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Title: “Analysis of the Presence of the Term
“Sustainability” in The Social Media Branding
of 8 Spanish Coastal Destinations”

-Constraints and opportunities

MASTER`S THESIS
DESTINATION MANAGEMENT

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Tarragona, 2022



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ABSTRACT

Sustainability is a concept that has been adopted by many destinations because it encompasses how natural systems work do to remain in balance now and in the future. Brands promote themselves as sustainable because they will connect with consumers and will increase their brand loyalty, reputation, and differentiation. Brand awareness linked to sustainability is cited as the top priority for marketers nowadays, and social media channels are a one-to-many solution for getting the word out about sustainable practices, sustainable brands. This Project is intended to analyze how destination have integrated this method of branding through social media when it comes to sustainability positioning. The objective of this research is to analyze the degree of integration of sustainability in the social network of municipalities in the Spanish coast. The sample analyzed is a set of 8 destinations in Spain and their corresponding opinion status in tweets. The procedure used to get the tweets was using the scrape tool from the scweet library. There were collected 22,044 tweets uploaded by the official account of destinations over a 5-year-period. To achieve the research objectives, a qualitative analysis of tweets included a set of 22 variables related to “sustainability”. Then, an analysis is made of the approach adopted by the municipalities to address this term in their tweets and its sustainability policies and plans that have been developed over the past 5 years. As results Even though sustainability in branding is a tool to strengthen the image of a destination based on trust, only 25% of the content of all tweets is aimed at sustainability. Within the 8 municipalities analyzed, Gandía is the municipality that performs best, with 61% of its content dedicated to sustainability issues.

Keywords: Sustainability, Social Media, Branding, Tweets, Coastal Destinations

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays sustainability is a concept that has been adopted by many destinations because it encompasses how natural systems work and yield everything required for the environment to remain in balance now and in the future. Sustainability is the key to a better future. Tourism industry rely on natural resources for business, activities. Ignoring sustainability can lead to the exhaustion of natural resources. (Dittman, 2019)

Almost the great majority of destinations devoted to tourism and all stakeholders acting in collaborative partnership are implementing the sustainable development agenda Agenda 2030 adopted by all UN Member States as a plan to guide the tourism development, regulatory frameworks of governments and policies transitions. The main idea is to mitigate inequalities and climate change that are threatening to undo the gain. Investment in inclusive and sustainable economies can unleash significant opportunities for shared prosperity. That is why the political, technological, and financial solutions have emerged to align these levers of change with sustainable development objectives. (United Nation, 2020)

It is important that brands promote themselves as sustainable because they will connect with consumers and will increase their brand loyalty, reputation, and differentiation. It will elicit and emotional response from consumers and inspire social change. It is an important opportunity for destination to communicate the brand's commitment to sustainability in other to gain identity, purchasing power and attract customers. By promoting sustainability through social media any destination will remain perdurable in the long run and fulfilling Corporate Social Responsibility. (Shayan, 2022)

Destination branding is a means of promoting the image of a destination and transmitting a message based on showing aspects that imply accessibility and affordability of services and products as well as collaboration to reach unwarranted learners. On the other hand, it constitutes an effective means to mitigate climate change and the negative impacts represented by the development of tourism in spaces with high vulnerability and thus reduce the level of environmental damage.

After the COVID-19 outbreak context, tourism industry has been seriously affected and is slowly moving towards a recovery stage taking into consideration that people's perception of safety has taken an important role in travel business because they are looking for sustainability, tranquility. (OECD, 2020). The coronavirus has shown us that we are not immune to these threats and their impact must not allow us to forget the great challenge facing humanity: the fight against climate change. In order to discover sustainable recovery paths for the industry the branding strategy is focused on communicating their sustainable plans and strategies to create awareness of the need to project its image as a sustainable destination.

Brand awareness linked to sustainability is cited as the top priority for marketers nowadays, and social media channels are a one-to-many solution for getting the word out about sustainable practices, sustainable brands. In fact, by creating a strong brand presence on social media, you can reach a broader audience. When it comes to social media branding, Twitter gives people a platform to discuss trending topics that they feel strongly about, which creates a very engaged audience for us to reach — whether organically or with paid ads. When brands connect with what is happening on Twitter, they see lifts across the marketing funnel: message association, brand awareness, brand preference, purchase intent. (Boston, 2013)

There are several benefits of analyzing twitter as a social media because it is also a great way to get a read on the brand's public reputation of any destination, to build a brand awareness and grow by building a strong organic following because by expanding a message on twitter new fans will be engaged. Precisely this master's thesis has the intention of analyzing how certain destinations deal with the issue of sustainability through this social network that is so influential in the perception of travelers. In addition, to explore How sustainability is projected through branding and specifically in communication through tweets. (Hutchinson, 2022).

It is evident that today is presenting increasingly competitive markets, where companies are exposed to multiple pressure factors because of the expectations that interest groups have placed on them. Conceiving a brand

focused on sustainability that defines principles and action frameworks is shielding it from reputational, regulatory, and operational risks. It is also a strategy that strengthens the image of a destination based on the awareness and consistency with which they act.

This Project is intended to analyze how destination have integrated this method of branding through social media when it comes to sustainability positioning. This research is done with the intention of analyzing how the promotion of more sustainable destinations has been evidenced during a five-years-period. The analysis of how destinations have evolved in recent years to the extent that sustainability has regained greater prominence in the management and image of destinations.

The research objective is to know to what extent the publication of tweets that call for awareness, care for the environment, and the promotion of a destination itself calling itself sustainable has been effective? To what extent have they incorporated sustainability into their destination promotion strategy and how has their image evolved to the extent that they have put it into practice?

The objective of this research is to analyze the degree of integration of sustainability in the social network of 8 municipalities of the Spanish coast

The thesis work is structured by an Introduction, Chapter I contains the bibliographic review on sustainability and destination branding concepts. Then appears the Methodology, the chapter where the methods to obtain and treat the data and the analytical framework are exposed. Chapter III is dedicated to the cases of analysis and the context. Chapter IV presents the most relevant results obtained from the analysis. On the other hand, Chapter V allows to understand the results obtained from the analysis of the sustainability plans and the initiatives implemented by the destinations. Finally, the conclusions and recommendations of the analysis appear.

CHAPTER I: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Branding and Social Media

The aims for brands in any social media strategy must serve the organization both internally and externally, build a sense of membership or citizenship with the destination, encourage the acceptance and communication of brand values, encourage the audience to engage in dialogue and promote the brand. Strategically, that dialogue can help the destination find and maintain a competitive advantage; inform the vision behind the brand and build differentiation for it. According to Yan, (2001) Brands still need to be differentiated and communicated to audiences, and it was found that successful online firms in the late 1990s tended to have strong CEO involvement in their websites.

Building a brand page on social media provides a source of continuously updated information for consumers while at the same time gaining exposure for brands. The ability to hold conversations directly with consumers on social media makes consumer brand relationships more intimate and fosters more rapport with consumers, especially young people. The interactive dialogues also provide an opportunity to reduce misunderstanding toward brands.

The web 2.0 and social networks have been hailed as the next media for marketing, its proponents pointing to the presence of politicians and actors on Twitter and Facebook. As mainstream media pointed out that actor – writer Stephen Fry was on Twitter, there was a sudden growth in subscribers in the United Kingdom (Macmillan, 2011).

Through the introduction of smartphones, social media has become mobile and ever-present, making presence on social media important to brands. Some of the most important aspects of social media from a branding and marketing perspective, are that the users are in control of the content they view, share, create, or comment on, and marketing efforts are inexpensive, highly measurable and targetable in comparison to traditional media. However, this does not mean imply that advertising on traditional media is outdated. Instead,

traditional media and online media such as social networks should be used as mutually supporting channels in marketing campaigns.

Social media have gained much popularity among Internet users and have provided a new paradigm for branding activities. A survey of participants from 35 countries showed that 50% of social media users are connected to brands, 42% had a conversation with a brand on social media, and 36% posted content about a brand or a company on social media (InSite Consulting, 2011).

Chua and Parackal (2009) who have done some incisive research into CEO blogs, refer that the usage of blogs gives some leaders a chance to provide audiences with an idea of their philosophy. But, in an era of competing media and short attention spans, Facebook updates, fan pages and Tweets became part of the branding toolbox. Facebook allowed blogs to be imported, forcing more users to stay on the site rather than go to the source. It gave the impression of direct engagement: companies could, for instance, communicate directly with their supporters.

It is needless to say that it is necessary for brands to build a connection with users and fostering a sense of belonging through the engagement itself. Destinations must consider their contact with audiences throughout platforms such as Twitter where users can become “follower” and give them the option to be updated, in such a way that users would be satisfied ‘feeling of being engaged: that there was a genuine belief of a two-way street in communication with the destination.

As technologies change, social media are where audiences can interact with those brands. However, technological problems limit their appeal. Nevertheless, if used correctly, social media can provide useful tools for the brand as they allow the organization’ s voice to come forward. With their growing user bases, they provide a means for audiences to engage and access brands. Social media brands provide the link between customers and the travel firms and customers may or may not develop a degree of loyalty to brands.

There are some other authors that support the fact that social media is used to gain the attention and involvement of consumers by many brands around the world (Graves 2016). According to Hütt (2011), when companies include social

media programs in their marketing, the main return they are looking for is to improve the interaction with their clients and to increase their sales. In addition to this, social media has many uses in branding. According to Pozin (2014), social media is important for “branding, acquisition, and retention”.

Regarding Christou (2015) that has established a model of Trust in a travel social media brand, there are three sets of factors correspond with the three entities involved in the brand-consumer relationship: the social media brand itself, the company behind the brand, and the traveler interacting with the brand. It is also proposed that trust in a travel social media brand will lead to brand loyalty. The brand’s characteristics play a vital role in determining whether a consumer decides to trust it. It is concluded that individuals are trusted based on their reputation (Zucker, 1986), predictability (Remple et al., 1985), and competence (Andaleep and Anwar, 1996).

There are obvious limitations to social media on brands. Neither Facebook nor Twitter can be taken far from their default look and feel, with interfaces that have become very familiar with their large user bases. Although a destination might be able to put some limited visual branding on both sites, they still work within the confines of these websites’ interfaces. In addition, the rise of new technologies that allowed audiences to opt out of ads—from cable networks to DVRs and then the internet—made it much harder for brands to buy fame. Now they had to compete directly with real entertainment. While promoters insist that branded content is a hot new thing, it is actually a relic of the mass media age that has been repackaged as a digital concept. (Holt, 2016)

Despite the existence of limitation, it is necessary to highlight that the utilization of social media for branding purposes may help to strengthen or change brand image, but in order to benefit from the power of social media, brands need to manage and enact their presence constantly (Pozin ,2014).

Brands may seek customer acquisitions by taking part in social media activities, such as discussions, that promote the brand to be associated with relevant themes and brands whose audiences are similar as the target market (Pozin, 2014). The key to new customer acquisitions is content that is interesting to the users and participating on discussions on social media

According to Pozin (2014) social media is very useful for creating and maintaining brand loyalty by managing the relationships with the users who are already customers of the brand. For example, social media may be utilized for customer service purposes. Brands should be consistent in their style of communication on different social media platforms, while customizing the content to match the characteristics of each platform.

1.2 Sustainability and Branding

Introducing sustainability as a core value and practice in business is said to be one of society's most promising means for safeguarding natural resources and eco-systems. This has led to much interest in how to integrate sustainability into the market-economic system. This view is expressed in the European Commission's (2008) It puts responsibility for sustainable consumption and production (SCP).

Villagra (2009) agrees on the same issue refereeing, since there are different positions in understanding what should be the role of communication, the corporate brand management and the corporate communication should be closely related to the Corporate Social Responsibility Strategy.

Brands, Akerlof (1970) notes, are company owned quality assurance schemes, and a means to both reduce information asymmetry and build trust. They therefore possess potential to be the foundation for further market growth for sustainable products and services, as they offer a way for corporations to 'harness' gains from investments in the development of this market in terms of brand value and customer loyalty, and so to internalize some of the positive externalities from market development work.

Brands thus help to overcome the information asymmetry Akerlof (1970) blames for the non-existence of markets for certain product qualities (here: sustainability). Second, brands are a tool well-suited for business to engage with sustainability as they allow firms to 'occupy' a certain sustainable cause. This results in (some) internalization of the positive externalities a market actor creates when actively promoting the development.

There is another perspective, that highlight the fact that, brands need to intimately connect to consumers' lives and thereby find ways to embed

sustainability into individuals' consumption in meaningful and seemingly natural ways (Ottman, Stafford and Hartman, 2006). Ideally, brands here become a tool to integrate sustainability into consumption in ways that provide consumers with emotional and social wellbeing and seamlessly fit into the post-modern consumer's identity-creation project. (Arvidsson, 2005; 2008)

Over the last decade, many destinations have shown increasing willingness to engage with SCP issues (Hughes, 2006). These efforts have often developed around brands. One prominent and highly visible example of this trend is the food retail industry, and today most major retail chains can point towards actions taken towards increased levels of sustainability on the markets they operate in. Observable efforts from retailers' brand-led sustainability work have been campaigns, product and service innovations, and co-operation with non-commercial (i.e., civil society, government agencies) and commercial partners (i.e., independent certification organizations, producers). (Arvidsson, 2005)

Regarding Lubin & Esty, (2010) perception, sustainability is clearly a matter of strategic importance. Therefore, implementing sustainability practices should be guided by a comprehensive plan in the form of a sustainability strategy. This strategy is the response of the firm to sustainability issues and a part of the company strategy. (Chandler, 1962).

Developing a sustainability-capable structure requires making radical changes across all the departments of a firm, including research and-development, production, finance, and marketing (Kotler, 2011). Firms need to coordinate the implementation of sustainable practices across these units in order to trigger synergistic effects and, thus, maximize returns. Moreover, they can gain a competitive advantage by publishing information about these practices

Integrating sustainability into branding can enable firms to appeal to clients that are concerned about sustainability, and thus, grant a competitive advantage. Research shows that CSR initiatives influence new product evaluation through their impact on destination evaluations (Brown & Dacin, 1997), as well as corporate brand.

Ensuring that sustainability becomes an integral part of the brand can be realized through several marketing applications. For example, it may involve

communication of sustainability efforts and their outcomes in advertisements, product packaging, and other promotional material. Destinations can create sustainability-oriented brands and enjoy the recognition that follows them. Indeed, sustainable brands are increasingly being acknowledged and the associated consumer perceptions. (Lubin & Esty; 2010)

Brand associations contribute to the sustainability by participating in the green initiatives of the brand (Chatterjee, 2009). When a green initiative is communicated to customers as a brand communication it has a favorable impact on their behavior. Brand communications help in building beliefs of customers about its green initiatives and develop their confidence in the intentions of the brand to act favorably for the long term needs of society (Pomering & Dolnicar, 2009).

Branding provides opportunities to manage perceptions, motivate stakeholders, and mobilize resources. It typically assumes and presents an alignment of interests of the government and those of the business sector, thus enabling governments to deploy nation branding for sustainability purposes, such as to attract sustainable businesses or promote sustainable development (Gond et al., 2011; Steurer, 2009)

Governments have been increasingly shaping and promoting the idea of sustainability in the recent years (Dentchev et al., 2017; Midttun et al., 2015; Steurer, 2009). For instance, they actively engage in the development and mechanisms of sustainability by introducing regulation, by setting standards for firms, and by partnering, facilitating, or endorsing different types of initiatives (Albareda et al., 2007; Gond et al., 2011; Knudsen et al., 2015; Steurer, 2009). Governments have also been encouraged to lead by example in executing social responsibility (Anholt, 2010; Mäkinen & Kasanen, 2016)

To be effective, sustainability governance requires acceptance from stakeholders, which, in turn, requires knowledge of local conceptions of and conditions for sustainability, and the embedding of multiple ethically acceptable values in governance (Leal Filho et al., 2016). Sustainability governance typically involves questions of economic efficiency, environmental effectiveness, equity, and political legitimacy (Adger et al., 2003)

1.3 Sustainability and Social Media

Many destinations have added social media as another outlet for their external and internal corporate communication about sustainability. Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) refers to technology-facilitated dialogue conducted through platforms including blogs, wikis, content sharing, social networking, and social bookmarking. It differs from traditional media in that it allows for a two-way interactive experience between organizations and stakeholders, rather than media outlets broadcasting information to the masses with no direct reaction or response (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). According to a survey by USA Today, two-thirds of large companies now regularly use social media and blogs to communicate (Mullaney, 2012). That percentage is even larger for smaller businesses due to the low cost of social media and its ability to reach consumers worldwide (Heggestuen & Danova, 2013).

Destination branding is a concept of a destination that can construct a social image so that it looks better than actual reality (Bungin, 2015). Elements to assess the effectiveness of a destination's branding consisting of image, introduce, differentiation, brand message after the image is created, consistency, emotional response, and creating expectation. From the elements used to assess the branding effectiveness of a tourist destination stated by Blain, Levy, & Ritchie (2005) can be used as a reference for the branding of Bekelir Village by using several elements in accordance with the current research, image, recognition, and differentiation.

Image provides an important role for a brand, how a brand is built with public perception. Social media is a source of information on forming an image and becoming a medium for social media users. So that the image has the potential to affect the audience with an attractive appearance and make it easier for users to interact with each other (Költringer & Dickinger, 2015). The opinions will be formed through social media by involving tourists with strategies through interesting image content [Oliveira & Panyik, 2015]. Aaker & Joachimsthaler (2012) said that destination branding has a long-term goal by planning a successful tourism concept, while the image is more to adaptation to short-term changes. The essence of the branding process is to build a strong and profitable image. Effective imaging allows travelers to get

to know each other's cultural background from various countries with the tourist destinations they aim for. Ideally, these efforts lead to emotional relationships, reduce feelings of discomfort and create relationships that benefit the image

Social media generates engagement and encourages telling stories about brands by offering a conceptual framework based on sociological concepts of storytelling, performance, performativity, and mobility (Lund, Cohen and Scarles, 2018). Often, citizens and local communities are put aside in the branding process, and this leads to very little connection and understanding of ownership and ties, relationships, and networks that determine communal community organizations. As a result, the level of identification with this lower brand does not promote authenticity, recognition, acceptance, and commitment by the local community (Aitken & Campelo, 2011). Brand recognition is an important first step in the consumer decision process to make choices. In general, brand recognition uses the logo or the iconic symbol of the tourist spot (Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005).

Social media has become a pertinent platform for public engagement, inter-organizational relationships, and public information in recent years (Rybako & Seltzer, 2010), allowing organizations to integrate SNS into their business strategies in order to derive value from areas such as customer traffic, customer loyalty and retention, brand awareness and reputation (Montalvo, 2016). However, while B2B analytics is valued at more than three and half times that of B2C analytics (Kalapesi et al., 2010), the interest and subsequent adoption of social media and big data analytics by B2B organizations has been unhurried when compared to that of B2C. Research conducted by McKinsey on the impact of participatory web technologies indicate that positioning of technologies to create networked organizations that promote innovative collaboration among stakeholders such as employees, customers, and partners is associated with market share gains (Bughin et al., 2010).

Branding also applies to the tourism industry. Branding is very useful to help identify goods or services from one seller or group of sellers, and for differentiation of good services from them to competitors (Aaker, 2009). The key



to the success of branding is that consumers understand differentiation between brands at the product level because brands that succeed have distinctive characteristics, so that they will always be remembered. In fact, in increasingly fierce market competition, branding is a unique way of communicating to show identity, so that it can distinguish itself from its competitors (Qu, Kim & Im, 2011; Marine, 2014). This encourages them to get involved in it by posting quality content in order to create a brand that is desired by the market through posting on social media (Lim, Chung & Weaver, 2012). An element of assessment of destination branding effectiveness, to create a strong brand differentiation is needed to be easy to remember (Blain, Levy & Ritchie, 2005).

CHAPETR II: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives-research question

The analysis performed in this research had as the specific **objectives**: 1- to know to what extent the publication of tweets that call for awareness, care for the environment, and the promotion of a destination itself calling itself sustainable has been effective? 2-To what extent have they incorporated sustainability into their destination promotion strategy and how has their image evolved to the extent that they have put it into practice?

The general objective of this research is to analyze the degree of integration of sustainability in the social network of 8 municipalities of the Spanish coast

Research question: does the tweets contain the words “sustainable” or “sustainability” or any topics and feelings linked to them enough times to position it selves as sustainable destinations and to create awareness about the environmental protection?

Research hypothesis: the sustainability branding is a strategy that municipalities use to consolidate their image by the social media in such a way that it allows to remain competitive, positioned, updated with new trends in the long run.

2.2 Analyzed DATA.

2.2.1 Process of Obtaining the Primary Data.

The Master's Final Project has been carried out in the context of the internship of the author as a BIDI fellow in the Territorial Analysis and Tourism Studies Research Group of the URV. As a member of the group with a scholarship, I have been assigned research support tasks, including carrying out a preliminary exploratory analysis of a selection of tweets in order to determine if such a source of information makes sense in order to be able to proceed to propose a larger scale analysis linked to the DG Research funded research project, ADAPTOUR (The adaptability of complex tourist destinations in the present era of social, economic and environmental transformations: Innovative paths towards destination resilience. PID2020-112525RB-I00). It is this data that I used to answer the research question of this thesis.

The data has been extracted by the student of the Computer Engineering Degree at the URV Víctor Suárez, who has provided an excel file with the tweets associated with a first sample of coastal tourist municipalities. It is with the tweets referring to these municipalities, which allow a pilot test for the general study, with which the TFM has been built.

2.2.1. Data Collection. Tweets extraction Procedure

The procedure used to get the tweets was using the scrape tool from the scweet library. This command performs the function of copying various information from tweets (date, author, message, emojis ...) simulating a user scrolling the screen. All this information is stored in csv type documents. It is a slow process when the number of tweets to download is high, but it offers a great freedom to get the tweets, as they can be downloaded by author name, date range, hashtag ... This feature has been used with python language in the Anaconda distribution.

2.3 Analysis Procedure

There were collected 22044 tweets uploaded by the official account of the 8 coastal tourism destinations over a 5-year period from 2018 to March 2022. which contained a list of keywords: related to “sustainable” or “sustainability” terms.

Once the extraction data process was finished, a qualitative analysis of tweets started. In order to achieve the research objectives, a set of 22 variables related to sustainability extracted from the Glossary of Sustainable Development (Echazú, 2020) were selected and it was the result of an exhaustive bibliographical review carried out in Chapter I of the research that allowed to focus the analysis. The list of key words appears in the following table:

Table 1. List of Key Words

	List of Key words
1	Nature
2	Heritage
3	Climate change
4	Energy

5	Beach
6	Sport
7	Fishing
8	Global warming
9	Culture
10	Responsibility
11	Safety
12	Rules
13	Climate
14	Sustainable/sustainability
15	Protection
16	Care of
17	Politics
18	Social
19	Environmental
20	Forbidden
21	Control
22	Cleaning

Source: Self-made

It is necessary to highlight the context in which the variable is used. To achieve this, an analysis is made of the approach adopted by the municipalities to address this term in their tweets, so that it can be identified if the term is used purely to promote themselves and have greater positioning and thus to attract more tourists. On the other hand, if they use it to raise awareness among both visitors and the local population about the need to protect the destination and mitigate damage to the environment.

The first step was to tabulate the tweets collected by years and per municipalities, and then began the process of filtering tweets based on keywords that were linked to sustainability. The intention was to know the frequency of appearance of these keywords in the tweets, in addition to reducing the general total of tweets and obtaining only those dedicated to sharing messages linked to sustainability.

The total of 22 variables are analyzed and the most important ones are determined according to their repetition in the total extracted tweets. It is thus defined which is the one with the greatest impact. On the other hand, we proceed to determine the keywords linked to the sustainability that are not used to communicate the brand despite its high importance when an image of ostensible tourism is built

We proceed to filter the tweets and find out the percentage of content dedicated to sustainability tweets that only include these terms. With the intention of knowing the total content that focuses on promoting the image of destinations towards sustainability in the 8 destinations analyzed.

Then we proceed to analyze the presence of the list of Key words collected in each destination and proceed to select among all the most important according to the percentage of presence in the tweets.

After that it is established the top three of municipalities that uses the most terms linked to the achievement of sustainability and on the other hand the list of the municipalities that do not use branding and social media appropriately to promote a sustainable image.

Consequently, it is essential to analyze the sustainability policies and plans that have been developed over the past 5 years. In this way, it will be possible to analyze if the destinations have a legal framework that supports their branding, in addition, the vision that each destination adopts with respect to sustainability will be understood.

The following step is to make a summary table that establishes a relationship between the presence of sustainability in the tweets with respect to the initiatives and sustainability plans they develop regularly from each municipality and thus know and compare their behavior.

And finally, to add important recommendations and suggestions can be made by the eight municipalities in order to guide its branding strategy towards sustainable practices in the destination.

CHAPTER III. CASES OF STUDY

A set of eight coastal destinations have been selected as the object of study to analyze to what extent the publication of messages on Twitter has been effective that call for awareness, care for the environment, the promotion of a destination itself calling itself sustainable.

The selected destinations are vacation destinations that are on the coast because they are destinations where the tourist activity is closely linked to the natural environment and at the same time heritage and therefore implies a greater impact on its performance. In addition, they are destinations that, according to the 2019 and 2021 Barometer, have developed their profitability favorably.

In addition, according to the annual average of beds in hotel establishments in Spain in 2021, by autonomous community, the autonomous communities to which the selected municipalities belong are the ones with the most representative figures. (Statista, 2021) which are: Andalucía, Cataluña, Canarias, and C. Valenciana.

Study Cases

The municipalities under study are briefly analyzed in order to understand the tourist context in which they develop its sustainable branding. (Hosteltur, 2019)

3. 1-Peñíscola

It is one of the most popular tourist resorts in the province of Castellon. The castle, perched on a large ridge overlooking the sea, offers a glimpse of its past at a time when knights and battlemented fortresses occupied the lands of El Maestrazgo. Visitors may also like to see the lighthouse and the Museum of the Sea or go hiking or mountain biking in the Sierra de Irla nature reserve.

3. 2-Salou

It is a tourist town in Tarragona located on the Costa Daurada, in the northeast of Spain. It offers a wide range of beaches, from small, rocky coves to the busy Levante and Poniente beaches. It is a popular destination for windsurfing,

sailing and golf. The Camino de Ronda, once used by fishermen (as the nearby statue attests), is now known for its sunrise and sunset views.

3.3-Roquetas de Mar

It is one of the largest tourist centers on the Almeria coast, both for its size, services and quality of its facilities, and for the large number of tourists who demand them annually. The city's coastline is an urban continuum parallel to the sea, a network of new residential, parks, streets and avenues that lead to wide beaches covered by an extensive promenade

3.4- Adeje

It is located in the south-west of the Island In recent years, the municipality's coastal area has undergone considerable development. Known as Costa Adeje, it boasts a top-quality hotel industry and plenty of leisure, nature, relaxation and sports options (with special mention to be made of its golf course).

3.5- Dénia

It is a historical coastal city in the province of Alicante, Spain, on the Costa Blanca halfway between Alicante and Valencia, and the capital and judicial seat of the comarca of Marina Alta. Around the city, however, was built in the last years massive: Thousands of single-family houses and apartment blocks for foreigners (especially Germans) have been built. Most of tourists are from Germany.

3.6- Benicàssim

It is a traditional holiday Centre, thanks to its six kilometers worth of sandy beaches, and its high mountains, from which we can gaze at the sea. These heights, which protect the town from the wind, are a part of the Desert of Las Palmas and Sierra de Santa Agueda, where we find the Bartolo peak (729 m). This spiritual retreat, founded by the Carmelites, nowadays offers interesting routes to cover by foot, or bicycle.

3.7- Benidorm

Located on the western Mediterranean in the province Alicante. This part is as well called by the tourist the Costa Blanca. Benidorm is a coastal city that

flourished into its current shape and stature after 1960. Until that time, Benidorm was just a small fishing village like many other coastal villages in Spain. It now thrives in vibrancy based on the tourism. Today it is known for its hotel industry, beaches, and skyscrapers and receives as many tourists from abroad as from Spain

3.8- Gandía:

The city of Gandia lies three kilometers west of the Mediterranean Sea (Costa del Azahar). Gandia has a great old town to offer the visitor. However, tourism is concentrated on the beach suburb of Gandia Platja, a few kilometers outside of Gandía, where there is almost more activity in summer than in Gandia itself. The town is a nice small town with an extensive pedestrian zone in the center and some interesting historical buildings. Gandia seems very Spanish, and little influenced by nearby coastal tourism.

The information analyzed was extracted from the official twitter sites of each of the destinations under study.

Table2. Tourist Information of the Coastal Municipalities

Municipies	Destinos	RevPAR (€) del total de hoteles.		Ocupación		Adr (€)		Alojamiento turístico	Población (habitante)
		2019	2021	2019	2021	2019	2021		
Peñíscola	C.Valenciana	51,9	54,0	67,6	58,1	77,1	93,1	797	7.882
Salou	Cataluña	66,4	50,9	81,7	51,5	81,4	99	1 233	26,775
Roquetas del mar	Andalucía	53,2	54,2	69,3	57,4	77	94,6	221	99,925
Adeje	I.Gran Canaria	100,6	85,5	84,3	61,0	119,3	140,1	1344	42,280
Denia	C.Valenciana	46,6	57,9	63,4	60,5	75,1	95,9	1414	41,733
Benicassim	C.Valenciana	49,6	75,4	63,2	69,3	78,7	108,8	142	18,055
Benidorm	C.Valenciana	57,5	47,8	77,1	50,8	74,7	94,1	1693	67,558
Gandía	C.Valenciana	-----	114,4	--	66,2	---	89,9	238	75.798

Source: Self made from data extracted from Exceltur(2019)

Ranking según RevPAR (en €) del total de hoteles en los destinos vacacionales. Enero - Diciembre 2019.

The socioeconomic profitability of tourism grew again in 2019 (RevPAR: +3.2%, employment +2.8%), slightly above the records achieved in 2018, driven by the good performance of foreign demand in the most of the peninsular holiday areas.

Regarding the profitability of holiday destinations Spanish presented different results in function of the origins of your demand and the differential attraction of your offer within a downward trend. (Barometer, 2019)

Most Andalusia holiday destination have presented results positive in its profitability in 2019. Its profitability and tourism employment, favored by the increase in demand, which was seen driven largely by the Spanish.

The coastline of the Valencian community presented heterogeneous results on your profitability. The results of the destinations of the Levantine coast were also heterogeneous in terms of profitability and employment, falling in the costa Blanca and increasing in the rest of the zones.

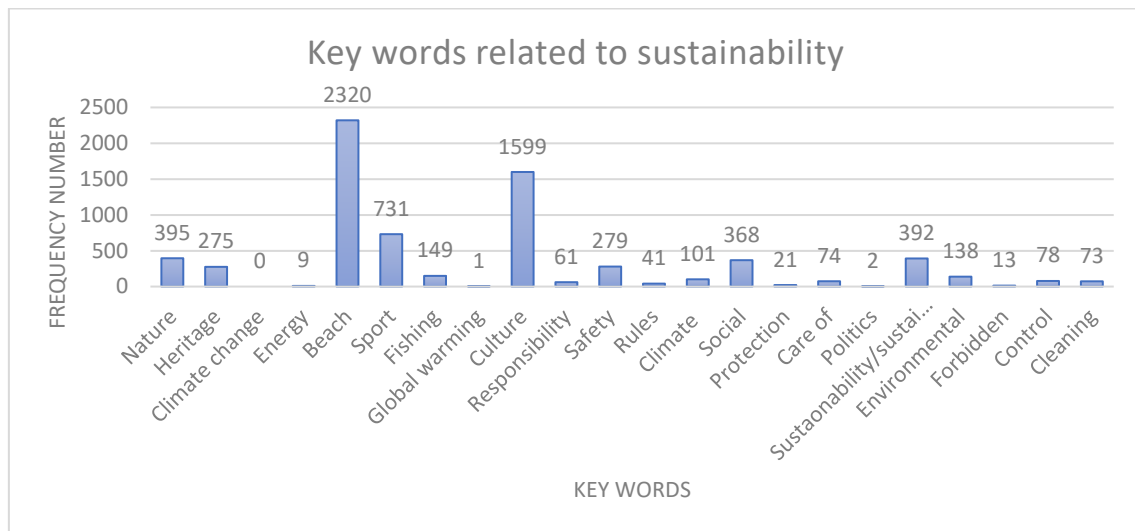
Catalan holiday destinations improved their profitability compared to a poor result in 2018 the year 2019 was quite positive for destinations Catalans in terms of profitability and, to a lesser extent, of employment, in a context of growth in demand. Holiday areas recovered the growth of Spanish demand, although they are compared to a 2018 marked by political instability, recovering the levels prior to these incidents.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

4.1 Presence of Keywords in tweets

The following graph shows the set of variables that were identified as most important in terms of sustainability analysis in a destination projects its sustainability through tweets

Figure 1. List of sustainable key word per frequency of use



Source: Self-made from collected data

To analyze the degree of importance reflected by these variables, see the graph above. First, the number of repetitions of the keywords in the twits for 5 years of each destination was tabulated. Subsequently, the set of variables that was most present in the tweets and that are consequently the most relevant were selected.

According to the results obtained from the data analysis, it can be stated that the 10 most relevant keywords in number of repetitions in the found tweets and according to their order of importance are the following:

Table 3. Most important key words used in tweets

	Key words	Frequency
1	Beach	2320
2	Culture	1599

3	Nature	395
4	Sport	731
5	Sustainable/sustainability	392
6	Heritage	275
7	Social	368
8	Safety	279
9	Fishing	149
10	Environmental	138

Source: Self-made according to collected data

From the results of the analysis of keywords, they communicate an identity that is characterized by the prominence of cultural elements, the existence of natural resources, the development of tourist activities that have an important weight in the cultural and natural elements of the municipalities. However, if the sustainable alternatives to mitigate the negative impact of tourism development are thoughts, the communication of the tweets focuses on sustainability, safety and the environment which constitute key aspects in sustainable communication strategies.

On the other hand, the following variables determined that, despite being very important in terms of sustainability, do not have great relevance on twitter since they are not mentioned on many occasions. Therefore, the variables found to be of minor importance for the destinations and that do not constitute keywords according to the previous statistical analysis carried out are the following:

Table 4. Less important key words used in tweets

	Key words	Frequency
1	Global warming	1
2	Climate change	0
3	Politics	2
4	Energy	9
5	Forbidden	13
6	Rules	41
7	Cleaning	73

Source: Self-made according to collected data

It is essential to highlight the fact that these variables do not focus on tweets constantly. However, they are terms that are of great importance and are related both to current sustainability problems, words that call for awareness, that can constitute a guide to good practices in achieving a sustainable destination, and at the same time express challenges faced by destinations to be sustainable. Which leads to think that the communication that is carried out on the idea of conceiving the sustainable destination is not being efficient enough. Calling for awareness and encouraging in the communication strategy for a municipality to be cleaner and for policies to mitigate climate change to be shared is essential.

Most of the tweets are focused on developing and diffusing “sustainability” which create customer satisfaction, while considering social and environmental aspects instead of being focused on the consumer society and materialistic behaviors which entail serious social and environmental problems.

The main intention of the tweet is to promote products, services, and activities to be sold. However, communicating the responsible consumption should be more highlighted

There is a lack of interest on the consumer side, potential and actual conflicts between socio-ecological and consumer benefits and an unfavorable environment about public and political institutions. However, the messages are launched to involve the local community in caring for the environment and protecting it through voluntary collection activities.

4.2 Key words analyzed in each destination

According to the statistics compiled within the selected keywords of greater importance, the destinations, when promoting themselves as sustainable, highlight fundamentally the term sustainability.

The following table shows the total number of key words linked to the topic of sustainability by municipality which were obtained as a result of adding all the tweets per year per municipality.

Table 5. Total keywords on “sustainability” per year and per municipality

	Sustainability Key Word					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	TOTAL
Peñíscola	36	135	195	99	11	476
Salou	124	142	289	289	79	915
Roquetes	244	467	322	337	107	1477
Adeje	48	19	188	212	42	511
Denia	31	43	137	293	19	523
Benicàssim	33	168	281	183	39	703
Benidorm	58	122	279	421	92	973
Gandía	362	245	437	420	96	1542

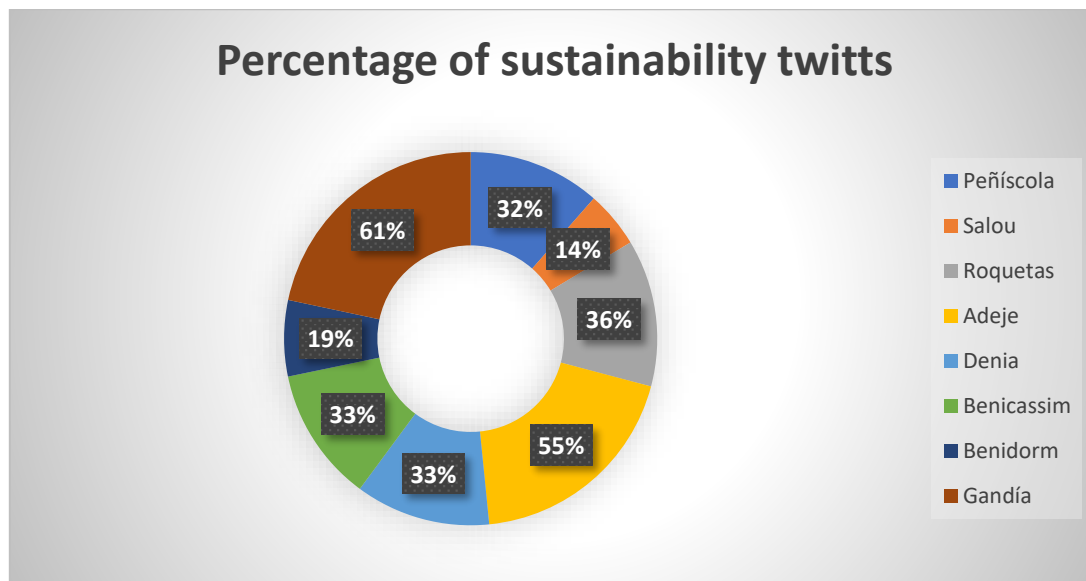
Source: Self-made according to data extracted from the official tweets of each destination

The previous table shows the sum of tweets obtained per year according to each municipality. However, it is necessary to know what percentage represents the total number of tweets dedicated to sustainability in relation to the total number of annual tweets. In this way it will be possible to establish an order and understand which are the municipalities that are promoted as sustainable throughout the branding tool.

In order to know which is the municipality that launched the most content to promote the destination as sustainable through tweets, it is obtained by calculating what percentage represents the number of tweets destined for sustainable tourism with respect to the total number of annual tweets that each municipality published from 2018 until March 2022.

The following following graph shows the percentage of content that each municipality dedicates to sustainability

Figure 2. Percentage of content linked to sustainability by municipality



Source: Self-made

According to the previous graphic and the percentages that has emerged from the table no 3, the top three of municipalities that uses the most terms linked to the achievement of sustainability is: Gandía, with 61% of the content of its tweets being aimed primarily at issues of sustainability, Adeje with more than half of its content 55% and finally Roquetas with 36%. On the other hand, the municipalities with the lowest percentage of content devoted to sustainability tweets are Benidorm with 19% and Salou with 14%.

It is necessary to highlight that according to the statistics obtained from the analysis of the tweets of the last 5 years, only 25% of the content that addresses the total number of tweets deals with sustainability issues in the 8 destinations that were selected as the object of study.

The intention of these municipalities throughout the sustainable messages is not to insist on the idea of reducing rates of consumption of natural resources, instead of doing so it is essential for a sustainable future by controlling and limiting the bad behaviors that goes against sustainable development. It is needless to say that the idea behind this approach is that cost-effective resource management can be achieved by managing the contexts of productive systems, rather than by managing the commodities that natural systems

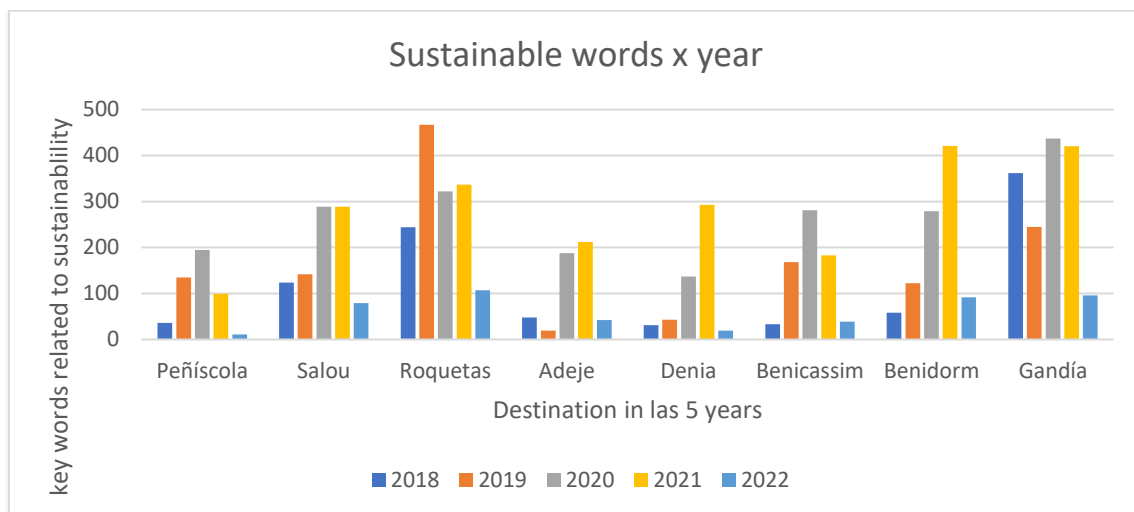
produce. Most of the eight municipalities seek to understand buyer perspectives in green supply chain relationships and devote inadequate attention to the strategic role of upstream suppliers.

4.3 Presence and evolution of the word sustainable in destinations

In order to better understand and argue and explain the results previously obtained, it is necessary to delve into the annual behavior of each municipality.

The following graph shows the evolution of the municipalities in relation to the number of tweets with sustainability content that they published annually from 2018 to the present.

Figure 3. Evolution of “sustainability” by municipalities during 2018-2022



Source: Self-made

In fact, it should be stated that in a general way and analyzing the evolution of each municipality in the years 2020 and 2021, the term sustainability in the branding of the municipalities took on more importance. Therefore, it can be affirmed that according to the graph, from 2020 there is a greater awareness on the part of the municipalities towards the need to associate their image with sustainability and that, unlike previous years, this term is in force.

Both the municipality of Roquetas del mar and the municipality of Gandía are characterized by standing out positively in one of sustainability in their destination branding, behaving as those with the greatest awareness towards the term "sustainability".

CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION: POLICY CONTEXT OF THE SOCIAL MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY BRANDING”

In order to better understand the evolution of destinations and their positioning as sustainable destinations, it is essential to analyze the sustainability policies and plans that have been developed over the past 5 years. In this way, it will be possible to analyze if the destinations have a legal framework that supports their branding, in addition, the vision that each destination adopts with respect to sustainability will be understood. On the other hand, it will be possible to define if there is a correspondence between the type of tourism that they promote (in this case sustainability) with the laws that systematically extend the management of sustainability.

The following table contains a summary of the different sustainable development plans that each municipality has been implementing, as well as the last update date of the plan.

Table 6. Plans linked to sustainability by municipality

Destination indicators and policies (Last modification)						
	Municipality	Sustainable Urban	Residue	Water	Sustainability	
		Mobility Plan	Plan	Management Plan	Plan	
1	Peñíscola	2019	2014	2019	2021	
2	Salou	2019	2021	2019	2021	
3	Roquetes	2021	2021	2015	2021	
4	Adeje	2022	2022	2021	2021	
5	Dénia	2013	2000	2021	2022	
6	Benicassim	2021	2022	2021	2021	
7	Benidorm	2021	2021	2022	2022	
8	Gandía	2014	2017	2018	2021	

Source: Self-made

Below is an evaluation of the behavior of each municipality where a link is established between the results obtained in terms of sustainability and how the policy of the destination has evolved in favor of sustainable development.

5.1-Gandía

Gandía is the municipality that publishes the largest amount of content in its tweets on sustainability with 60% of the content.

If you look at the graph no. in both 2019 and 2021 the highest number of tweets. According to the dates of the sustainability plans that have been developed, it is understood that Gandía is a municipality that has had a vision for the future and has implemented

On the other hand, the year as the plans that had been implemented were becoming obsolete since it was up to 5 years in advance, they did not incorporate sustainable competitive or updated solutions to the new challenges and emerging challenges.

However, in the years to come, as sustainability tweets increased, new regulatory orders and sustainability plans were implemented (See annex I).

It should be noted that Gandía precisely obtained a RevPar of 114.4 Euros in 2021, occupying the number position 22 in the ranking. which leads us to think that the fact of promoting itself as sustainable positively favored the positioning and attraction of tourists. (Barometer, 2021)

5.2 Adeje.

Adeje is the second municipality that publishes the largest amount of content in its tweets on sustainability with a total of 55%.

If you look at the Graph no 3. in both 2020 and 2021 the highest number of tweets. This is because, according to the dates, the sustainability plans they have developed correspond to the same years, which means that Adeje has modified its sustainability plans, a higher budget has been allocated to sustainable tourism and to the search for favorable solutions to remain competitive and for tourism to endure.

It should be noted that Adeje, despite having published lower numbers of tweets on sustainability in 2019, its RevPar was 100.6 Euros, occupying the 7th position in the ranking which was a higher figure than the following year, which was 85.5, which leads one to think that the fact of not having promoted itself as

sustainable in 2019 positively affected its positioning, attraction of tourists and profits the following year

The municipality is redirecting the tourism development towards the improvement of different aspects of Adeje and defining actions that allow contributing to the tourist recovery of the municipality after the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, in 2022 Adeje mobilizes all its resources to achieve maximum sustainability and excellence to consolidate its proposal as a destination and municipality.

5.3 Roquetas del Mar

In other to accomplish with the Goal of Sustainable Development. Roquetas has developed a huge number of projects, such as: Digitization of the supply and sanitation network, Infrastructure replacement plan to accomplish with the Clean water and sanitation. On the other hand, has implemented some others to build a sustainable community: Maintenance plan for green areas and trees, Fixed and mobile clean point project, project fifth container, Cycling tourism promotion, Energy saving program for municipal buildings: solar panels, Municipal network of electric vehicle chargers, Rehabilitation of Urban Green Spaces.

Roquetas is the third municipality that publishes the largest amount of content in its tweets on sustainability, with a total of 36% of all tweets in 5 years.

If the Graph no 3 is seen, In 2019 there was a peak and the highest number of tweets on sustainability was detected. This is because it was in 2019 when Roquetas de Mar started its Smart City and Tourist Destination projects. And it is necessary to consider that for a destination to be intelligent, it must first be sustainable. Which means that since then Roquetas already valued the importance of being recognized as a sustainable municipality.

Roquetas has modified its sustainability plans, a higher budget has been allocated to sustainable tourism and to the search for favorable solutions to remain competitive and that tourism lasts from the year 2021 according to the dates of the plans in Table 6.

In 2019, it obtained an occupancy rate of 69.3 according to data from (Barómetro, 2021,2019) which was a higher figure than the following year. which leads us to think that the focus on a smart city and specifically on a sustainable destination will attract more tourists and improve the positioning and profitability of the municipality.

The worst performance goes to:

5.4 Salou

Besides the Salou's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PMUS), it has other environmental project that support its Plan Management, for instance, Salou joins Nature Week every year with various activities. In the last edition, a bioblitz (citizen science day, with the participation of anyone who wants) was held in Cala Crancs, in Cap Salou to inventory the biodiversity of the space, including its marine area, and to help eliminate plants invasive. In 2021 a lot of plans and strategies has been implemented to increase policies and laws that make a destination more sustainable. In 2018 Salou decided to create a new plan to improve the sustainability management and mitigate the climate change.

Its mobility plans establishes a regulatory framework for circulation conditions, which shows the structuring of a legal system that backs up and supports the search for sustainability.

There are many tweets that focus on the promotion of sport. This is because Salou was certified in 2013 by the Catalan tourist agency, as a <sports tourism destination in the form of football. In 2016, the certification was applied to the dinghy sailing modality, in January 2018, in cycle tourism and finally, in early 2020, the certification as a golf destination (Hosteltur, 2021). What corroborates the fact that the tourist activity of Salou is closely linked to the natural resources available to the municipality and therefore there is an important need to protect the resources in the long term. Because its natural resources are precisely what make the destination unique and competitive.

Salou is the municipality that publishes the least amount of content in its tweets on sustainability, with a total of 14% of all tweets in 5 years.

If you look at the table 6, which contains the relations of laws and policies related to sustainability Salou has modified its existing sustainability plans to improve them, a larger amount of budget dedicated to sustainable tourism and the search for solutions has been allocated favorable to remain competitive and that tourism lasts from the year 2020.

However, although they develop sustainability plans and other activities, they do not disseminate it or position themselves as sustainable enough through tweets. should direct the branding of your destination towards an audience that can enjoy all the comforts, facilities that take place in Salou. It should get the local population to get more involved in the sustainable activities that are carried out every year in a cyclical way in favor of the environment.

It should be noted that Salou In 2019, it obtained an occupancy rate of 81.7 according to data from Barómetro, (2019,2020) which was a higher figure than the following year. which leads us to think that Salou is a municipality that is positioned in the minds of customers as a vacation destination and that although it maintains a high occupancy rate and profitability, it is not attracting tourists who are capable of taking care of themselves through branding. environment, that they are aware of the importance of sustainability.

The second of the destinations with the lowest percentage of supportive content in tweets is.

5.5 Benidorm

It is the second municipality that publishes the least amount of content in its tweets to sustainability with a total of 19% of the total number of tweets in 5 years.

If you look at the table 6, say the relations of laws and policies related to sustainability Benidorm has modified its existing sustainability plans to improve them, a larger amount of budget dedicated to sustainable tourism and the search for solutions has been allocated favorable to remain competitive and that tourism lasts from the year 2021, the same year in which the highest number of sustainability tweets was published on the web.

However, although they develop sustainability plans and other activities, it does not compensate for the lack of tweets in the rest of the years analyzed.

It should be noted that Benidorm. In 2019, it obtained a higher ADR in 2021, 94.1, than in 2019, which was 74.7, according to data from Barómetro (2021, 2019) which was a higher figure than the following year. Which leads us to think that Benidorms is a municipality that is positioned in the minds of customers as a vacation destination and that although it maintains a high occupancy rate and profitability, it is not attracting tourists who can take care of themselves through branding. environment, that they are aware of the importance of sustainability.

Within municipalities that are characterized according to the data of tweets collected by having less than half of their content destined for their sustainability, but which in turn have sustainability plans that support the sustainability approach that they promote through social networks, they stand out:

5.6 Denia

Although, Denia is a municipality that has had a sustainable urban mobility plan since 2013, which shows its concern for these issues for many years, it only has 33% of the content of its tweets dedicated to spreading its image in order to promote measures, laws of this nature.

If its position in the Ranking according to RevPAR (in €) of the total number of hotels in the destinations is analyzed from January to December 2019 occupies a position number 50 of 52 municipalities analyzed. should use branding as a strategy and instrument to promote and disseminate its regulatory framework.

Denia continues to increase its plans and allocated budget in order to develop sustainable practices, for them it has received nearly 3 million euros in an extraordinary call for Next Generation European funds to develop its Destination Tourism Sustainability Plan for the recovery from the social and economic crisis generated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

5.7 Benicassim:

If the behavior of Benicassim is analyzed, it can be said that Benicàssim will have a pioneering sustainability body in Spain. Even though the Department of

Sustainable Development will promote a campaign to raise awareness of the SDGs and will create a youth volunteer group in 2022 this municipality should work on the messages they share with the users to increase the publications that create knowledge and that transmit and disseminate their strategies. Despite these indications, it is worth noting that the occupancy level of this municipality remains at 63.4%, although they should consider the possibility of further exploiting social networks and attracting more tourists.

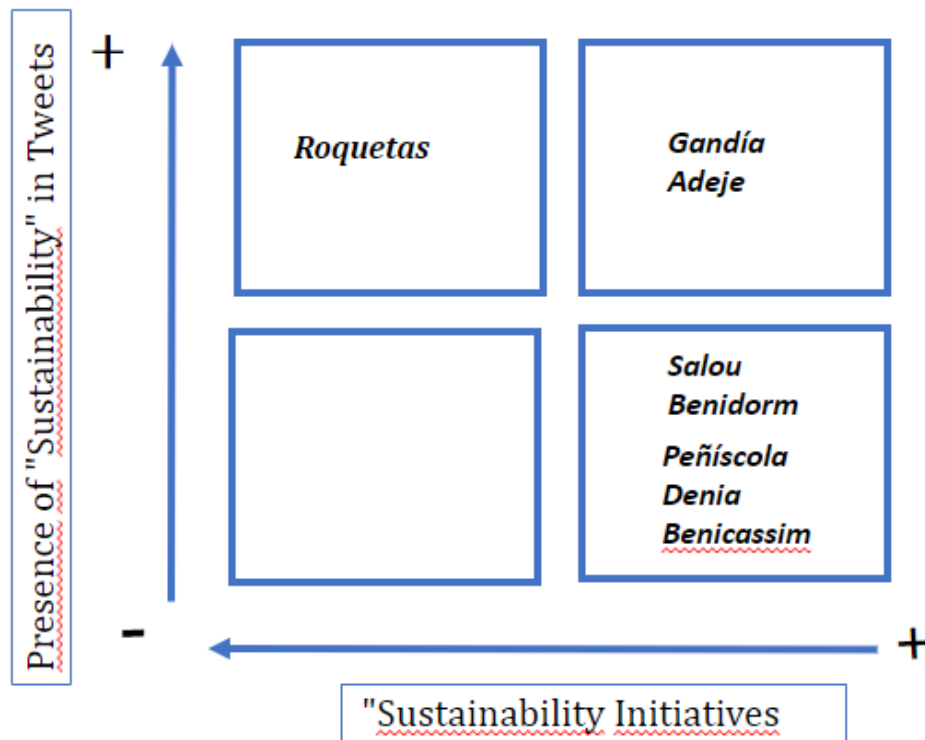
5.8 Peñíscola:

the behavior of Peñíscola is similar to the behavior of Denia and Benidorm. Although they develop sustainability plans that support a sustainable tourism strategy, they do not place special emphasis on making them known or strengthening their image.

Its occupancy rate of 67.6% in 2019 shows that it is a destination that should opt for the development of strategies that allow it to capture the attention of potential customers and social networks are an important way.

5.1 Summary Analysis of the Destination Branding of each municipality.

Figure 4. Synthesis graph of the branding state of the municipalities



Source: Self-made

Roquetas has a relatively positive sustainable branding strategy and a high presence compared to the rest of the municipalities, however its sustainable initiatives have had greater weight in recent years. therefore, its sustainability plans are not sufficiently consolidated or disseminated

On the other hand, the municipalities that are in Block II: Salou and Benidorm, despite having numerous initiatives and sustainability plans, do not spread their image towards sustainability through social networks.

In Block III, which is the ideal or most positive position, among all the municipalities analyzed, both Gandia and Adeje are the ones with the greatest presence of the term sustainability in tweets and, in turn, have the greatest number of sustainable initiatives and have more plans updated.

CHAPTER VI CONCLUSION

6.1 Concluding Remarks

1. There were selected 22 keywords in terms of analyzing the content of the tweets of 8 municipalities on the coast and of these only the word sustainability was the most relevant.
2. The word sustainability emphasizes and refers to the approach of the offer, since in most of the 8 municipalities of the coast they use it in tweets as a way to promote themselves as sustainable instead of raising awareness of both external demand and the of the need to protect natural and heritage resources so that they last over time as well as mitigate climate change by carrying out good practices during the tourist experience
3. Even though sustainability in branding is a tool to strengthen the image of a destination based on trust, only 25% of the content of all tweets is aimed at sustainability.
4. Within the 8 municipalities analyzed, Gandía is the municipality that performs best, with 61% of its content dedicated to sustainability issues. The use of this keyword has been favorable since the percentage of occupation has been increasing over time.
5. Salou is the municipality that contributes the least sustainability content through tweets, only 14% of its content. However, it maintains its stable occupancy rate as it is highly positioned in the minds of tourists as a vacation destination. Although this destination has a set of sustainability plans, laws, regulations, and guidelines for the development of tourism in a sustainable way, it has not promoted enough to be recognized as sustainable
6. Conceiving a brand focused on sustainability that defines principles and action frameworks is shielding it from reputational, regulatory, and operational risks. It is also a strategy that strengthens the image of a destination based on the awareness and consistency with which they act.
7. Within the 8 municipalities analyzed, there are 3 that, who have sustainability plans, incentives for good practices, that ratify the awareness of the government bodies regarding the terms of sustainability, only dedicate

33% of the content of their tweets to sustainability issues which are: Denia, Benicassim, Benidorm

6.2 Reflections

1. Sustainable branding is the creative specialty that deals with the development of brands from a sustainable point of view and has emerged in recent years as a response to the concern of numerous brands to choose strong values aligned with a purpose and with the need to communicate their efforts in social and environmental matters.
2. The results and diagnoses of the 8 municipalities are not aligned with the previous literature, since they reflect that the destinations do not communicate their efforts in social and environmental matters through tweets in a constant and sufficient way, since only 25% of the tweet content is dedicated to “sustainability” terms.
3. According to the list of plans and initiatives linked to sustainability issues investigated, it can be said that as of 2020, an awareness and boom in the creation of sustainable strategies began and the allocation of budgets to improve and update obsolete sustainability plans. In addition, the development of a branding focused on sustainability, although in relation to this last aspect, the content volume of the term sustainable must still be increased.

RECOMENDACIONES

General Recommendations

1. Improve the content of the tweets by the 8 municipalities in such a way that messages related to sustainability can be disseminated
2. Use tweets as a direct channel to influence the criteria of visitors and raise awareness about the need to protect the environment where tourist activities take place.
3. Give greater importance to terms such as climate change, social inclusion and energy that are key elements to achieve sustainability.
4. Use the term “sustainability” in social media branding with a focus on demand, to make visitors aware while satisfying their leisure needs in a manner consistent with the destination's sustainability policy.

Specific Recommendations

1. Roquetas del Mar should increase the initiatives of sustainability and continue consolidating its image towards this term.
2. The two municipalities that have the least presence of sustainability on tweeter which are Salou and Benidorm should implement strategies that consolidate the branding of destinations through social media such as:
 - Look for a post that performs well in search with a considerable number of backlinks
 - Introduce the relevant keywords about sustainable initiatives
 - Increase engagement
 - Make it easy for users to share the content by using hashtags
 - Create catchy headlines or compelling captions.
 - Make the sustainability policy, the efforts, achievements, and areas for improvement visible to all stakeholders.

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ANNEX I

Annex 1: Sustainability plans by municipalities

Municipio	Año	Plan	Goals
Gandía			
	2014	<i>Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan</i>	Among the objectives of the SUMP is to make the pedestrian the main protagonist of mobility. The Government of Gandia addresses the solutions to one of the main structural problems of the city, such as traffic and mobility, through the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PMUS), approved this week by the Local Government Board
	2018	<i>The reading of water meters with Vodafone's Narrowband IoT (NB-IoT) technology</i>	Which allows citizens to monitor, control and manage water consumption regardless of whether said meters are in areas of poor coverage, places of difficult access or underground
	2021	<i>Gandía Tourism Sustainability Plan</i>	Includes a set of actions aimed at recovering spaces for citizens, connecting the city with its natural surroundings and applying technological solutions that improve the information and interaction of our visitors. Gandia opts for 5 million euros for the Tourism Sustainability Plan 2022-2024
	2021	<i>New Ordinance regulating construction and demolition waste control</i>	To improve, regulate, and prevent waste from being deposited in unauthorized areas, and for waste to be managed properly according to current regulations, for the benefit of the conservation of the environment and the territory.
Adeje			
	2021	<i>Tourism sustainability and efficient waste management</i>	Advancing towards tourism sustainability and efficient waste management in the tourism sector", with which it was intended to raise awareness of the relevance of recycling in holiday destinations.



	2022	<i>Tourism Sustainability Plan</i>	The Adeje City Council is currently immersed in the preparation of a Tourism Sustainability Plan for the municipality to present to the Program of Tourism Sustainability Plans in Destinations 2021 convened by the Secretary of State for Tourism (SETUR) of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Tourism.
	2022	<i>Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PMUS-ADEJE)</i>	Document that will guide the planning of the municipality with measures and projects that will have the purpose of facilitating sustainable mobility and reducing the use of private cars.
Roquetas			
	2016	<i>Integrated sustainable development strategy</i>	To move from the traditional static exercise of putting a plan on paper to the establishment of a flexible system that allows continuous improvement. It is a cyclical and interactive process of planning, participation, and action in which the emphasis is on managing progress towards sustainability goals rather than developing a “plan” as an end product.
	2019	<i>Roquetas de Mar starts its smart city and tourist destination projects</i>	Started the process of developing as a smart city and a smart tourist destination with the launch of the “Roquetas sMART, ICT at the service of mobility” projects, one of the nine lines of action of its Sustainable Urban Development Strategy (Edusi) financed with 10 million euros of Feder funds
	2021	<i>Tourism Sustainability Plan</i>	The lines of action of this plan revolve around the green and sustainable transition, the digital one, the improvement of energy efficiency, competitiveness, and the improvement of sustainable mobility.
	2021	<i>Model of sustainability in water management</i>	The reduction and saving have been achieved, thanks to a significant effort of innovation and implementation of new technologies that improve the efficiency of the supply network,



			and mainly, to the entry of desalinated water since last year, which has also significantly improved the taste, color and quality of the water supplied.
Salou			
	2019/2024	<i>Salou Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (PMUS)</i>	It has the aim of defining future strategies that are in line with the principles of integration, participation and evaluation, the promotion of more sustainable modes of travel, on foot, by bicycle and public transport, social cohesion, and defense of the environment, guaranteeing a better quality of life for all those who live, work, and carry out their activities in the municipality
	2019	<i>Water Management Plan</i>	"Constructive Sanitation of the Mar i Pins, Cala Cranes and Cap de Salou eastern slopes" has the clear objective of eliminating these discharges and improving the municipal wastewater management that took place.
	2021	<i>Waste Reduction Campaign. "Mou-te pel residue zero!",</i>	It has the double objective of promoting the reduction of waste around local businesses in Salou, through inclusive gamification, (game for all ages and motivations) with the achievement of up to 30 different challenges that citizens can face when they go shopping or in their day to day. And, on the other hand, the promotion of commercial activity, taking into account environmental awareness.
Benidorm			
	2021	<i>Tourism Sustainability Plan in Destination</i>	The improvement and reconversion of the necessary destination with the entire health crisis of COVID19 and in line with the work that has been carried out with the Benidorm DTI Plan to be more sustainable and intelligent.
	2021	<i>Sustainable urban mobility plan SUMP</i>	Objective of improving the movement of residents in the city as well as the millions of visitors who come to our city.

			the Benidorm Sustainable Parking Plan which, linked to the development of the SUMP, offers an action plan that helps implement sustainable mobility policies in Benidorm
	2021	<i>Recycling plan</i>	Since the selective collection of glass began the number of containers and recoverable waste has been increasing progressively.
	2022	<i>Water Plan</i>	Municipal Action Plan against the Risk of Floods is aimed at ensuring "the protection of people, goods and the environment in the event of large storms", explains the mayor.
Denia			
	2021	<i>Strategic Plan in terms of tourism marketing</i>	The three axes: deseasonalization, sustainability and digitization at the destination, which aims to be the roadmap of the Department of Tourism for the next three years.
	2021	<i>Sustainable urban mobility plan</i>	The Cycling Mobility Strategy includes the reduction of speed in the urban area, the creation of bike racks, the creation of lanes for these vehicles and promoting their use
	2022	<i>Denia Tourism Sustainability Plan Meeting</i>	For local entities, financed entirely by Next Generation European funds The general objective of the plan is to strengthen Dénia's position as a leading city in sustainable gastronomy, promote the renewal of the tourism model. Axes of action: Green and sustainable transition, improvement of energy efficiency, Digital transition, Competitiveness
	2022	<i>Reduction of waste</i>	Thanks to the selfless collaboration of the local companies Industrias Aura and Bottle Recycling, the collected waste will be recycled and turned into cleaning utensils
	2022-	<i>Local Waste Plan</i>	An essential tool to improve the management of all waste fractions generated in the municipality.
	2022	<i>Water Plan</i>	Digitization transforms the Denia Municipal Water Service. The innovative fully digital management



			system allows unifying all the management of the integral water cycle around a single platform, called Aqualia Live, and where different interconnected applications are integrated.
Benicassim			
	2021	<i>Action Plan for Climate and Sustainable Energy (PACES)</i>	It is a document based on a reference emissions inventory and an assessment of risks and vulnerabilities to climate change that establishes a roadmap to deal with this problem at the local level, through mitigation and adaptation actions. Precisely, the PACES was also made known among the companies that are part of the Comprehensive System of Spanish Tourism Quality in Destinations (SICTED), within the planned citizen participation plan.
	2021	<i>Sustainable mobility plan</i>	Launching mobility solutions that directly revert not only in caring for the environment and improving quality of life, but in the long term will mean significant savings in environmental costs for Benicàssim
	2022	<i>Recyclable</i>	Define the actions of the population in terms of waste collection and management. With the aim of involving the public in the project, the council has initiated a citizen survey through which it seeks to collect the vision, opinions, uses and customs of its neighbors when it comes to disposing of their household waste
		<i>Integral Water Cycle</i>	the execution of improvements to the infrastructures of the integral water cycle and in this sense we focus the actions on the management of rainwater and wastewater”.
Peñíscola			
	2014		The Plan aims to reduce the generation of waste and provides for the drafting of a didactic and awareness guide for citizens in



			order to reduce the level of predisposition of the neighbors to propose improvement actions in terms of recycling.
	2019	<i>Water Control Plan.</i>	Plan for the control of bathing areas on the quality of the beaches of the South regarding the contamination and the analysis of the waters and their inspection.
	2019	<i>Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan</i>	The objective of the SUMP is to improve urban mobility with sustainability criteria, so as to guarantee a healthy environment where you can walk and pedal through accessible, safe and attractive itineraries; and where the use of private vehicles is reduced and rationalized, thereby reducing pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption.
	2021	<i>Peñíscola Destination Tourism Sustainability Plan</i>	The Plan will have a total investment of 3 millions euros. The candidacy that has earned the destination government approval and funding, includes investments in governance, accessibility, mobility, tourism intelligence and sustainable experiences. Peñíscola needed to write a sustainability plan to present to the SETUR ordinary call

