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# VENICE IN THE ERA OF SOCIAL NETWORKS: IMPACT ON TOURISM, ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

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**Abstract.** The article examines the impact of social networks on tourism in Venice, focusing on the processes of content creation, the use of digital platforms, advantages (increased visibility, economic benefits), and disadvantages (overtourism, environmental problems). Modern trends and prospects for sustainable tourism development are analyzed.

**Keywords.** social networks, tourism, Venice, advantages, disadvantages, overtourism.

**Introduction.** Problem statement and its connection with important scientific and practical tasks Venice, as one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world, annually welcomes millions of visitors, which generates significant economic benefits but also creates challenges related to the preservation of cultural heritage and environmental sustainability. In the modern digital world, social networks play a key role in shaping tourist flows, as they allow users to share experiences, plan trips, and disseminate information about destinations.

The main problem is that uncontrolled use of social networks contributes to the phenomenon of overtourism, when the massive influx of tourists exceeds the capacity of the city's infrastructure. This issue is connected with important scientific tasks in the fields of tourism economics, communication sociology, and environmental management, as it requires finding a balance between economic benefits and the preservation of Venice's unique environment.

According to available data, tourism generates approximately 3 billion euros annually for Venice's economy. However, overtourism causes a number of negative consequences, including rising housing prices, pollution of canals, and erosion of historical buildings.

Research on the impact of social networks on tourism has been actively conducted since the beginning of the 2010s. Studies by authors such as Mize (2023) emphasize the positive effects of social networks, including increasing the visibility of tourist destinations through viral content, which contributes to economic growth.

At the same time, publications by Responsible Travel (2023) and Ecobnb (2020) focus on the negative consequences of social media influence, particularly the phenomenon of overtourism in Venice, where digital platforms intensify mass tourism, causing environmental degradation and conflicts with local residents.

Seraphin and other researchers (2020), in the journal *Nature*, propose a systematic approach to analyzing tourism development in cities similar to Venice, where social networks contribute to a “vicious cycle” of declining quality of life. Ukrainian researchers, including scholars from VNTU (2020), consider social networks primarily as marketing tools, but less attention is paid to cultural and historical destinations.

Unresolved issues include the integration of social media content creation processes with sustainable tourism management mechanisms, particularly in Venice, where geotagging of popular locations leads to local overcrowding. This study focuses on these aspects, emphasizing practical recommendations for balancing digital promotion and heritage preservation.

**Research aim and objectives.** The aim of the article is to analyze the impact of social networks on tourism in Venice through the perspective of content creation and platform usage, identifying their advantages (economic development, promotion, increased visibility) and disadvantages (environmental and social challenges).

The objectives of the study are: to describe the process of creating tourism-related content on social networks; to evaluate the use of social media platforms by tourists and businesses; to analyze the advantages and disadvantages of social networks using Venice as an example; to identify future research prospects related to sustainable tourism development in the digital environment.

**Research results and discussion.** Venice, located on 118 islands in the Venetian Lagoon, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its unique architecture, canals, and cultural landmarks, including St. Mark’s Square and the Rialto Bridge. Tourism forms the foundation of the city’s economy, attracting more than 20 million visitors annually. However, since the 2020s, the problem of overtourism has become increasingly severe due to the influence of social networks.

Social platforms have transformed the way tourists discover destinations, plan trips, and share experiences. Visual content on Instagram, TikTok, and other platforms has significantly contributed to the global popularity of Venice, while simultaneously creating challenges related to excessive tourist concentration.

The creation of social networks begins with the development of a communication platform designed to connect users and exchange information. Historically, this process developed from early platforms such as SixDegrees (1997) to modern networks such as Instagram and TikTok, where visual content plays a central role.

The development process includes creating user profiles, publishing posts, adding geotags, implementing recommendation algorithms, and developing interactive communication tools. In Venice, tourists actively create digital content by sharing photographs and videos of canals, gondolas, historical buildings, and cultural attractions. Hashtags such as #Venice and #VisitVenice contribute to the viral distribution of content and increase destination visibility. For example, geotagging of popular locations such as the Bridge of Sighs attracts thousands of visitors who want to reproduce the same experiences shown online. As a result, social networks influence not only tourism promotion but also the spatial distribution of tourist flows.

According to Ukrainian sources, such as Webcase (2023), successful digital platforms require a strong focus on user experience. However, in tourism, organizations usually integrate their promotion strategies into existing global social networks rather than creating independent platforms.

Tourists use social networks at different stages of travel planning: searching for reviews on TripAdvisor, viewing visual content on Instagram, watching travel videos on TikTok, and booking services through direct links. In Venice, social networks are often used to find travel tips, avoid queues, and discover cheaper routes. However, such recommendations may contribute to the overload of local services and popular locations.

Tourism businesses, including hotels, restaurants, and tour operators, actively use social media marketing (SMM) to promote their services and cooperate with influencers. The main advantages include: rapid dissemination of information; accessibility for users and businesses; direct communication with audiences; networking opportunities; increased visibility of tourist destinations. Social networks have significantly contributed to Venice's global popularity, attracting younger audiences and increasing tourism-related revenues.

Social networks provide significant opportunities for the development of tourism in Venice. One of the main advantages is the economic impact, as digital platforms stimulate tourist activity, increase the number of bookings, and generate substantial revenues for local businesses. Social networks democratize access to tourism information, allowing small and medium-sized enterprises to compete with large companies by promoting their services directly to potential customers. Through digital communication, local businesses can reach international audiences without significant advertising costs. Another important advantage is cultural exchange. Tourists share authentic experiences, photographs, and stories, which increases the global recognition of Venice and strengthens its image as a unique cultural destination.

According to Tourism Review (2023), Instagram tourism contributes to increased visitor interest and influences travel decisions. Social networks also support crisis management by enabling rapid dissemination of information during emergency situations, such as floods or restrictions. Thus, social networks contribute to:

- increasing the visibility of Venice as a tourist destination;
- promoting local businesses;
- supporting cultural communication;
- improving interaction between tourists and tourism providers;
- providing fast access to important information.

Despite their advantages, social networks also create significant challenges for Venice. The main problem is overtourism, as viral content encourages mass tourism and concentrates visitors in the same locations. A large proportion of tourists are short-term visitors who spend limited amounts of money but create additional pressure on urban infrastructure. Excessive tourist flows contribute to environmental degradation, including waste accumulation, pollution of the Venetian Lagoon, and accelerated deterioration of historical buildings.

Social consequences are also significant. The growth of tourism contributes to rising housing prices and the gradual displacement of local residents. The population of Venice has decreased significantly compared with previous decades, creating challenges for maintaining the city's authentic social environment. Another negative aspect is the psychological impact of social networks. Users often create idealized images of destinations, which can lead to unrealistic expectations and excessive dependence on digital content. Travel recommendations and viral "travel hacks" shared online may also increase pressure on public transport, restaurants, and popular attractions. Overall, social networks contribute to a "vicious cycle" in which increased popularity leads to overcrowding, reduced quality of life for residents, and challenges for sustainable tourism development.

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of social networks in tourism development in Venice

Aspect	Advantages	Disadvantages
Economic	Increased tourism revenues and business opportunities	Low economic contribution from short-term visitors
Social	Cultural exchange and international communication	Displacement of local residents and social conflicts
Environmental	Promotion of sustainable and eco-friendly tourism	Pollution and deterioration of historical sites
Usage	Easy access to tourism information	Digital dependence and privacy issues

**Conclusions.** Social networks have a significant impact on tourism development in Venice. Their use creates considerable benefits, including increased visibility of the destination, economic growth, promotion of cultural heritage, and improved communication between tourists and businesses.

However, the negative consequences of uncontrolled digital promotion are becoming increasingly important. Overtourism, environmental problems, rising living costs, and social challenges demonstrate the need for a more balanced approach to the use of social networks in tourism. To ensure sustainable tourism development, it is necessary to introduce effective regulatory measures, such as tourist access management, visitor monitoring systems, and ethical digital campaigns promoting responsible travel behavior.

Future research should focus on the use of artificial intelligence for content moderation and tourism flow management; reducing the negative effects of geotagging on popular destinations; comparing the impact of social networks on other cultural cities, such as Kyiv or Lviv; developing models that combine digital marketing opportunities with cultural heritage preservation.

Therefore, social networks should be considered not only as promotional tools but also as strategic instruments requiring responsible management to maintain a balance between tourism growth and sustainable urban development.

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