

# The Impact of Short Video Marketing on Hotel Consumers' Reservation Intention: Empirical Evidence from the Chinese Market

Zhang Ling., Arif @ Kamisan Pusiran., Fatma Zohra Chekima., Brahim Chekima\*

Faculty of Business, Economics and Accountancy, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, 88400, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100400292>

Received: 13 April 2026; Accepted: 18 April 2026; Published: 06 May 2026

## ABSTRACT

This study examines how short video marketing influences hotel consumers' reservation intention in China. Although platforms such as Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and WeChat Video Channel play an important role in hospitality promotion, the psychological processes through which short video narratives shape booking intention remain underexplored. Grounded in the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework, the study investigates the effects of narrative structure on narrative transportation; the effects of narrative transportation on flow experience and sense of presence, the effects of flow experience and sense of presence on perceived value; and the effect of perceived value on reservation intention. Data were collected via an online questionnaire from 153 respondents who had recently been exposed to hotel-related short videos and analyzed using SPSS and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The results showed satisfactory reliability and validity of the measurement model, while the structural model confirmed that all six hypothesized relationships were positive and significant. Perceived value emerged as the strongest predictor of reservation intention. The findings extend the application of the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework to short video hospitality marketing and demonstrate that immersive storytelling can turn promotional content into experiential value creation. In practical terms, the study offers useful guidance for hotel marketers on designing coherent, emotionally engaging short videos that enhance consumer engagement and booking conversion.

**Keywords:** Short-video marketing, narrative structure, narrative transportation, flow experience, sense of presence, reservation intention, luxury hospitality, China.

## INTRODUCTION

The hospitality sector has been reshaped by digital media, with online visibility, platform engagement, and user-generated influence becoming central to marketing performance (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2013; Kim & Kim, 2020). Within this broader transformation, short video content has emerged as an especially influential format because it combines visual immediacy, emotional stimulation, and fast circulation across mobile-first platforms. In hospitality contexts, short videos can communicate ambience, service encounters, and aspirational experiences more vividly than static promotional materials, which makes them increasingly relevant to hotel marketers seeking stronger consumer engagement (Chen, Wang, & Xie, 2021; Liu, Chou, & Liu, 2021; Kim & Kim, 2020).

This issue is especially salient in the Chinese market, where short video platforms such as Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and WeChat Video Channel have become important channels for travel discovery and hotel evaluation. The paper situates this shift within the context of luxury hospitality and highlights a practical problem. Hotels and travel intermediaries now invest heavily in short-form video content, yet its performance does not always translate into booking conversions. Trend-based content may attract attention, but attention alone does not explain why some videos strengthen reservation intention while others do not. This gap points to the need for a more precise explanation of the psychological process through which short video narratives shape booking-related responses.

The current literature suggests that the influence of digital media in hospitality cannot be understood solely

through exposure, platform reach, or general online promotion. Instead, consumers respond to how media content is experienced. Narrative absorption, affective involvement, and mediated realism appear to be central to how persuasive travel and hospitality content works (Lada et al., 2024; Green & Brock, 2000; Van Laer, de Ruyter, Visconti, & Wetzels, 2014; Biocca, 1997; Lombard & Ditton, 1997). This paper, therefore, builds on the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework and examines whether narrative structure triggers narrative transportation, whether transportation strengthens flow experience and sense of presence, whether these organism states raise perceived value, and whether perceived value finally drives reservation intention. In this way, the study moves beyond broad claims about the popularity of short videos and tests a specific psychological mechanism in the Chinese hospitality market.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### Short Video Marketing in Hospitality

Short-form video marketing has become increasingly significant in hospitality because it offers a dynamic way to showcase hotel amenities, destination atmosphere, and travel experiences in a concise, emotionally appealing format. Prior research has shown that digital and social media content can influence engagement, trust, and behavioural intention, especially when consumers perceive the content as vivid, interactive, and authentic (Dwivedi et al., 2021; Hollebeek, Glynn, & Brodie, 2014; Kim & Kim, 2020; Bouteraa., 2023a; Bouteraa et al., 2023b; Chekima et al., 2023; Febrilia et al., 2023). In hospitality, this matters because service evaluation often depends on imagination and expectation before actual consumption. Short videos can therefore serve as pre-experiential media, making intangible hotel offerings more concrete and desirable (Chen, Wang, & Xie, 2021; Liu, Chou, & Liu, 2021).

### Stimulus–Organism–Response Framework

The study is grounded in the Stimulus–Organism–Response model, which explains how external cues trigger internal psychological states that later shape behavioral outcomes. Within this framework, narrative structure serves as the stimulus. Narrative transportation, flow experience, and sense of presence constitute the organism stage. Perceived value and reservation intention form the response stage. This structure is suitable because short video marketing operates not only through information presentation but through immersive psychological engagement.

### Narrative Structure and Narrative Transportation

Narrative structure refers to the coherence with which a short video presents a storyline, including sequencing, progression, and emotional flow. Narrative persuasion research suggests that coherent stories make it easier for viewers to follow the message, process events, and become mentally involved in the narrative world (Green & Brock, 2000; Escalas, 2007; Van Laer et al., 2014). In short video environments, where exposure time is limited, coherence is particularly important because it provides rapid cognitive entry into the story. On this basis, the study proposes:

H1: Narrative structure positively influences narrative transportation.

### Narrative Transportation, Flow Experience, and Sense of Presence

Narrative transportation refers to the process through which viewers become cognitively and emotionally absorbed in a story (Green & Brock, 2000). Once absorbed, viewers may experience flow, characterized by deep concentration, intrinsic enjoyment, and reduced awareness of time (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). They may also experience sense of presence, the mediated feeling of being there in the depicted environment (Biocca, 1997; Lombard & Ditton, 1997). The study positions transportation as the psychological gateway to these downstream immersive states. Accordingly, the study proposes:

H2: Narrative transportation positively influences flow experience.

H3: Narrative transportation positively influences the sense of presence.

## Flow Experience, Sense of Presence, Perceived Value, and Reservation Intention

Flow and presence are expected to shape how viewers evaluate the hotel experience. Perceived value is defined as the consumer's overall assessment of benefits relative to costs and can extend beyond price and function to include emotional and experiential worth (Zeithaml, 1988). In hospitality, immersive content that strengthens enjoyment, realism, and symbolic meaning should increase perceived value, which in turn should increase booking-related intention. On this basis, the study proposes:

H4: Flow experience positively influences perceived value.

H5: Sense of presence positively influences perceived value.

H6: Perceived value positively influences reservation intention.

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design and uses a structured online questionnaire to test the proposed model. A purposive sampling approach was employed to target respondents who had viewed hotel-related short videos and had relevant hotel booking experience. The questionnaire measured six constructs, namely narrative structure, narrative transportation, flow experience, sense of presence, perceived value, and reservation intention. The instrument used a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The item sources reported in the study show that narrative structure and sense of presence were adapted from Zhu et al. (2024), narrative transportation from Liu et al. (2023), flow experience from Wu et al. (2024), perceived value from Zeithaml (1988), and reservation intention from Han et al. (2020). The questionnaire was pretested before the main survey, and data were collected online from eligible Chinese respondents with recent exposure to hotel short videos. The final usable sample comprised 153 valid responses.

Data analysis was conducted in two stages. SPSS 26.0 was used for preliminary screening, descriptive statistics, and respondent profiling. SmartPLS was used for measurement model assessment and structural model testing. The analysis covered common method bias checks, outer loadings, composite reliability, average variance extracted, HTMT, path coefficients, coefficient of determination, effect size, and predictive relevance.

## RESULTS

### Respondent Profile

The final sample included 153 valid responses. Female respondents accounted for 69.28 percent and male respondents for 30.72 percent. The largest age segment was 26 to 30 years old at 39.22 percent, followed by 31 to 40 years old at 26.80 percent. In educational terms, bachelor's degree holders made up the largest category at 43.79 percent, followed by associate's degree holders at 31.37 percent. In income terms, the largest segment earned RMB120,000 to RMB180,000 at 25.49 percent, followed by RMB60,000 to RMB120,000 at 23.53 percent. All respondents had viewed hotel-related short videos within the previous six months. Douyin was the most frequently used platform at 92.81 percent, followed by Xiaohongshu at 72.55 percent. A large majority, 82.35 percent, reported having previously chosen a hotel based on social media content.

### Common Method Bias

The common method bias was assessed using full collinearity testing. The full collinearity VIF values ranged from 1.495 to 2.670. These values were below the conservative threshold commonly used in PLS-SEM work, indicating that common method bias was not a serious concern.

### Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model showed acceptable psychometric quality. All item loadings exceeded 0.70. Composite

reliability values ranged from 0.896 to 0.921, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Average variance extracted values ranged from 0.732 to 0.795, exceeding the 0.50 threshold and confirming convergent validity. Discriminant validity was also supported because all HTMT values remained below 0.85. Collectively, these results indicate that the reflective measurement model was reliable and valid and that the constructs were sufficiently distinct from one another.

### Structural Model Assessment

All six hypotheses were supported. Narrative structure had a positive effect on narrative transportation, with  $\beta = 0.549$ ,  $t = 9.111$ , and  $p < 0.001$ . Narrative transportation positively influenced flow experience ( $\beta = 0.552$ ,  $t = 9.271$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and sense of presence ( $\beta = 0.566$ ,  $t = 9.719$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Flow experience positively influenced perceived value, with  $\beta = 0.387$ ,  $t = 6.111$ , and  $p < 0.001$ . Sense of presence also positively influenced perceived value, with  $\beta = 0.430$ ,  $t = 6.750$ , and  $p < 0.001$ . Perceived value had the strongest direct effect on reservation intention, with  $\beta = 0.711$ ,  $t = 19.098$ , and  $p < 0.001$ .

The explanatory power of the model was moderate to substantial. Narrative transportation recorded  $R^2 = 0.302$ , flow experience  $R^2 = 0.427$ , sense of presence  $R^2 = 0.320$ , perceived value  $R^2 = 0.463$ , and reservation intention  $R^2 = 0.505$ . This means that the model explained 50.5 percent of the variance in reservation intention.

## DISCUSSION

The results show that short-video marketing influences reservation intention through a measurable sequence of psychological and evaluative effects, rather than through exposure alone. The strongest evidence appears at the end of the model, where perceived value emerged as the most powerful direct predictor of reservation intention. This suggests that short videos work when they increase the viewer's judgment that the hotel experience is worthwhile, rewarding, and worth pursuing, consistent with value-based consumer evaluation in hospitality settings (Zeithaml, 1988).

The results also show that narrative structure matters strongly at the beginning of the process. The significant path from narrative structure to narrative transportation indicates that coherent storytelling is a necessary condition for short-form persuasion. This supports transportation-based explanations of narrative influence, where well-organized stories reduce cognitive resistance and draw viewers into the story world (Green & Brock, 2000; Van Laer et al., 2014).

Narrative transportation, in turn, had strong effects on both flow and presence. This indicates that once viewers are cognitively and emotionally absorbed, they are more likely to experience both concentrated enjoyment and perceptual realism. In practical terms, transportation seems to be the point at which a short hospitality video stops functioning as a simple advertisement and starts functioning as a simulated experience.

The results also show that the two organism variables did not contribute equally to value formation. Sense of presence had a slightly stronger effect on perceived value than flow experience did. This implies that, in hotel short-video marketing, making viewers feel they are there may be more influential than merely making the content enjoyable. In luxury hospitality, realism, atmosphere, and sensory credibility appear to be especially important in determining whether the experience is judged as valuable.

### Implications

The study contributes theoretically in three ways. First, it extends the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework to the context of short-video hospitality marketing by empirically validating a chain that begins with narrative structure and ends with reservation intention. Second, it supports the relevance of narrative transportation theory in short-form media environments by showing that coherent narrative design serves as a meaningful antecedent to an immersive psychological response. Third, it supports a more experiential understanding of perceived value in hospitality. The findings indicate that value is shaped not only by cognitive evaluation, but also by immersion and mediated presence (Li et al., 2024a).

From the practical point of view, the findings suggest that hotel marketers should treat the short video strategy as a narrative design problem rather than as a visibility problem alone. A short video that simply displays amenities is less likely to trigger transportation than one that stages a coherent guest journey. Story progression, emotional timing, and sensory sequencing should therefore be treated as strategic design variables.

The results also indicate that content should be optimized for presence as well as enjoyment. Since the sense of presence exerted a slightly stronger effect on perceived value than flow experience did, marketers should invest in first-person framing, realistic transitions, ambient sound, and details that make the hotel environment feel tangible. In luxury hospitality, the viewer must not only enjoy the video. The viewer must feel the atmosphere.

Finally, the strong role of perceived value means that performance metrics should move beyond exposure and engagement counts. Hotels should assess whether their short videos strengthen value perception, because content that generates attention without increasing perceived worth may still fail to convert.

### Limitations And Future Research

The study is based on a cross-sectional online survey and therefore cannot establish temporal causality with the same strength as longitudinal or experimental designs. It is also context-specific, since it focuses on Chinese consumers exposed to hotel-related short videos in a luxury hospitality setting. Future research would benefit from multi-method designs, platform comparison, and longitudinal tracking of conversion behaviour. The study also points to the importance of further examining cumulative exposure, platform-specific dynamics, and underexplored contextual variables such as culture, algorithms, and user traits.

### CONCLUSION

This empirical study shows that the effect of short video marketing on hotel reservation intention is neither direct nor superficial. It operates through a structured sequence. Narrative structure increases transportation. Transportation increases flow and presence. Flow and presence increase perceived value. Perceived value then drives reservation intention and stands out as the strongest predictor in the model. The model also explains a substantial share of reservation intention and demonstrates positive predictive relevance.

In empirical terms, the study shows that short-video performance in hospitality should be understood as a value-conversion process grounded in immersion. In managerial terms, it suggests that hotels seeking better booking outcomes should pay closer attention to story coherence, sensory realism, and value formation rather than relying solely on platform presence.

### REFERENCES

1. Biocca, F. 1997. The cyborg's dilemma: Progressive embodiment in virtual environments. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 3(2), JCMC324.
2. Bouteraa, M., Al-Daihani, M., Chekima, B., Ansar, R., Tamma, E., Lada, S., Baddou, A., Elkheloufi, A., & Ming Fook, L. (2023). A Multi-Analytical Approach to Investigate the Motivations of Sustainable Green Technology in the Banking Industry. *International Journal of Social Ecology and Sustainable Development*, 15(1), 1–32.
3. Bouteraa, M., Tamma, E., Aichouche, M. E. H., Achour, S., Lada, S., Ansar, R., Fook, L. M., & Chekima, B. (2023). International Joint Ventures' Knowledge Acquisition: Critical Literature Review. *Sustainability*, 15(8), 6364.
4. Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the internet. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 609–623.
5. Cao, X., et al. (2021). "How the destination short video affects the customers' attitude: The role of narrative transportation." *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services* 62: 102672.
6. Chekima, B., Bouteraa, M., Ansar, R., Lada, S., Fook, L. M., Tamma, E., Abdul Adis, A.-A., & Chekima, K. (2023). Determinants of Organic Food Consumption in Narrowing the Green Gap. *Sustainability*, 15(11), 8554.

7. Chekima, F. Z., & Chekima, B. (2019). Celebrity Credibility Influence on Cosmetic Product Purchase Intention. Exploring the Dynamics of Consumerism in Developing Nations, 153–175.
8. Chen, H., et al. (2023). "Impact of short video marketing on tourist destination perception in the post-pandemic era." *Sustainability* 15(13): 10220.
9. Chen, Y. F., & Peng, S. S. 2021. The influence of short-form video marketing on hotel booking intentions. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, 45(2), 365–385.
10. Chen, Y., Wang, Q., & Xie, J. (2021). How short video marketing influences consumers' purchase intention: Evidence from China. *Journal of Business Research*, 136, 354–364.
11. Chong, S. E., et al. (2024). "From screen to scene: Exploring factors influencing flow state and actual destination visitation tendencies in short travel videos." *Tourism Management* 100:2400183.
12. Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper and Row.
13. Ding, H.-M. and K.-P. Hung (2021). "The antecedents of visitors' flow experience and its influence on memory and behavioral intentions in the music festival context." *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management* 19: 100551.
14. Dwivedi, Y. K., Ismagilova, E., Hughes, D. L., Carlson, J., Filieri, R., Jacobson, J., & Wang, Y. (2021). Setting the future of digital and social media marketing research: Perspectives and research propositions. *International Journal of Information Management*, 59, 102168.
15. Escalas, J. E. (2007). Self-referencing and persuasion: Narrative transportation versus analytical elaboration. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 33(4), 421–429.
16. Febrilia, I., Rahmi, R., Lada, S., & Chekima, B. (2024). Online Impulse Buying: Investigating the Role of E-Commerce Attributes, Customer Motivation, and Urge to Buy Impulsively. *The Journal of Behavioral Science*, 19(1), 95–108.
17. Gan, J., et al. (2023). "Short video marketing and travel intentions: The interplay between visual perspective, visual content, and narration appeal." *Tourism Management* 99: 104795.
18. Green, M. C. and T. C. Brock (2000). "The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79(5): 701-721.
19. Hennig-Thurau, T., Hofacker, C. F., & Bloching, B. (2013). Marketing the pinball way: Understanding how social media changes the generation of value for consumers and companies. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 27(4), 237–241.
20. Hollebeek, L. D., Glynn, M. S., & Brodie, R. J. (2014). Consumer brand engagement in social media: Conceptualization, scale development, and validation. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 28(2), 149–165.
21. Kim, J., & Kim, M. (2020). Short video marketing and its impact on consumer engagement: Evidence from the hospitality industry. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*, 29(7), 785–803.
22. Lada S, Chekima B, Ansar R, Lim MF, Bouteraa M, Abdul Adis A, Abd Karim MR, Yong K (2024). Strategic alternatives for Muslim-friendly homestay in Sabah Malaysia: a SWOT/TOWS analysis. *Journal of Islamic Marketing*, Vol. 15 No. 6 pp. 1534–1559.
23. Li, X., Lim, M.-F., Ramlee, A. N. A., & Chekima, B. (2024). Brand Authenticity: A 21-Year Bibliometric Review and Future Outlook. *Sage Open*, 14(3).
24. Liu, L., Chou, H., & Liu, J. (2021). Short video marketing on social media: The impact of influencers and content characteristics on consumer engagement. *Journal of Business Research*, 132, 699–711.
25. Lombard, M., & Ditton, T. 1997. At the heart of it all: The concept of presence. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 3(2), JCMC321.
26. Van Laer, T., de Ruyter, K., Visconti, L. M., & Wetzels, M. (2014). The extended transportation-imagery model: A meta-analysis of the antecedents and consequences of consumers' narrative transportation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 40(5), 797–817.
27. Wu, X. and I. K. W. Lai (2024). "How the creativity and authenticity of destination short videos influence audiences' attitudes toward videos and destinations: the mediating role of emotions and the moderating role of parasocial interaction with Internet celebrities." *Current Issues in Tourism* 27(15): 2428-2447.
28. Zeithaml, V. A. (1988). Consumer perceptions of price, quality, and value: a means-end model and synthesis of evidence. *Journal of Marketing*, 52(3), 2–22.