

# #04. Tourism, social, reputation



University of Bergamo  
Master Course in Project and  
Management of Tourism Systems  
Academic Year 2021-2022  
**IT for Tourism Services**

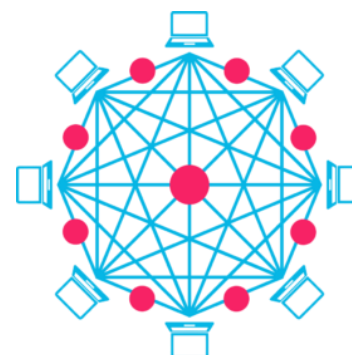
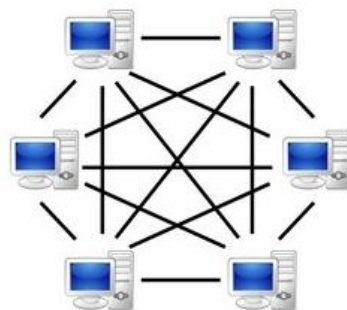
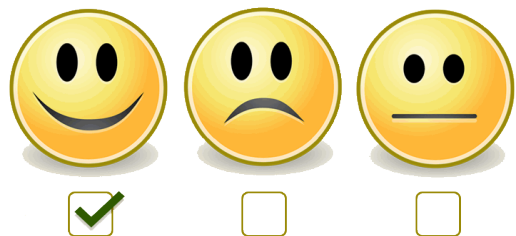


image credit to [extrapola](#)

# What are we talking about this time?



1. IT and tourism
2. A tourism websites taxonomy
3. P2P
4. Web 3.0
5. Social
6. Web reputation
7. Sentiment



CC Blockgeeks

image credits to Quora and extrapola



# Travel providers vs. travel agents



A preliminary general **distinction** should be made between travel providers and travel agents.

- ✓ Travel **providers provide** travel products.
- ✓ They provide flights, transport, hospitality...
- Travel **agents do not provide** travel products.
- They **sell someone else's** travel products.
- Most of them do so **through the Web**, today.
- ❖ As we will see, some **special travel agents** also are on the market today. They are **accommodation brokers**, also improperly called **Peer-to-Peer (P2P)** travel services.



# IT and tourism



The digital revolution and **Information Technology (IT)** have had a **very strong impact** on tourism.

**Traditional** travel agents – that is pre-digital tour operators like TUI and Carlson, travel retailers and ticket offices – **no longer dominate** the market at all.

On the other hand **Travel Providers** – like Air France, Deutsche Bahn, or Accor – can **sell** their tourist services and products **directly** to final customers through the Web today, and no longer need traditional tour operators, travel retailers and ticket offices.

Some call this process **disintermediation**.



# Online Travel Agents

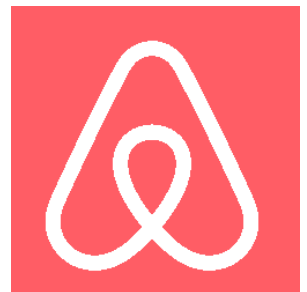
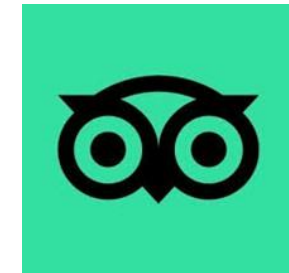


This is true, but it's not only a matter of disintermediation.

Actually, **Online Travel Agents (OTAs, or OLTAs)** like Booking.com, Expedia, TripAdvisor and **accommodation brokers** like Airbnb do not simply “disintermediate”.

They now make use of the Web to run a **different sort of intermediation** between travel producers and final customers.

Big **OTAs** like Booking.com and Expedia, the TripAdvisor community, and Airbnb itself – though springing from diverse stories, and adopting diverse models – have all succeeded in **taking the place** of traditional, pre-digital travel agents.



# Appealing technologies



Digital technologies have paved the way to interesting and appealing **new ways of selling** tourist services, products and places **directly** to final customers.

One of the first has been the so-called **Last Minute**, which offer late travel deals.



image credit to Depositphotos

Another is **Dynamic Packaging** – often connected with **Recommendation Systems** – which allows customers to build their own travel itineraries by consulting recommendations from previous tourists and assembling services accordingly.



image credit to bug-software.com

# Digital has invaded tourism



This innovation process is fast and still ongoing, and we really don't know which new technologies will affect tourism in the future.

Recent instances have been the so-called Peer-to-Peer (P2P) travel services like **Airbnb** and **Uber**, two **disruptors** which now drive the market but began operations only nine or ten years ago.

**Homes are just the beginning.**

Come back on November 17th to hear what's next from our CEO, Brian Chesky.

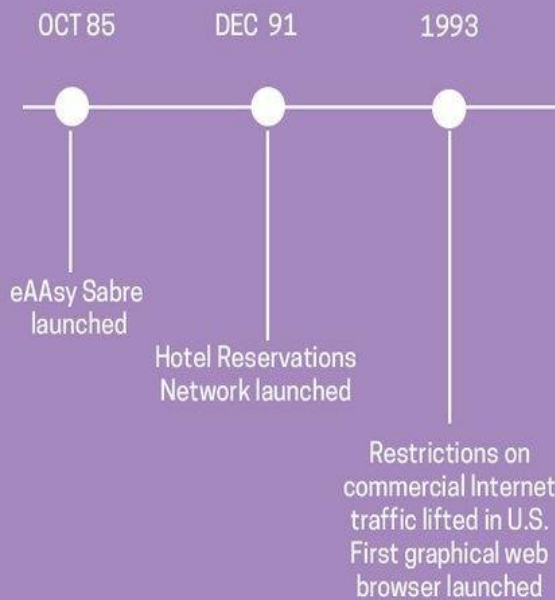
Remind me

**Tourism** has come to be a **leading innovation field**, which an aggressive industry platform like **Skift** has prioritized. Some slides from Skift – about years from 1985 to 2005 – follow.

## PRE-ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCY

American Airline's Sabre service launched the first DIY booking service via dial-up partners including Compuserve.

# Skift history 1



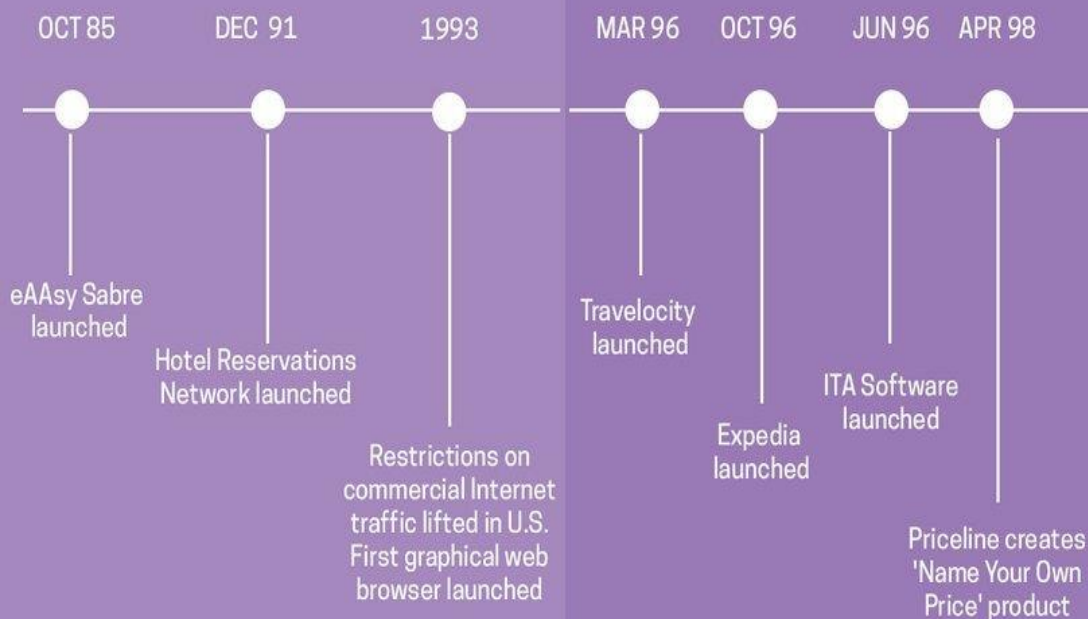


## PRE-ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCY

## THE KEY LAUNCHES

Thanks to the advent of the web browser and dial-up services including America Online, consumers began using the Internet to shop.

# Skift history 2



## PRE-ONLINE TRAVEL AGENCY

## THE KEY LAUNCHES

Thanks to the advent of the web browser and dial-up services including America Online, consumers began using the Internet to shop.

## CONSOLIDATION AND EVOLUTION

Following the first generation of online travel agencies (OTAs), the field entered into a period of consolidation, IPOs, and new brands.

# Skift history 3



# The industry and DMOs, a short history



As we saw from the Skift history, IT and tourism have long been parallel and rapidly growing phenomena.

1) The **tourism industry** began using IT to improve transportation, intermediation and hospitality **shortly after WW2**. Those were the years when **Computer Reservations Systems (CRS)** – later **Global Distribution Systems (GDS)**, like Sabre and Amadeus – were born.

2) Then **the Internet era** started (1991-2002), and both the industry and **Destination Management Organizations (DMOs)** began developing websites, in order to communicate smoothly with their potential customers.



image credit to Depositphotos

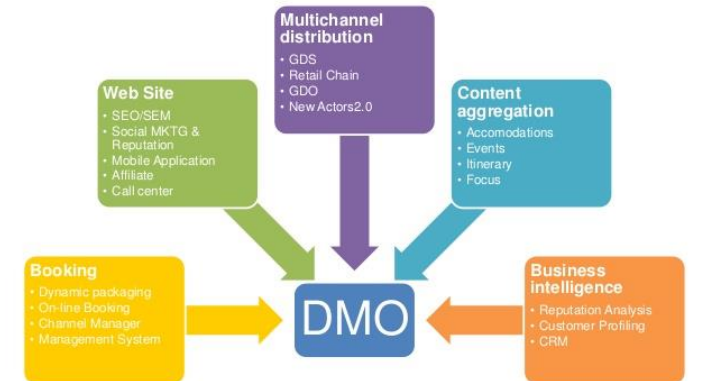
# Towards customer care and support



amadeus  
Your technology partner

TRAVEL ONE

## Destination Management System



23 Il turismo in rete. Semplicemente

by OPEN21

**Visit Bergamo**  
Un capolavoro italiano

3) In 1991-2002 DMOs involved local actors – or, rather, tried to involve local actors... – by centralizing and distributing tourist information and services from various partners in their own destinations’ territories. The idea was to build destination management systems.

3) During the following decades of the Internet era (from 2002) the change has been more radical. The industry and DMOs have shifted from creating technological artifacts, like websites, to customer care and increased support to the tourists’ decision-making process.

# All right... But now back to the basics



When you come across a website somehow dealing with tourism, can you say what sort of a website it is?

Can you spell its

- category?
- model?
- main task?

Strange as the word may look to you, in the following pages we're going to produce a tourism websites *taxonomy*.



# Which is the real thing?



Which of these websites is the one that Kraków delivers to its guests?

What are the other two for? To begin answering, let's try to provide our taxonomy of tourism websites.

# Who's who?



If you're in serious doubt about **a website's who's who**, finding out who owns the **second-level domain name** may be worthwhile.

To do so, you can consult the whois form on websites like <https://who.is>, where owners of the “international” domain names, the first level of which is **.com**, **.net**, **.org**, **.biz**, **.info**, **.tv**, **.is**, **.travel** or the like, are usually found.

National domains, the first level of which coincide with **national states'** acronyms – like **.pl** for Poland, **.it** for Italy, or **.uk** for the United Kingdom – may also be searched for through individual national registration authorities.



# Destination Management Organizations



Categories of tourism websites (1) – The public, or public/private consortia

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>DMOs</b> [Destination Management or Marketing Organizations] (or <b>LTBs</b> , Local Tourist Boards, or <b>RTBs</b> , Regional Tourist Boards)	Either public or private/public funding	Attracting visitors to the destination; marketing the destination and local actors; informing and assisting visitors before, during and after their visit; dealing with sustainability issues





# DMSs, Destination Management Systems



In terms of digital management of tourism destinations, there's more to be considered. Let's introduce the **Destination Management Systems**, or **DMSs**.

DMSs are based on **digital platforms**. They're based on **content management systems** which are intended to drive local tourism operators to **cooperate** with one another. This is instrumental to manage a local tourism system – or, if you prefer, **a destination as a network**.

In fact, DMSs are **based on a network approach** as far as tourism operators (local authorities, hoteliers, restaurant managers, museum curators...) are concerned ... or, rather, DMS are supposed to be based on a network approach.

The story of Tiscover provides examples. Your lecturer, however, does not tell it here.

**tiscover**

# Travel providers



Categories of tourism websites (2) – Big private, or public

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Travel Providers</b> (Air France, Deutsche Bahn, Trenitalia, RyanAir, Accor, Holiday Inn, Hertz etc.)	Online sale of tourism services (flights, hotels, car rentals etc.) mostly produced by the suppliers themselves	Selling services directly (no agents)



... and we're not dealing here with B2B GDSs like Amadeus or Sabre.

# “Amadeus”? What is that?



Amadeus IT Group is a multinational IT provider for the global travel and tourism industry.

Amadeus was originally created as a neutral Global Distribution System (GDS) by Air France, Iberia, Lufthansa and SAS in 1987 in order to connect providers' content with travel agencies and consumers in real time.

The creation of Amadeus was intended to offer a European alternative to Sabre, an American GDS.



Source: [Wikipedia](#), accessed 20210926

# Travel agents



Categories of tourism websites (3) – Big or small private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Pre-digital agents</b> (big like TUI and Amex, or small like SmallWorld and local travel shops)	Intermediation of tourism services mostly not produced by them	Selling tourism services and travel packages

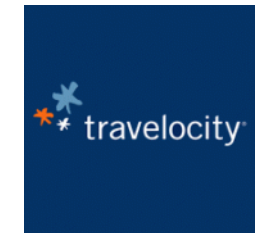


# Online Travel Agents (OTA, OLTA)



Categories of tourism websites (4) – Big private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Online Travel Agents (OTA or OLTA</b> , like Travelocity, Expedia, Booking.com, Priceline, Venere, HostelWorld, eDreams etc.)	Online intermediation and sale of tourism services (flights, accommodation, car rentals, packaged tours etc.) mostly not produced by agents	Cashing brokerage rates (under different specific models: for instance, Expedia's differs from Booking.com's)



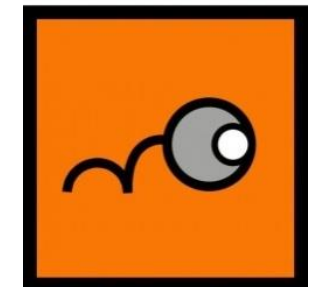
# Travel metasearch engines



Categories of tourism websites (5) – Big private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Travel Metasearch Engines</b> (or fare aggregators, like Trivago, Kayak, Mobissimo etc.)	Online comparison of tourism services and their fares (flights, accommodation, car rentals, packaged tours etc.) mostly offered by Online Travel Agents	Cashing intermediation, mostly from Online Travel Agents

trivago



**Mobissimo**  
the ultimate travel search engine

# Digital? What can destinations do?



A relevant question. Which **policy** can a destination adopt, when it deals with **selling** its tourism services to the general public?

Here are the **four available options**, that – please, note – can **combine** with one another.

1. **Doing nothing**. A DMO can choose not to mention hotel accommodation at all.

Several national tourist boards adopt this policy, as many DMOs are statutorily not allowed to advise about accommodation, nor to sell.

But **an essential service is missing!**



# More choices for the DMOs



2. **Linking to the hotels' websites.** A DMO can list the local hotels and add links to the hotels' websites. In practice, this is often the only viable choice. A service is formally provided, but **visitors won't use it very much**: it's easier, for them, referring to their favourite OTA website or Airbnb.

3. **Building its own platform.** A DMO can build its own hotel reservation system, as a public component of its **DMS**. This is an **expensive** option, however, and visitors would probably use their favourite OTAs just the same.



image credit to Shutterstock



# Coming to terms with the enemy?



4. **Dealing with an OTA.** Finally, a DMO can find an agreement with an OTA or a Travel Metasearch Engine.

A **hotel reservation** service is somehow **provided**, and the DMO can get some profits through an **affiliation** agreement.

Although this is the cheapest and quickest option, critics might observe that, by doing so, the DMO **loses control** on accommodation policies, and **abandons** all the accommodation businesses in its own area – which a DMO should take care of and promote – to the OTAs' will.

Nonetheless, a leading Italian DMO like VisitTrentino efficiently **combined** its platform with an affiliation.



image credit to Shutterstock

# Affiliation? What is this?



We mentioned **affiliation** as a potential **resource** for a DMO website that finds an agreement with an OTA or a metasearch engine.

But what is an affiliation in digital terms?

An affiliation is an **agreement** between a **lesser website** and a **hub** – like an OTA or a metasearch engine (or Amazon, like in the picture).



image credit to [amazon.fr](https://www.amazon.fr)

When a **customer** reaches a hub from a lesser website, and **ends up buying** a product from the hub, the managers of the lesser website get a **percentage**.

# Hoteliers and e-commerce



Dependence on OTAs is a problem that must be addressed not only by DMOs but by **hoteliers**, too.

Worse. Destinations can choose to avoid OTAs, but hotels actually can't.

**People** are increasingly accustomed to **book through** their favourite **OTA**, and hotels which are **not listed** on OTAs run the **risk** of becoming **invisible**.



image credit to [travolution](#)

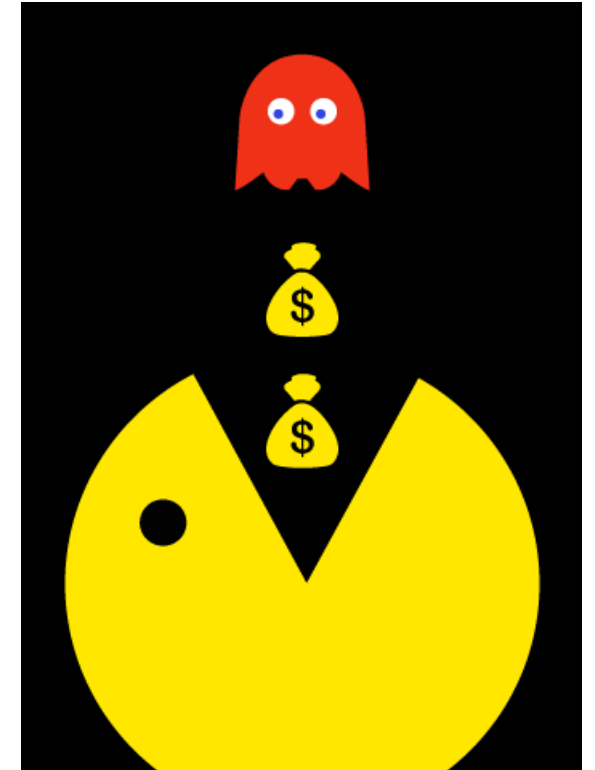
# Management of tourism businesses



OTAs charge a percentage on reservations placed through them – which erodes the hoteliers' income.

Although dealing with accommodation enterprises is beyond the scope of these lectures, this issue has at least to be mentioned here.

Some materials on management of tourism businesses, relating to workshops designed by your lecturer, are available from a previous IT for Tourism Managers webpage at [http://www00.unibg.it/struttura/en\\_strutturasmst.asp?corso=44111](http://www00.unibg.it/struttura/en_strutturasmst.asp?corso=44111)



# Travel communities



## Categories of tourism websites (6) – Big private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Travel Communities</b> (first of all, Tripadvisor)	Online comparison of tourism services (often accommodation, food and points of interest) through UGC, or User-Generated Content: typically, customer reviews	Cashing advertisements (though TripAdvisor has become something very close to an OTA in recent years)



Question.  
Is TripAdvisor simply a travel community still?

# Travel publishers



## Categories of tourism websites (7) – Private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Travel publishers</b> (Frommer's, Lonely Planet, the Touring Club of Italy, Michelin etc.)	Sale of guidebooks, travel books or digital content, mostly produced by the publishers themselves	Selling books or digital content directly (no intermediation). Also selling massive digital content to destinations or companies.

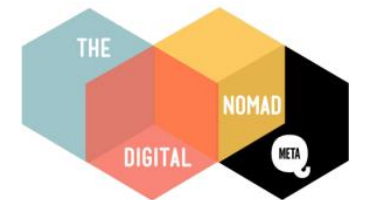


# Travel blogs



## Categories of tourism websites (8) – Small private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Travel Blogs</b> (or travelogue, like Peter Greenberg, Nomadic Matt, Travel Break, etc.)	None – though some travel bloggers increasingly act as professional travel writers or journalists. Affiliation is also possible	Informing on personal travels, possibly making profits through agreements with DMOs or publishers, and/or marginal profits through affiliations

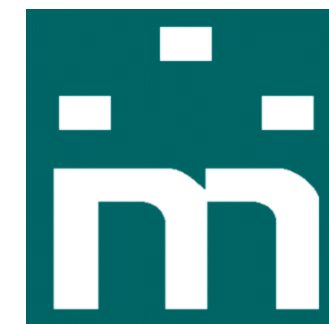


# Unofficial “destinations”



## Categories of tourism websites (9) – Small private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Small Businesses or Amateurs</b> (like CiaoMilano)	Sponsorship and/or advertisements on the website; possibly sale of digital content; <b>affiliation</b>	Informing on a tourist area, and possibly making marginal profits through affiliations





# Small service suppliers



## Categories of tourism websites (10) – Small private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Accommodation Suppliers</b> (Family-run private hotels, Farmhouses, Bed & Breakfasts, etc.)	Online sale of tourism services (hospitality) produced by the suppliers themselves	Selling services <b>directly</b> (no intermediation) <b>or selling through</b> Online Travel Agents and/or DMOs and/or accommodation brokers



# Accommodation brokers




Categories of tourism websites (11) – Big private

General category of tourism websites	Model	Main task
<b>Accommodation Brokers</b> (like Airbnb, Wimdu, CouchSurfing, etc.)	Online intermediation of accommodation either provided by small business or made available by citizens	Cashing brokerage rates, if any. (... it may be interesting to note that CouchSurfing does not cash intermediation.)



Such brokers are *improperly* called **Peer-to-Peer (P2P) travel services**.

# The so-called Peer-to-Peer travel services




**Authenticity**

- Authentic experiences
- Meeting local people



**Technology**

- Online and mobile platforms
- Social media functionalities



**Value**

- High value for money
- Advent of online micro-entrepreneurs

“Consumers are expected to increasingly turn to Peer-to-Peer travel services, which represent today **the best answer to** some of their **needs**, while large travel companies are likely to gradually embrace the Peer-to-Peer trend.”

Source: World Travel & Tourism Council, “Online Travel in 2016: Mobile Channel and Peer-to-Peer Travel Services Drivers of Growth”, [Medium](#), January 27, 2016

# Peer-to-Peer, digitally speaking

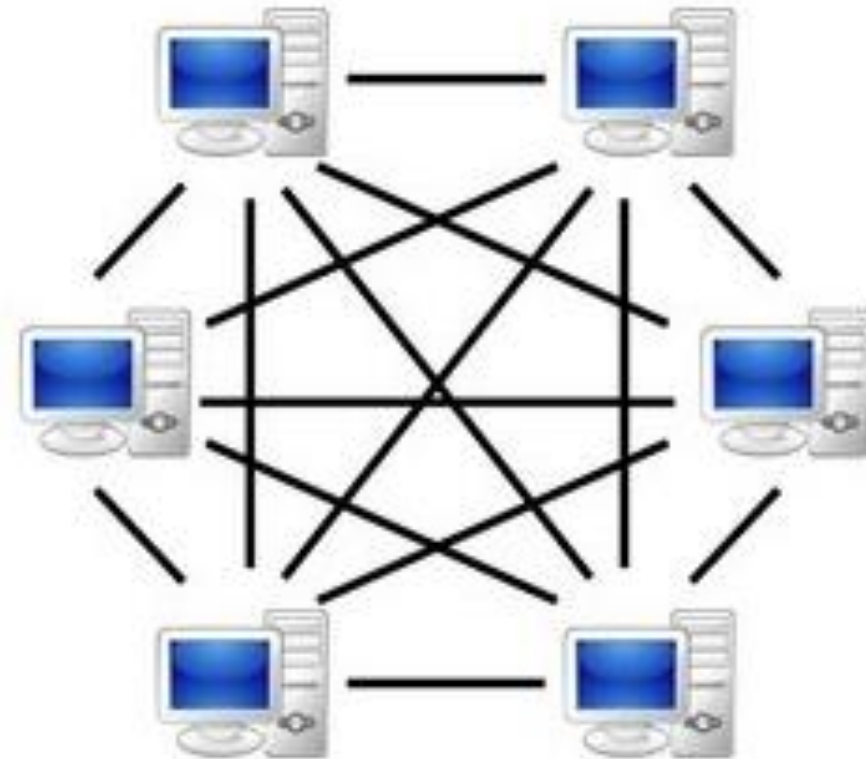


Let's speak digital, however!

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) computing or networking is a **distributed** application architecture that **partitions tasks** or work loads between peers.

Peers are **equally privileged**, equipotent participants in the application.

They are said to form a peer-to-peer **network** of nodes.



P2P-network

image credit to [Quora](#)

# Real Peer-to-Peer, historically speaking



Mass **diffusion** of P2P services already happened at least **twice**.

The first time was with **Napster**, a music sharing service, in 1999.

The second time was with **Skype** in 2003.

The original release of Skype put users in connection through a traditional client-server platform. Once the connection between the users was established, however, the platform went out, and let the users go on through a P2P connection.

Skype was bought by Microsoft in 2011, and repeatedly redesigned since then. It is **not a P2P service any longer**.



# Peer-to-Peer?

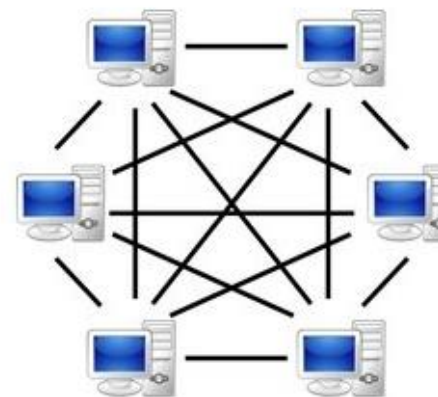


image credit to [Quora](#)

In digital terms, **neither** Airbnb **nor** Uber – which is as a sort of Airbnb-equivalent in the field of private transport – **use P2P connections**.

When a **guest** contacts a **host**, she/he does not contact her/him directly. Both in Airbnb and in Uber, a traditional **server-based platform** is always **in between**.

The supposed peer-to-peer **digital** connection is **apparent** only. A peer-to-peer **personal** connection, if any, happens later.



P2P-network



Server-based



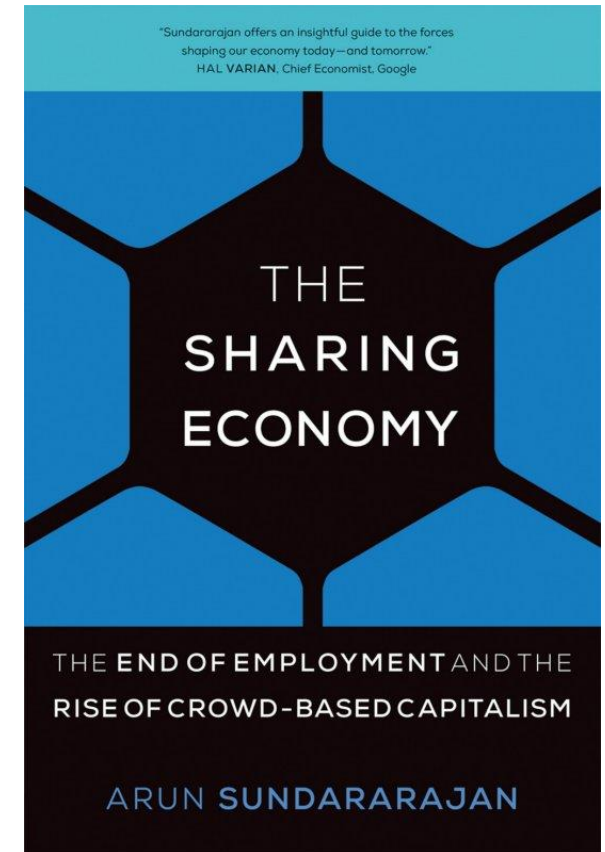
# Crowd-based capitalism?



“Giving someone a ride, having a guest in your spare room, running errands for someone, participating in a supper club — these are not revolutionary concepts”, the release notes of this book say.

“What is new, in the ‘**sharing economy**,’ is that you are not helping a friend for free; you are providing these services to a stranger for **money**.”

**Arun Sundararajan** explains the transition to what he describes as “**crowd-based capitalism**” — a new way of organizing economic activity that may supplant the traditional corporate-centered model.





# Web 3.0?



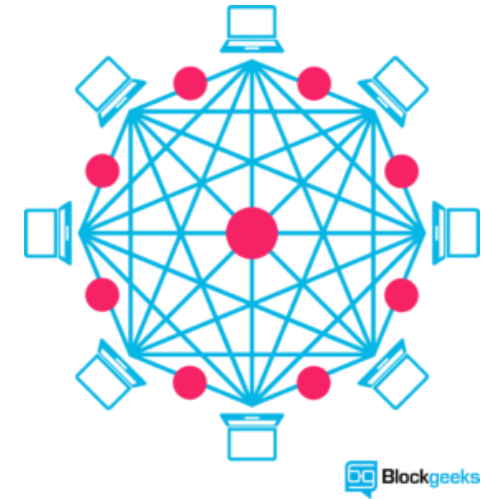
Sundararajan's idea of a **transition** from a corporate-centred model to a “crowd-based capitalism” must be seriously considered.

A “new way of organizing economic activity, bound to supplant the traditional corporate-centred model” may well be going on.

Is this the proverbial **Web 3.0** that many are talking about?

Berner's Lee has foreseen the Web 3.0 as a **semantic Web**, that is a Web where much of **the meaning is machine-readable** and “our lives will be handled by machines talking to machines.”

Sundararajan and others foresight the Web 3.0 as an **environment** where the economy is **driven by shared consensus** – like in a **blockchain**, where shared data are secure and reliable inasmuch as they are modification-resistant.



# Web 3.0 as decentralisation

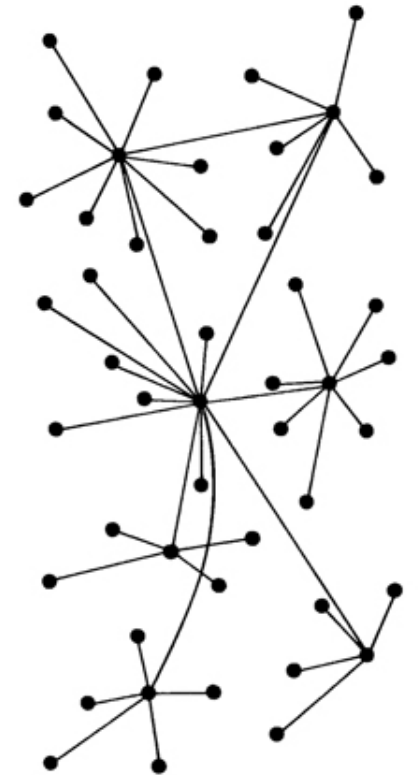


Both Berner's Lee's and Sundararajan's approaches to the Web 3.0 think of moving **away from centralised services** – like social media or e-commerce – that **depend on single organizations** to function.

**Money itself**, which we commonly perceive as something that only central banks can create, **is involved**.

Thanks to **blockchain** and its **decentralized consensus policy**, new **currencies** – informally known as “cryptocurrencies” because their data are encrypted and modification-resistant – **can now be created**, whose functions are managed by **shared consensus**.

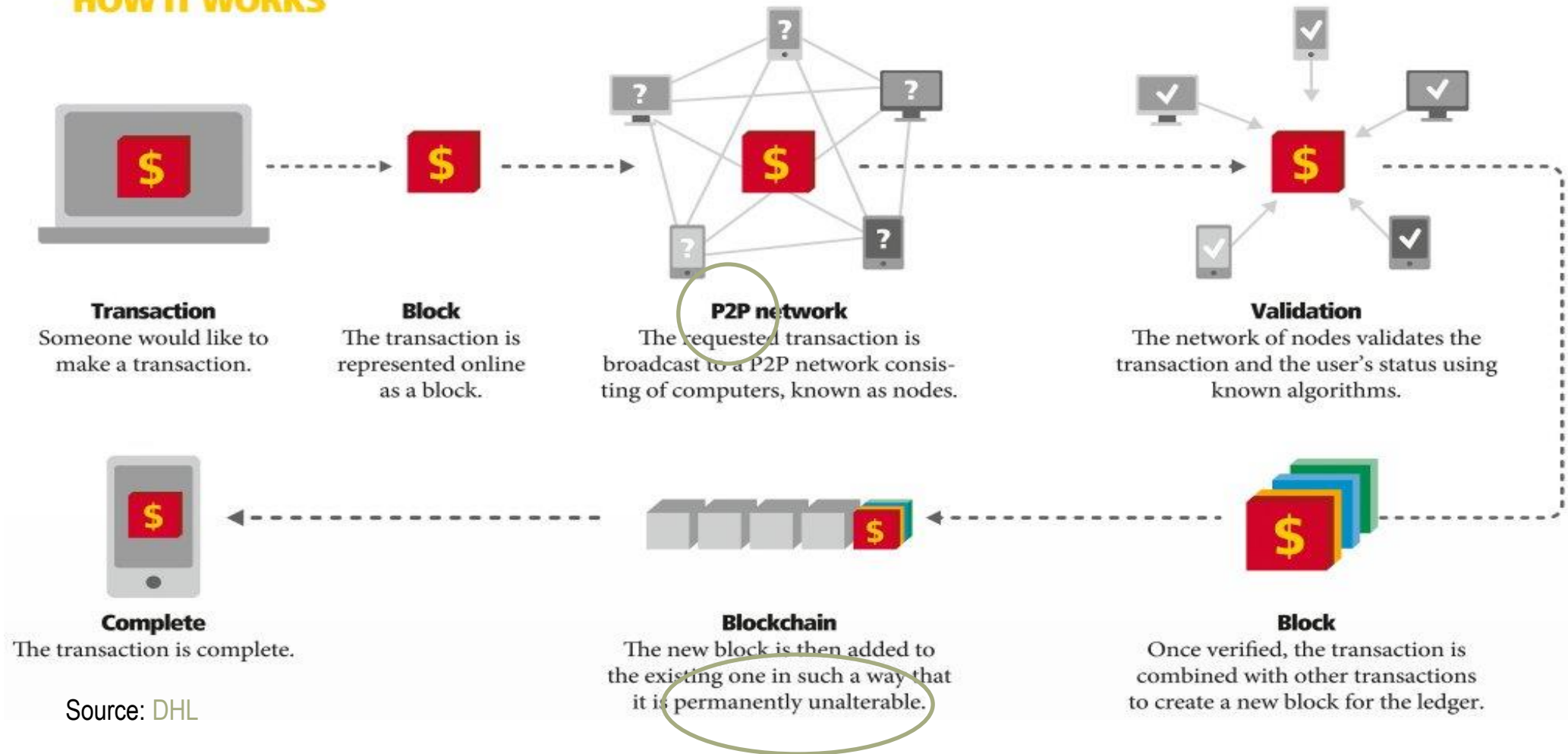
New coins can be launched, through **Initial Coin Offerings (ICOs)**.



# Blockchain P2P decentralization



## HOW IT WORKS



# Blockchain accommodation services?



A possible future might come from blockchain accommodation services, where

- hotel and family accommodation reservations are managed through P2P connections and modification-resistant blocks;
- OTAs and brokers like Booking.com or Airbnb might no longer be needed;
- potential sustainability issues might be addressed through the blockchain.



image credit to Use the Bitcoin

# TripAdvisor and User-Generated Content



Whether or not blockchain accommodation services will substitute the current OTAs and accommodation brokers, it is clear that **shared users' judgements** do play – and will play – a **crucial role**. It was tourism to pioneer the so-called **e-Word of Mouth** (eWOM). The first platform to gather **User-Generated Content** (UGC) on a mass scale was a tourism platform: TripAdvisor.

Today **TripAdvisor** is something very close to an OTA. But it took off as a genuine community among tourists. As the founders wrote,

“We started as a site where we were focused more on those official words from guidebooks or newspapers or magazines. We also had a button in the very beginning that said, ‘**Visitors, add your own review**’, and pretty soon the number of average **consumer reviews** far **surpassed** the number of ‘professional reviews’.”



# “Social, the default state”



The social trend triggered by UGC was identified – and denounced – by **Andrew Keen** as early as in 2012.

In his book *#digitalvertigo* he wrote that

“**The social has become the default setting of the Internet.**”

(We will see that social networking has combined with the diffusion of smartphones to the point that **the basic situation** to be considered by tourism managers today is **mobile social**.)

Anyway... Do the social networks compel us – as Keen wrote – to **show off** like in a **panopticon**? This is probably true, but the social networks also imply a more basic need: **social exchange**. After all, all of us exchange, work, buy and sell **every day**.



# Karl Marx

SINCE THE PRODUCERS DO NOT COME INTO SOCIAL CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER UNTIL THEY EXCHANGE THEIR PRODUCTS, THE SPECIFIC SOCIAL CHARACTER OF EACH PRODUCER'S LABOUR DOES NOT SHOW ITSELF EXCEPT IN THE ACT OF EXCHANGE.

Thomas Locher, 2007. Georg Kargl Gallery, Vienna

# Social networks & Big Data

UGC are part of the huge sets of data – also created by Internet communication, smartphones, GPS and wi-fi – that we’ve become accustomed to refer to as **Big Data**. Those “big data” are absolutely **not homogeneous**, and have **different owners**.

Yet they can – theoretically, at least – be gathered, analysed, processed by AI, and **put to good use**.

Big Data can be used by tourism managers – as you yourselves are likely to become in the future – to understand **how users behave**, try **co-creating** their experience, and **influence them to buy**.



image credit to CleanPNG



# Reputation



Let's come to the point. The way in which we are practically compelled to show off in the social networks deals with the social and economical role we play in the world.

The style we adopt throughout the social networks has a socio-economical weight.

The way in which we sell ourselves in public deals with our own reputation.

- Reputation? What is this?

What is reputation in the digital/“real” ecosystem?

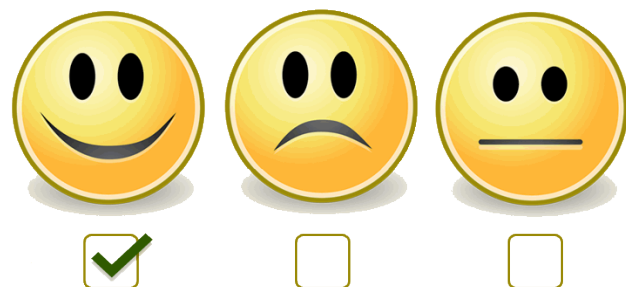


image credit to extrapola



# Reputation compares and evolves



1. Generally speaking, reputation is **how something** (or someone, or a website, or a destination...) **is perceived**.

For instance, Blackberry was the leading mobile phone system before the iPhone was introduced. The appearance of the iPhone turned Blackberry into something perceived as stiff, related to business. Just a tool for boring businessmen.

This brings us to some further conclusions.

2. Reputation **changes in time**.

3. Reputation **implies a comparison**.

... but what does this mean on the Web?



# Web reputation



You may remember that, talking about **networks**, we relied on **CheckPageRank** to retrace a **website** or a webpage **ranking**.

Well... Intuitively, we **might think** that a website **ranked 10** (like <https://facebook.com/>) represents **an entity** with a **better reputation** than an entity whose website is **ranked 6** (like <https://www.unitn.it/>) or **5** (like <https://www.unibg.it/>). But this would be **wrong**.

The point here is **not a website's visibility**, but **how the entity represented by that website is socially perceived**.

How do people **perceive** that entity? What do **shared users' judgements** reveal about the reputation of that entity?

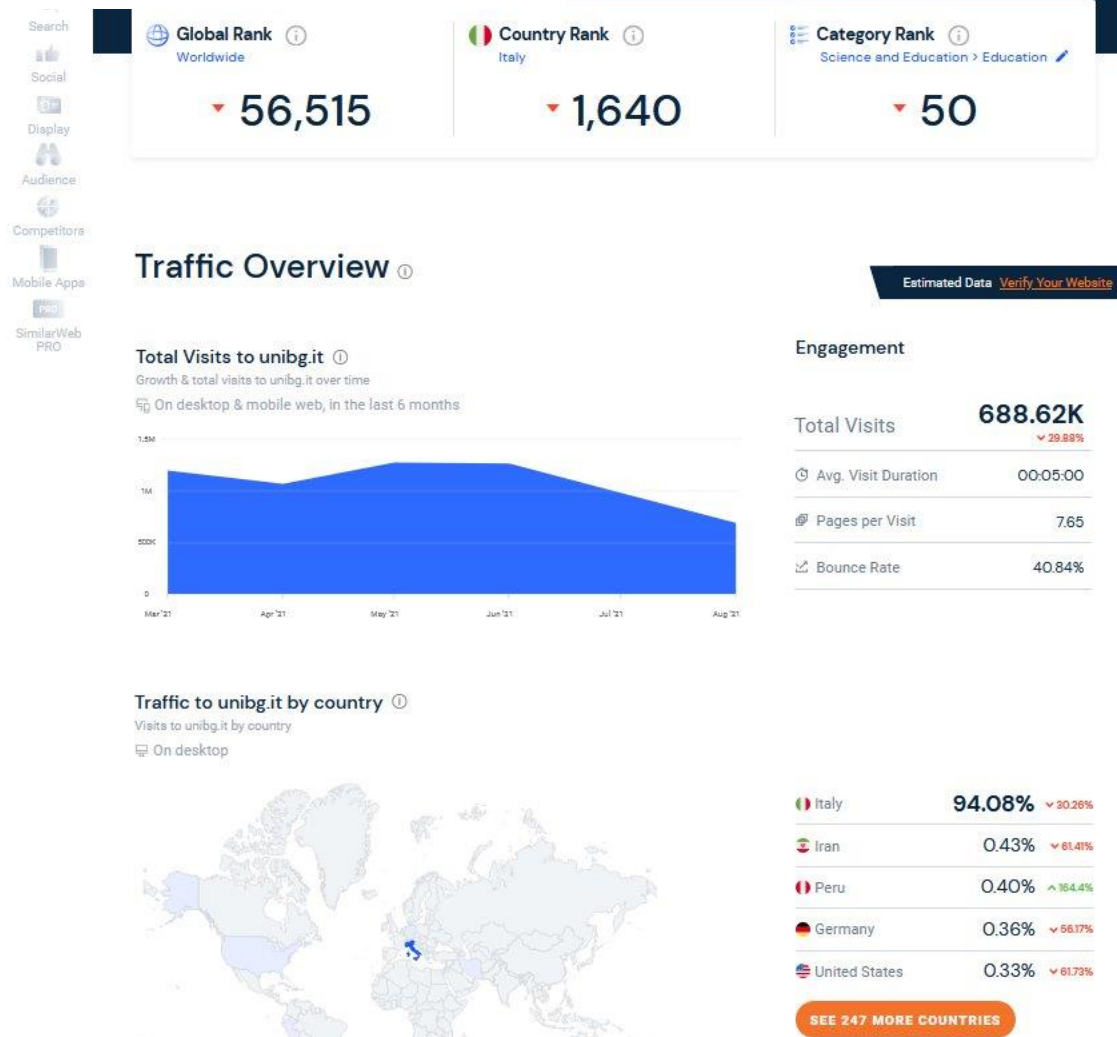
It does not matter how many visitors the website enjoys or how much **User Generated Content** is available about it.

What matters is **what people think of the represented entity**.



image credit to Vexels

# From SimilarWeb



SimilarWeb data about  
<https://www.unibg.it> retrieved  
on September 27, 2021

An official website's ranking has nothing to do with the web reputation of the entity it represents.

We also mentioned [SimilarWeb](#), where data about websites' visitors are available; but they don't deal with web reputation.

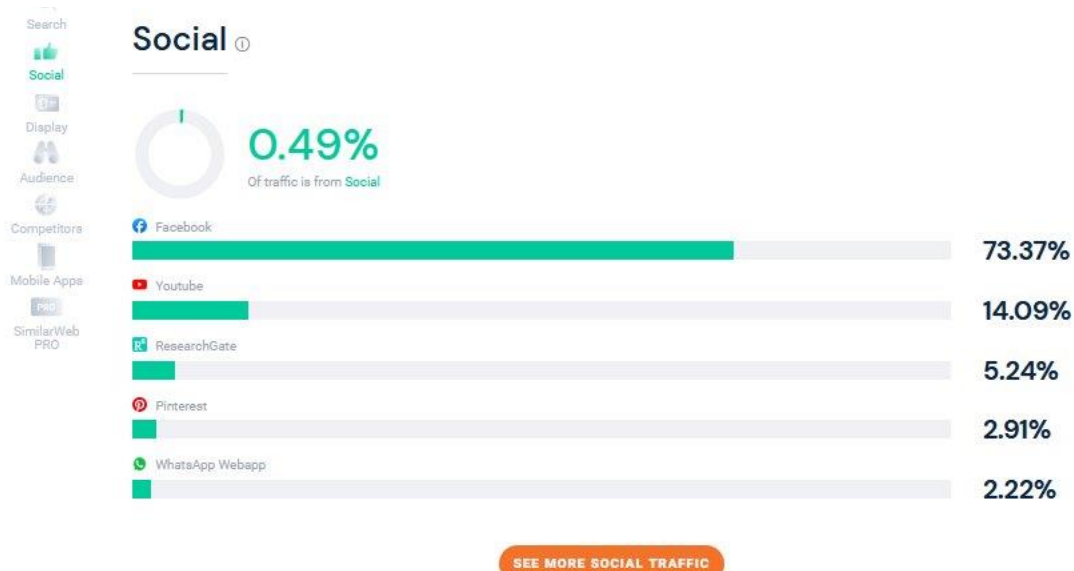
We see how much traffic was there, but learn nothing about any reputation.



# “Social” SimilarWeb

Aug 2021

FULL REPORT



## Display Advertising

 ⓘ


### Top Publishers

 ⓘ

gameforge.com

### Top Ad Networks

 ⓘ

Google Display Network



SimilarWeb provides data about social networking, too, but – again – they don’t deal with reputation.

SimilarWeb only reveals percentages of how much of the traffic to a website comes from social platforms – less than 0.5% for the UniBg website.

No reputational analysis of any UGC.

SimilarWeb data about <https://www.unibg.it> retrieved on September 27, 2021



# Quality of the web reputation



Data about the quality of the web reputation of an entity can be retraced by consulting the UGC from its Facebook, Twitter, Instagram... webpages.

- How many likes?
- How many followers?
- Above all: what sort of comments?

**About** See All

Università statale fondata nel 1968. UniBg, Futuro in corso.

29,715 people like this including 108 of your friends

31,370 people follow this

4,501 people checked in here

<http://www.unibg.it/>

035 2052111

[social@unibg.it](mailto:social@unibg.it)

College & University · Public School

Pagina a cura dell'Ufficio Comunicazione

**Photos** See All

Università degli Studi di Bergamo  
September 13 at 8:00 AM · 🌐

#unibg mette a disposizione dei propri studenti borse di studio, contributi per la mobilità internazionale e premi di laurea. Hai tempo fino al 4 ottobre per fare domanda: <https://www.unibg.it/node/12600>

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Elena Botezatu  
Valentina Ongaro puoi consultare il bando pubblicato qui: <https://www.unibg.it/bando-borsa-studio-aa-20212022>...  
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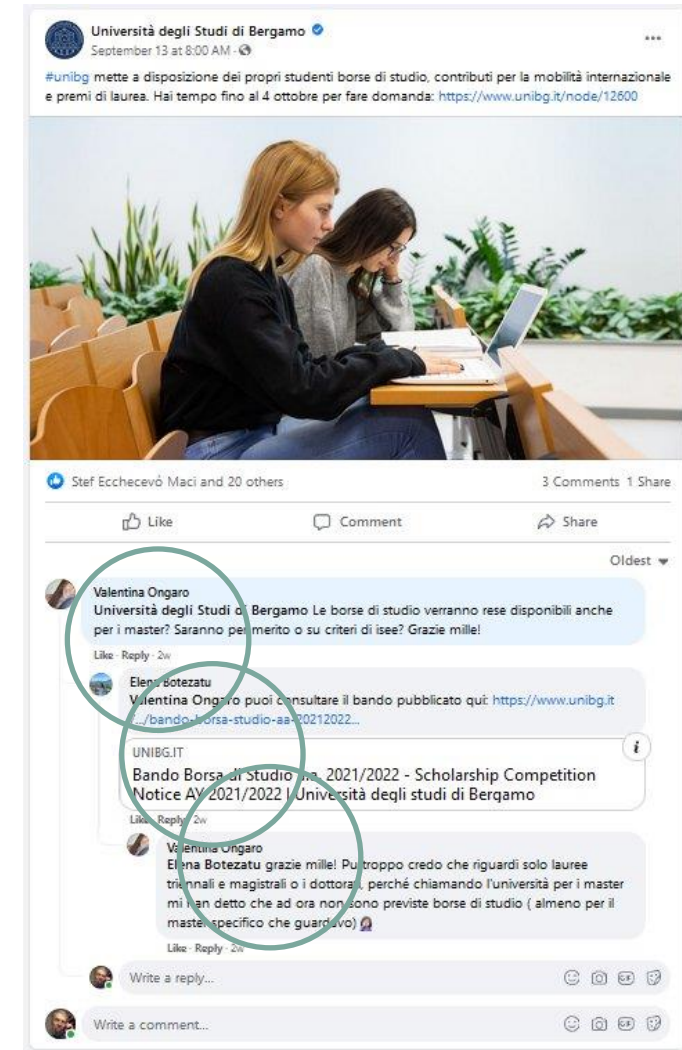
Valentina Ongaro  
Elena Botezatu grazie mille! Purtroppo credo che riguardi solo lauree triennali e magistrali o i dottorati, perché chiamando l'università per i master mi han detto che ad ora non sono previste borse di studio (almeno per il master specifico che guardavo) 🙄  
Like · Reply · 2w

Write a reply...  
Write a comment...

# Engagement



The **impact** of these posts should be considered, **too**.  
The most basic approach to begin this sort of measure is certainly to look at the relevant **Facebook pages** – both the **official one**, and **other pages** that clearly deal with the relevant entity – and count **how many likes** they've gathered.  
But this is a very basic approach.  
Further on, are **most posts** published by the **page managers**? Or are they mostly posted by other people who are involved and **engaged** indeed?  
Do posts, tweets etc. **start discussions**, or remain unfollowed?



# Measuring the web reputation



Anyway, reading all the UGC about something – or someone – from the main social platforms is a hard job.

What's worse, we saw that reputation implies a comparison and changes in time.

- Which other entities should the University of Bergamo – to keep our example – be compared with?
- And how often?

There's more. How can we measure the web reputation?

- An initial answer to this question might come from the values scales adopted by some relevant UGC platforms. The example here shows how Google Maps represents reputation for tourism entities.

The screenshot shows a search interface for hotels. At the top, there is a price range slider set to '€0 - €218+'. Below it, a 'Sort by' dropdown menu is open, showing a list of rating options: 'Any rating', '2.0 ★★☆☆☆', '2.5 ★★★☆☆', '3.0 ★★★★☆', '3.5 ★★★★★', '4.0 ★★★★★', and '4.5 ★★★★★'. To the right of the menu is a 'Brands' dropdown and a 'Filters' button. Below the menu, two hotel listings are visible:

- Hotel NH Orio al Serio**: 4.3 ★★★★★ (1,319), 4-star hotel, Informal airport hotel with dining. Price: €118. Includes 'Free Wi-Fi' and 'Ad · From Booking.com'.
- Mercure Bergamo Centro Palazzo Dolci**: 4.0 ★★★★★ (931), 4-star hotel, Modern lodging with free breakfast. Price: €87. Includes 'Free Wi-Fi' and 'Ad · From Booking.com'.



# Here's the scale adopted by TripAdvisor



**Traveler rating**

- 1
- & up 9
- & up 11
- & up 11

**Hotel class**

- 4 stars +7
- 3 stars +7
- 2 stars +7
- 1 star +1

**Style**

- Budget 0
- Mid-range 0
- Luxury 0
- Family-friendly 7

Show more ▾

**Brands**

- B&B Hotels 1
- Best Western 0
- NH Hotels 0
- Accor Live Limitless (ALL) 0

**BergHotel**

Booking.com

€89  
€72

View deal

FindHotel ↗ €78  
Expedia.it ↗ €81  
Lol.travel ↗ €89

View all 10 deals from €72 ▾

●●●●● 243 reviews  
#6 Best Value in Bergamo that matches your filters

Free Wifi  
Free parking

**La Castellana**

Booking.com

€90

View deal

✓ Free cancellation

Expedia.it ↗ €90  
Hotels.com ↗ €90  
eDreams ↗ €90

View all 5 deals from €90 ▾

●●●●● 394 reviews  
#7 Best Value in Bergamo that matches your filters

Free Wifi  
Taking safety measures

**San Giorgio**

Booking.com

€65

View deal

✓ Free cancellation

Expedia.it ↗ €59  
FindHotel ↗ €59  
Hotels.com ↗ €59

View all 8 deals from €59 ▾

●●●●○ 224 reviews  
#8 Best Value in Bergamo that matches your filters

Free Wifi  
Free parking

# Professionally speaking



The **scales** we've come across are often 1 to 5, but on **different values**. How could those data be **organized** and made **comparable** to accomplish **reliable results**?

Anyway, **many data** have to be collected from very **different sources** in **different times**.

We can try to do so **by ourselves** only when working for a small enterprise with just a bunch of competitors, or researching for an individual final dissertation.

When the scope is broader, **professional platforms** are available which systematically **collect UGC data** and make them **understandable** and **manageable** to subscribers.

Two examples in the tourism field may be mentioned: an international and an Italian one.



# Travel Appeal

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Welcome to Travel Appeal! 



# Sentiment



We've seen that each platform adopts its own values. Stars, marks, percentages...

A simple and unifying value adopted by platforms that professionally analyse UGC is the so called sentiment. Written comments, meaningful pictures, emotional videos are categorized as expressing positive, negative or neutral perception.

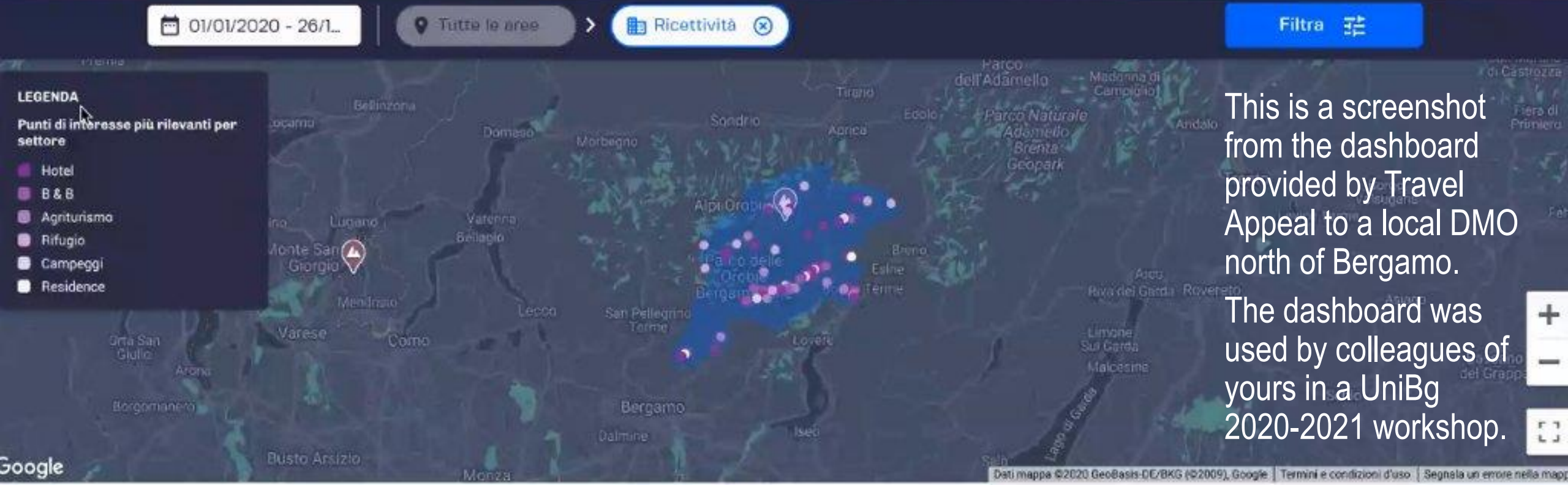
Professional platforms evaluating the web reputation make use of these simple and unifying values. But, well, they may be misusing them here and there...

In fact, collection and analysis of UGC are performed entirely through automated procedures. Sentiment is automatically evaluated according to predefined parameters.

There is no personnel who actually reads comments posted in communities and social, or looks at the pictures.



# A screenshot from Travel Appeal



This is a screenshot from the dashboard provided by Travel Appeal to a local DMO north of Bergamo.

The dashboard was used by colleagues of yours in a UniBg 2020-2021 workshop.

HOTEL	RIFUGIO	AGRITURISMO	B & B
SENTIMENT ⓘ	SENTIMENT ⓘ	SENTIMENT ⓘ	SENTIMENT ⓘ
87,5 /100 ▼ -1,5	88,2 /100 ▼ -1,0	89,6 /100 ▲ +1,1	89,4 /100 ▼ -1,4

# Web reputation based on web presence



The Travel Appeal dashboard in the previous page displays sentiment percentages, grouped for categories, about accommodation facilities in Val Seriana (the blue area). It is only one among very many visualization options that the dashboard allows.

The small circles displayed in the map, each representing a POI in its spatial position, are linked to sentiment data extracted from the web presence of each POI.

In fact, web presence is the growth medium of web reputation.

If an entity is not properly present on the Web with its official website and its semi-official social networking pages, its web reputation is lost.



Having considered this, we cannot take for granted that sentiment data extracted from the web presence of POIs are definitive. Percentages and diagrams captivate our eyes, and certainly identify real trends. Yet those quantities – too positive? – result from automated procedures of semantic analysis.

image credit to [homebrewingcondor.blogspot](http://homebrewingcondor.blogspot)

# Another screenshot from Travel Appeal

26/08/2020 - 26/...

Tutte le aree

Tutti i comparti

Filtra

## SENTIMENT

Il Sentiment misura il livello di soddisfazione percepita espressa dagli utenti che emerge dall'analisi semantica dei contenuti online.

### SENTIMENT VALSERIANA E VAL DI SCALVE



-0,4 Rispetto all'anno precedente

87,2 Italia

### ANDAMENTO



# Interpretation and semantic analysis



Every time that posts, pictures or videos are too many, and there is neither time nor way to analyse them in person, machines enter. Machines base their analyses of language on semantic parameters.

But cultural factors, linguistic subtleties and context details may make the task of turning a text into a precise sentiment evaluation quite difficult.

Some examples from Travel Appeal (old examples, please take due note!) follow.



image credit to Travel Appeal



# Are these “unanswered complaints”?!?

**3 unanswered complaints**

Profile	Sentiment	Review Text	Date
	89.1%	Roberto has been <b>a great host</b> , welcoming, attentiv...	Wed. June 1st 2016
	89.8%	Roberto was <b>a fantastic host</b> providing us with di...	Wed. June 1st 2016
	84.0%	<b>The best host you can ever ask for!</b> Great location...	Wed. June 1st 2016

[Show all](#)

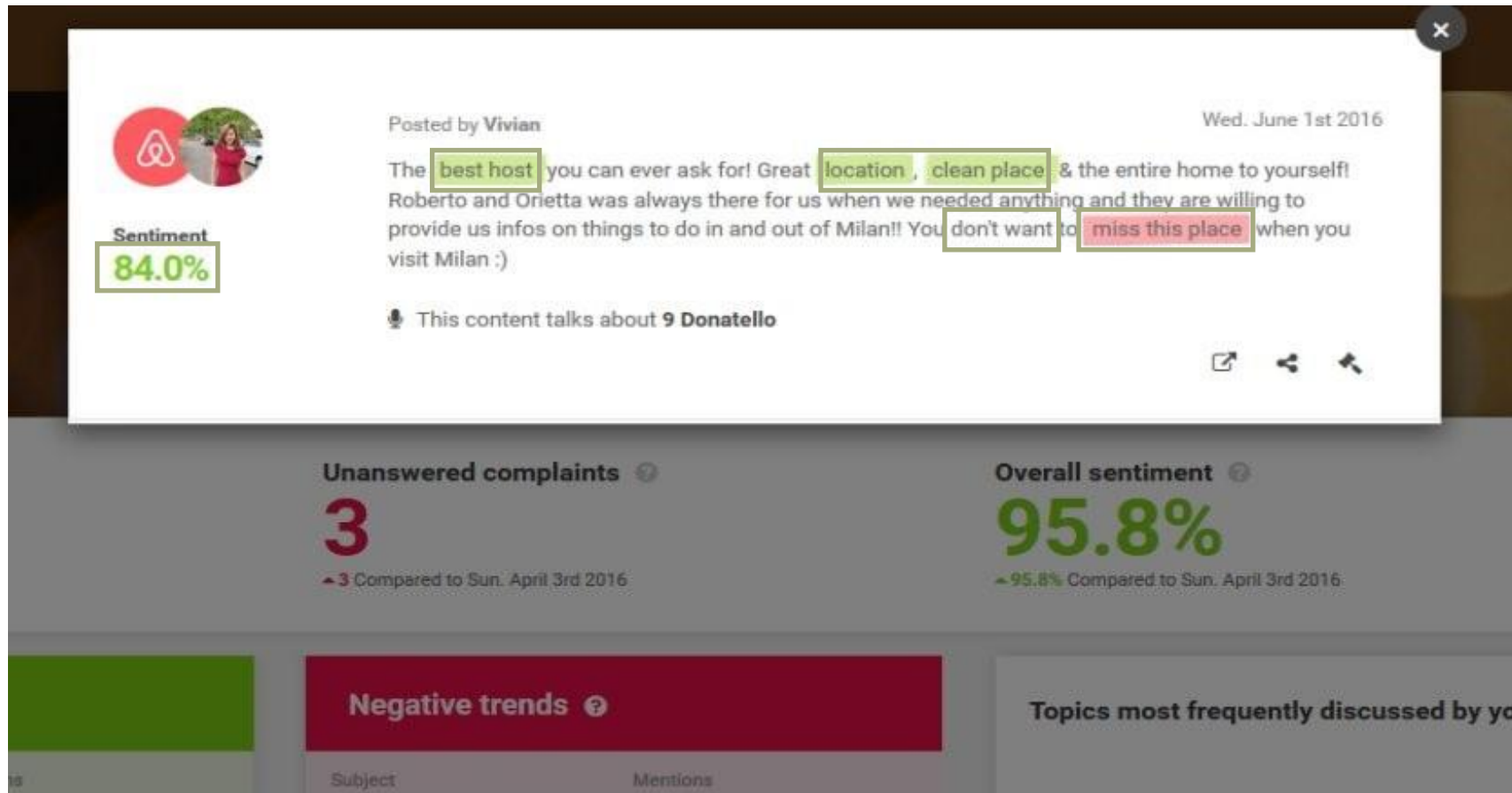
▲ 3 Compared to Sun. April 3rd 2016

▲ 95.8% Compared to Sun. April 3rd 2016

**Negative trends** ⓘ

Topics most frequently discussed b

# Where does the “don’t want” come from?



If a “mechanical” semantic analysis of language deals with strings of words but not with the syntax of the sentence, the meaning of a comment may be turned upside down.

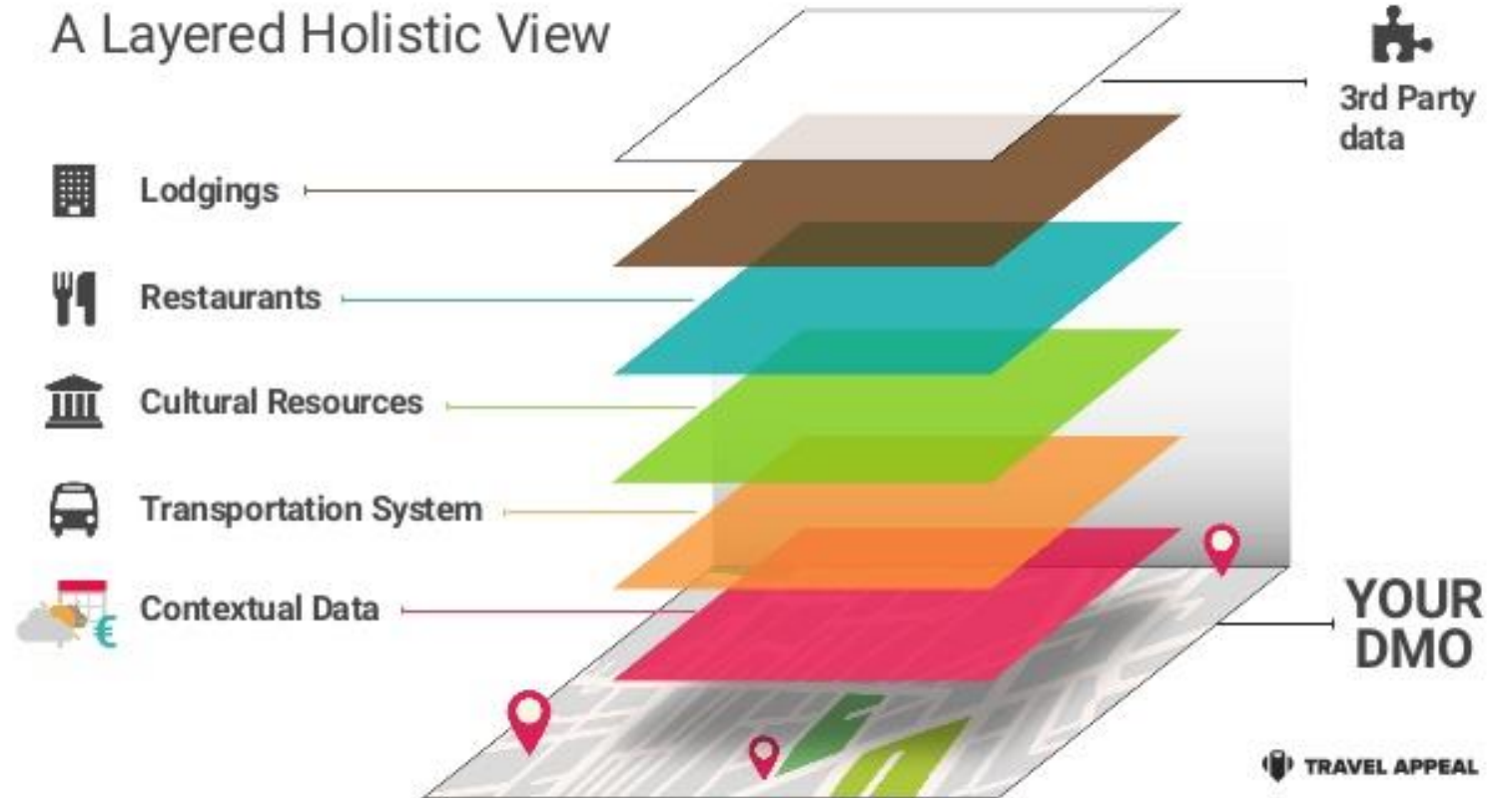
# Destinations' reputation measurement



The examples above from Travel Appeal refer to a family accommodation.

The wider market for web reputation tools is in fact the industry: hotels, B&Bs, restaurants and the like.

Destinations' web reputation is a more complicated subject, in fact.




# Destinations' service is upon request

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PRO	PREMIUM	ENTERPRISE
<b>€59</b> €49/mo for the online subscription	<b>€129</b> €108/mo when you pay annually	<b>On request</b> Tailored on customer needs
<b>Post and content management</b> (unlimited)	<b>Post and content management</b> (unlimited)	<b>Post and content management</b> (unlimited)
<b>Sentiment analysis</b> (unlimited)	<b>Sentiment analysis</b> (unlimited)	<b>Sentiment analysis</b> (unlimited)
<b>Review analysis</b> (unlimited)	<b>Review analysis</b> (unlimited)	<b>Review analysis</b> (unlimited)
<b>Intelligent suggestions</b>	<b>Intelligent suggestions</b>	<b>Intelligent suggestions</b>
<b>Respond to Reviews</b> directly from the Dashboard	<b>Respond to Reviews</b> directly from the Dashboard	<b>Respond to Reviews</b> directly from the Dashboard
<b>3 Months price analysis</b>	<b>3 Months price analysis</b>	<b>6 Months price analysis</b>
<b>3 Months availability analysis</b>	<b>3 Months availability analysis</b>	<b>6 Months availability analysis</b>

 Welcome to Travel Appeal! ✕



# Key points

1. Digital has invaded tourism
2. There are many different sorts of tourism websites
3. Peer-to-Peer doesn't mean person-to-person
4. The Webs may come in threes
5. Social, the default state
6. Reputation is about entities, not websites
7. Sentiment is not sentimental

image credit to extrapol