do not offer the beneficiary the possibility to access other electronic sites through the multi-connectivity service. In other words, they do not aid beneficiaries in creating their personal accounts. They also do not allow users access to information resources they need.

Social media have achieved a high level in their ability to offer opportunities for conducting electronic business transactions through the mechanism of user tracking. They are also provided users with various interfaces for conducting secure electronic buying and selling operations that protect their rights, personal data and ensure privacy right.

The responses of the respondents showed that the level of attitudinal loyalty of the customers hotels is high. This is due to their belief that these entities seek to provide a high-quality service in line with their expectations, and they are aware of the importance of obtaining the customer's adherence to their offers, as the elements relating to loyalty are used in the implementation of their strategies and help in making decisions when there is uncertainty about which strategies are most suitable for meeting the competition challenges. In fact, a causal relationship of trust is established as long as this strategy responds to the customers' willingness to continue enjoying the services offered by these companies and to consider them as the first choice when the customer needs to consume a tourism service.

The high level of attitudinal loyalty has been reflected in the level of behavioral loyalty, which in turn appears to be higher in relation to tourism sector. In fact, the level of behavioral loyalty of customers is high according to the respondents' responses. The results show that the willingness of these companies to transform latent loyalty into permanent loyalty, ensuring that the tourism service offers great added value to its consumer; this makes customers satisfied with the services provided and strengthens their attachment to the company by increasing the frequency of their visits to the same company. In addition, social media allow customers to express themselves and transmit their complaints or claims to their friends, relatives...

The results of the research showed also that the four components of e-marketing implemented by tourism industries do not have any impact on customer loyalty. This fact is due to the disparity of e-marketing elements among the companies. Nevertheless, some elements have had a moderate influence so that they do not produce a significant change in customer loyalty.

The results also proved that the different elements of the e-marketing of hotels in Morocco did not record any significant impact on the attitudinal loyalty of the customers. This can be explained by the facts:

i. The inability of the e-marketing strategy to provide information to customers on the quality of the service, and a lack of access to the search interface and price comparator, and information on the location;

ii. Despite the improvement of the electronic product in the companies surveyed, this has no impact on the attitudinal loyalty of customers. This is due to the very low levels of the company's ability to present diversified services that meet the needs. These services should be improved by adding new services;

iii. In the absence of an attractive electronic pricing policy, these companies do not offer services at prices that take into account the purchasing power of the customer and that are in line with the quality of the service offered. In addition, the price levels are not acceptable and do not meet the expectations of the customers, and the discounts applied are not able to attract customers who are not sure about the services offered by these companies;

iv. In spite of the very aggressive electronic promotion policy, this variable appears incapable of influencing loyalty, due to the weakness of the companies surveyed to set up a promotional mix: well-defined targeting, highlighting the benefits of its services and its singularities compared to competitors.

The weaknesses or failures of the e-marketing elements that the study showed, negatively influenced attitudinal and behavioral loyalties in terms of:

- Impact of marketing mix elements on attitudinal loyalty. Despite the improvement in the level of attitudinal loyalty of customers hotels due to the moderating role of social media, the elements of e-marketing have failed to strengthen some indicators of attitudinal loyalty by raising them to higher levels:

▪ The failure of certain elements of the promotional mix has led customers to fiercely defend the interests of tourism companies against competitors;

▪ The elements of the promotional mix did not contribute to improving positive customer word-of-mouth against competitors;

▪ The e-marketing strategies, especially the e-price policy, did not arouse any customer interest to faithfully continue consuming the company's products in case of the increase of the price of the services;

▪ The client is reluctant to pay additional fees or taxes in return for the same services from the companies surveyed;

▪ The elements of the promotional mix did not contribute to the reinforcement of the indicators of attitudinal loyalty, such as the customer's conviction and trust in the willingness of his company to provide quality services and his desire to continue consuming the services of the companies surveyed. The fact that this company remains his preferred choice, and his firm belief that this company is aware of the importance of customer loyalty as one of the key sources of data on which it relies to develop its strategy and make trade-offs regarding the decisions to be taken.

- Impact of marketing mix on behavioral loyalty. Despite the high level of behavioral loyalty of the customers of the companies surveyed, the elements of the marketing mix do not contribute significantly to achieving this level:

▪ The elements of the marketing mix have not led the companies surveyed to work towards presenting a tourism service with a high added value;

▪ The elements of the marketing mix did not contribute to the improvement of customer satisfaction in the companies surveyed:

▪ The elements of the promotional mix have no influence on the customer's desire to strengthen his relationship with his tourism company in the future and to increase his visits to the hotels;

▪ The elements of the marketing mix do not contribute to changing the conviction of the customers towards their company, even if a competitor company offers a solution to the problems encountered.

The effective communication between the customers of the surveyed companies helped to build personal relationships, which resulted in customer satisfaction.

Discussion the moderating role of social media in the relationship between e-marketing and customer loyalty

Social media, as a moderating variable in the relationship between e-marketing and customer loyalty, have contributed to the modification of the influence of e-

marketing on customer loyalty. Indeed, we have first supposed the absence of significant impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty, then the presence of a significant impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty.

Social media have changed the insignificant impact of e-marketing on customer loyalty by turning it into a significant impact. Because, the use of social media by users and the features they have allowed them to disseminate comprehensive information about the company's tourism services and the levels of services offered, and therefore, the change in the image of these companies to their customers, this has influenced the following aspects:

- The client's image of the travel company motivates him to defend them to others and convey a positive word of mouth;

- The tendencies and inclinations of customers to maintain the relationship with these companies, even in case they have increased the prices of their services, in addition to the possibility of paying additional fees and taxes in order to get more services ;

- The customer's image of the tourism product has led to the strengthening of positive indicators of attitudinal loyalty, which distinguishes the companies surveyed.

Social media have changed the insignificant impact of e-marketing on behavioral loyalty by transforming it into a significant impact. Thus, they have accelerated the transition from attitudinal customer loyalty to behavioral loyalty.

8. CONCLUSION

The development of social media and web have enabled customization strategies where service personalization has become more effective and easily achievable. Indeed, the results of the study showed that the variable "customization" played a key role in customer loyalty. This is due to the performance of these platforms, which are subject to continuous improvement and innovation: personalized tools in line with users' requests and needs, opportunities for customers to make comments and complaints regarding the quality of the services presented, etc.

The results of the study also showed that communication - a very important element of social media- is moderately established according to the respondents' answers. This is due to the fact that these networks have not yet reached sufficient levels to offer information on a large scale, to expand the network of personal relationships, in addition to the use of various tools in the dissemination of information to the beneficiaries.

Social media have helped tourism businesses transform latent loyalty into permanent loyalty. This transition has strengthened customers' belief in these companies and their offers. They have become essential levers in the marketing policies of hotels and play a role in strengthening both behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. They contribute to the reinforcement of the customer's willingness to continue, or even increase the purchases rate in the future, to the increase in recurrent visits to the company's premises and electronic sites, and to social media accounts, and make the customer more loyal to his company despite the tempting offers of his competitors.

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Appendix / Questionnaire

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Please tick the most appropriate answer (√)

1. Age:

Below 25 yrs25-30 yrs ☐

30-39 yrs ☐

40 yrs and Above ☐

2. Gender: Male ☐   Female ☐

3. Marital status: Married ☐ Single ☐ Widowed ☐ Divorced ☐

4. What is your highest education level?

Certificate ☐   Bachelor ☐   Master ☐   PHD ☐

5. What is your length relationship with your hotel?

Less than 1 year ☐   1-5 years ☐   6-11 years ☐   above 12 years ☐

6. Which of the below social media platforms do you frequently visit?

Facebook ☐   Twitter ☐   Instagram ☐   Other ☐

7. Kindly select from the options below why you access social media platforms:

a. Interact with friends ☐

b. Source for information ☐

c. Network with other online users (not necessarily friends) ☐

d. Learn about new products and offers ☐

8. How frequently do you access the internet?

a. Hourly basis ☐

b. In the evenings/ after work ☐

c. Work break times ☐

d. Once a week ☐

e. Occasionally ☐

SECTION B: Effects of e-marketing mix Tool Use on Customer Loyalty in hotel

Please indicate your opinion as per the level of disagreement or agreement with the outlinestatement using 1 to 5 scale guidelines: 1= Strongly Agree 2- Agree, 3= Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree

	E-marketing Mix	1	2	3	4	5
1	Use of e-marketing mix by the hotel has influenced my brand awareness					
2	Hotel uses e-marketing mix to communicate with their customers					
3	Use of hotel e-marketing mix has enabled me create a strong bond with hotels					
4	I use hotel site web or emailing… to get answers					
5	I use hotel site web or emailing because it helps me exchange information with other online users					
6	I visit hotel web site because it helps me share information with my friends and other online users					
	Brand Awareness					
7	Use of web site has enabled hotel make me aware of the brands					
8	Use research engine has helped me remember the brand					
9	use of e-marketing has positively influence my perception towards hotel's brand					
	Perceived Quality					
10	Online reviews has affect my perception on product view					
11	The information I get online regarding product offered by hotel has influenced my perception					

SECTION C: Impact of Social Media Marketing on Customer Loyalty

Please indicate your opinion as per the level of disagreement or agreement with the outlinestatement using 1 to 5 scale guidelines: 1= Strongly Agree 2- Agree, 3= Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree.

	Customer's Experience	1	2	3	4	5
1	I visit hotels social media platforms because it matches my experience and expectations (customization)					
2	I do not use hotel social media platforms because the content is not relevant,					
3	I get recommendations/views from my friend first before buying or using any product or services					
4	Hotel social media platform is not easy to navigate and download content, and can't get quick feedback					
	Interactive					
5	I don't like using hotel social media platforms because it is no easy to interact with, the message is clear and understandable					
6	I use hotel social media platforms because it enables me to exchange information with other online users along common areas of interest (price, product…) e.g. through online chats					
7	I use hotel social media platform because it provides value added content					
	Brand attitude					
8	Hotel promotes its products and services online					
9	Hotel promotes its products and services on social media					

SECTION D: Determine how social media can be used to increase brand loyalty

Please indicate your opinion as per the level of disagreement or agreement with the outlinestatement using 1 to 5 scale guidelines: 1= Strongly Agree 2- Agree, 3= Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree

	Accessibility	1	2	3	4	5
1	It is easy to access hotel social media community					
2	Use of hotel's social media has enabled me create a opinion					
3	I use hotels social media platforms because they post effective informative about product, prix, place					
4	I like using hotel social media platforms because they regularly updates their important					
	Trust					
5	I trust hotel brand					
6	Information I get from hotels' social media platforms is trustworthy social					
7	Hotel offers transparency on their social media site					
8	Hotel offers timely feedback on their social media site					
	Reward					
9	I refer my online friends to hotel social media platforms because they offer their online discounts.					
10	Hotel social media platform offers discounts on their services					
11	I use hotel social media platform because they offer free gifts whenever I do an online transaction					

12. What influences you to do repeatedly use hotel social media platforms?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIATION