

“Zero-Party Data in the Tourism Industry”

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1. Introduction

The following applied research is conducted with the purpose to identify the position of zero-party data in the data economy trending in the global tourism industry. The research question covers not only the role of zero-party data in the digitization but also seeks to analyze the possible benefits of zero-party data application in the global tourism industry. Being a relatively novel phenomenon among other types of the customer data, zero – party data offers new possibilities to achieve greater transparency and accuracy, allowing brands to build direct and personal relationships with the customers (Khatibloo, 2018). That is why, in order to get a deeper understanding of the trends taking place in the growing data economy, this research also defines the other types of data: first,-second and third-party data as well as their role in the global data economy.

The integration of zero-party data into the data economy points out the importance of giving customers a power to choose what data they want to share with the multiple brands in the era of GDPR (Khatibloo, 2018). Therefore, throughout this research three most relevant for the case concepts of the data economy were taken into careful consideration, namely: consent, value and privacy.

The research is of exploratory nature as there is no prior relevant information from the past researchers due to the novelty of the research subject (Robert, Stebbins, 2001). The research insights are aiding to the future researchers to acquire more information on the subject of zero-party data. Although the research is exploratory, it has classical structure of a qualitative research including: the definition of research problem, methodology, analysis of the results and conclusion (Bryman, Bell, 2015).

In order to gain a better understanding of the role of zero-party data in customer relationship management, the experts from the global tourism and hospitality brands were interviewed on the research subject in question. With the research question in mind the types of data and their business applications, which were the matters of interest for the interviewees, were investigated and categorized.

The results and their interpretation provide the grounding for the future researches on zero-party data and give the opportunity to comprehend the needs of both brands and customers in their mutual engagement to have a better brand experience.

2. Overview

2.1 Research Problem

The topic of the research in question is the position of zero-party data in the growing data economy. Whereas, the research problem is to understand what zero-party data is and which benefits it can have for the market players in the global tourism and hospitality industries. To better understand the positioning of zero-party data in the abundance of data types, we looked briefly into the overall situation of the data knowledge nowadays.

The term *zero party data* was first coined by Forrester to describe any data that a customer proactively and deliberately shares (Khatibloo, 2017). It differs from other types of data as it provides organizations with explicit consumer preferences rather than implied preferences (that were generated from a brand's interactions with a consumer). It gives companies greater insight into their needs, interests, and intent – unlike, for example, first-party data, which can only offer insight generated from purchase history or basic facts like date of birth (Rowan,2020). Zero-party data can include preference center data, purchase intentions, personal context, and how the individual wants the brand to recognize her. The aims of this type of data are to encourage companies to offer transparent digital experiences to their audience, which nurture lasting relationships with customers and provide them a better value (Khatibloo, 2018).

2.2 Research Question and Aims

The research questions that we focused on sound as:

What is the position and the role of zero-party data in the data economy of global tourism and hospitality industry? What are the benefits of using zero-party data in tourism and hospitality industry?

By seeking the answer to the research question the researchers wanted to find out if the brands were interested and felt ready to integrate the practices of zero-party data collection and subsequent data analysis into their marketing strategies. The digital market is increasing rapidly (Chavez, O'Hara, Vaidya, 2019). Informing the audience of zero-party data seems beneficial for both users and marketers and prioritizes truly personalized marketing. The research question helped us to achieve the goal of pursuing zero-party data to help the consumers and the buyers of the web industry to collect more useful and focused data. The primary aims of the research were to learn what decision - making tools are being implemented on the tourism and hospitality

consumers and society and how it can be beneficial for global tourism and hospitality industry to use zero-party data.

Introducing zero-party data is fairly a new concept in society and seems too good to be true. By collecting data that is intentionally shared with just the marketer and the consumer, rather than making assumptions and inferences will be more powerful towards purchasing intentions (Fader, Thomas, 2018). Building better relationships one on one versus making a generic target to everyone and anyone (Arthur, 2013). It can be costly and a waste of time for the company, when they can focus on the true relationships they have created with the customers through the zero-party app. This research provides insights about the data economy in the global tourism industry and the place of zero-party data in it.

2.3 Potential Data Resources and Structural Framework

Since application of zero-party data is a fairly new concept, few respectable resources of information available at the present moment. Therefore, literature and available reports were used as the secondary data sources, while primary data source became expert interviews. Thus, the research is exploratory and provides preliminary basis in a subject (Robert A. Stebbins, 2001).

For secondary research, available reports and magazine articles, as well as online sources, were used to gain in-depth understanding of the zero-party data topic and its aspects. Using the information, obtained through the desk research, interview guide and questionnaire were put together, as it was expected that analysis of the insights gained through such research would help to identify the focal points of concern to be explored in the upcoming interviews.

Practical application of the knowledge gained through the study of the chosen data sources was aiming at reaching the qualitative goals of the research with the help of the following structural framework:

- schedule the project workflow with the help of Gantt chart and constant communication
- learn which data types exist and how they are applied in the data economy
- look into zero-party data and its place in the data economy
- determine research design and potential data sources
- prepare the questionnaire for semi-structured expert interviews
- find experts and conduct interviews

- define the important insights from the raw data obtained through the process of the qualitative research
- analyze and interpret results in line with the research question
- give essential recommendations

As the project has limited time frame and resources, it was decided to concentrate only on one industry - the global tourism, as the sector with very intensive encounters between tourists and service providers. Therefore, experts from the tourism and hospitality industry were sought for the interviews. Main group within the industry was expected to be top managers and CEOs.

The COVID-19 situation influenced our research workflow tremendously by making it difficult to access the experts from the global tourism industry as they were facing the unprecedented crisis in the sector. In the context of the emergent change we could conduct only the minimum of the interviews required for an exploratory research. However, we obtained enough data to answer our main research question.

2.4 Literature Review

For a business, it is important to understand the customers and analyze what attracts them most. Marketing a company's information requires data and making it more personalized towards the customer (Nesamoney, 2015). From every click on the websites, the social media and interactions, every swipe purchase on your credit card and even basic information about a person, is all transcribed as data and could be valuable for marketing purposes. The marketers use the learning systems that gather information about the viewers, however it is sometimes crossing the line and becoming too personalized (Rowan, 2020). Overall data is impacting how businesses operate and pursue a marketing strategy.

Zero-Party Data

Why should companies pay attention to zero-party data? **Reason being is that it is more personalized on a voluntary action.** It is viewed as direct information that is collected, but not too invasive. You simply get to know your customer through communication with 100% trust with the marketer, versus “what if’s” and “maybe’s” with other data gathering systems (Rowan, 2020). Zero party data is a fairly new term and sometimes needs to be broken down. **Another**

term that can be used for it is *permission marketing*. Thus, it needs to be straightforward and regarding the consumer's privacy (Selinger, Polonetsky, Tene, 2018). Going further into research it is important to understand the balance between personalizing and the concern for privacy (Rowan, 2020).

Zero-party is just making its first steps in the world hospitality industry as services become more customer-oriented. (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwall, 2019). The hospitality can use zero-party data to truly personalize the experiences to their customers by building their trust and commitment. With finding a balance between delivering an excellent guest experience and meeting profit obligations the data analytics in hospitality should reach a new level of performance (McGuire, 2017).

Consumer data

Beside the declared data, which individuals willingly share with the company, businesses collect inferred and observed data. Observed data usually gathered through the direct observation of customers behavior and actions. (Baker, Hart, 2016). Data collection process usually follows the customers along their customer journey (Petersen, Person, Nash, 2014). The more stages of the actual journey could be observed the more accurate the behavioral data would be.

Inferred data refers to the characteristics assigned to the person based on their online behavior (Bodea, Karanikolova, Mulligan, Makagon, 2018). For example, it could assign person's interests (films or sports, for example) based on their research bar inquisitions. Inferred data could be combined with the declared data to improve the accuracy of the persona, assigned to the customer.

Collected consumer data can be allocated to three groups, according to the its collectors: first-party data, second-party data and third-party data.

First-party data

First-party data includes information, directly collected from the customers. It could be, for example, loyalty program activity or purchase history (Khatibloo, 2018). Since it is collected directly from the source (firm's customers) it is thought to be as of the highest accuracy and relevance to the business. One of the uses for the first party data, is, for example, personalization

of the advertisements or gaining audience insights (Arthur, 2013). **Main difference between zero-party data and first-party data is the fact that first-party data belongs to the company and governed by the firm's privacy policies and terms of use. The company could, potentially, commercialize it and sell to other parties** (Khatibloo, 2018).

Second-party data

Second-party data is, essentially, first-party data of another company. It could be purchased directly from the source, without intermediaries. Examples of the second-party data are product preferences or web cookie data (Khatibloo, 2018). Such data can give firms access to the information they did not have access before and be used, for example, to reach new audiences.

Third-party data

Third-party data refers to information purchased through an outside broker (Kosorin, 2018). These companies usually collect and process various data sets (such as mobile device ids and purchase preferences) to create consumer profiles (Grigsby, 2018). Such data is readily available and, due to aggregation of the large data sets, can provide valuable insights which cannot be gained from a small company's data. Drawback of such information is that there is no transparency in its collection and, therefore, it does not pass the consent the way zero party data does (Khatibloo, 2017).

Summary

The recognition of zero-party data as an efficient and reliable tool for gathering and measuring consumer information is a significant breakthrough in the digital marketing. Being a relatively novel phenomena zero-party data has not yet won the market but its position among other types of data is improving with the constant growth of concern about data privacy. The potential of zero-party data in the data economy should be explored in the context of digital marketing and big data science taking into consideration the data privacy issues as well as the other types of data: first-, second- and third-party data (Selinger, Polonetsky, Tene, 2018). The role of zero-party data for marketers inheres in delivering altogether better relationship with the customers and enhanced Customer Lifetime Value for companies through the improved

personalized insights in the process of business interaction (Fader, Thomas, 2018). **Collection and successive activation of zero-party data is a win-win situation for both consumers and businesses, especially in the hospitality industry where the competitive advantage is based on the customer centricity.**

3. Research Methodology

This chapter describes methods selected for the research process in the Applied Research Project. In pursuit of the credible and reliable results, research methods, relevant for the scope of the research questions and problems, were carefully chosen. They helped to maintain the logical structure during the working process and provided a framework for comprehensive analysis of the findings.

3.1 Formatting style

This research uses the American Psychological Association (APA) Style. As a formatting style most commonly used for the social sciences, it was chosen, as explained by Beins (Beins, 2012), as an attempt to transfer precise information and for avoiding any kind of misconception of communicated literature. Minimal deviations from the original guidelines are possible due to the pre-requisitions and requirements of the course for which this report was written.

3.2 Research methods

The work is based on the scientific research principles. Qualitative methods were chosen and used throughout the analysis of the literature and expert interviews. The background analysis was carried out through the desk research, to acquire first, general understanding of the topic. Further, semi-structured expert interviews were conducted and evaluated to access the primary data.

3.3 Secondary data

To build a basic knowledge about the industry, various literature sources were used. Due to the relevance of recent up-to date data for the topic, authors focused their attention on the recent sources of reliable information, such as industry's reports, official statistics and scientific articles. These sources were used to provide the information used for the background analysis.

3.4 Primary data

After a review of secondary data authors had a clear overview of the topic at hand and, therefore, it was possible to evaluate what kind of information was necessary to obtain to answer the research questions. Following the secondary research, primary research based on expert interviews was conducted. As shown in the table 1, primary data was used to answer both the research questions.

Table 1
Research approach

| | Primary data: expert interviews | Secondary data: existing literature |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| What is the position and the role of zero-party data in the data economy of the global tourism and hospitality industry? | | |
| What are the benefits of using zero-party data in tourism and hospitality industry? | | |

Source: own creation, 2020

All the interviews for this paper were conducted in a semi-structured way. According to (Lewis, Thornhill, Saunders, 2009) semi-structured interviews represent interviews with flexible structure. The technique concentrates on conducting interviews in a form of a conversation. Some questions or topics can be prepared beforehand, however, they can be removed or rearranged during the flow of the interview. It is also possible that interviewees answers evoke new doubts or topics for conversation, therefore, new follow-up questions can be asked in the process.

To provide an additional support for the interviewers, an interview guide was developed. It was designed to aid authors in the conversation process, aiming at the goal of conducting the interviews in the most efficient way to be able to access information needed to answer the research questions. The guide was developed with the thought of the flexible structure in mind and for the approximate interview length of 30 minutes.

For the convenience of the following analysis authors recorded, and afterwards transcribed the conducted interviews. Most transcriptions miss the introduction phase because the recordings were started only after the oral permission from the interviewees was received. Transcriptions and the interview guide could be found in the appendices.

As can be seen in table 2, the interviews were conducted with the experts from the various businesses serving the tourism market. According to Flick (Flick, 2018) experts are “members of organisation with specific function, possessing specific professional knowledge and expertise”, therefore, experts from the high management positions were chosen, as they usually handle the information authors needed to access answer the research questions. As similar companies deal with identical issues within the same industry, replacing the companies with the similar ones would have not significantly influenced the research.

Table 2
Expert interviews

| # | Company | Interviewee | Position | Date/Setting |
|---|---|-------------|-------------|---|
| 1 | Tourist Transport Company, Switzerland | A | Top Manager | April 24th, 2020 Interview conducted via the Zoom call |
| 2 | 5 Star Hotel, Lucerne, Switzerland | B | Top Manager | May 11th, 2020 Interview conducted via the Skype call |
| 3 | 5 Star Hotel, Georgia | C | Top Manager | May 12th, 2020 Interview conducted via the Zoom call |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|-------------|---|
| 4 | 5 Star Boutique Hotel, Moscow, Russia | D | Top Manager | May 19th, 2020 Interview conducted via the WhatsApp call |
| 5 | 4 Star Hotel, Yalta, Russia | E | Top Manager | May 13th, 2020 Interview conducted via the WhatsApp call |
| 6 | Destination Management Organization, St. Gallen, Switzerland | F | CEO | May 18th, 2020 Interview conducted via the Cisco call |
| 7 | 3 Star Family Hotel, Switzerland | G | CEO | May 26th, 2020 Interview conducted via the Zoom call |
| 8 | Tour Agent, Winterthur, Switzerland | H | CEO | June 2d, 2020 Interview conducted via Google Handgouts call |

Source: own creation, 2020

Interviews B, C, D, E and G were used to access various aspects of the hotels' data management and their most common marketing tools. Interviews were conducted via the WhatsApp, Skype or Zoom calls. Conversations amounted to roughly from 20 to 40 minutes of audio time.

Interview with A was used to access in further detail aspects of the tourist transport company and their approach to data handling. The interview was conducted via Zoom call and amounted to 25 minutes of conversation time.

Interview with H was used to develop an understanding of how a tour agent collects and controls clients' data. The interview was conducted via the Google Hangouts call and amounted to roughly 45 minutes of conversation time.

Interview with F was used to understand various aspects of the DMO's data handling. The interview was conducted via the Cisco call and amounted to roughly 45 minutes of conversation time.

Additionally, Thomas Wozniak, supervisor for the project from the HSLU, participated in the project by providing guidance during the course of the research process.

3.5 Interview analysis approach

After the interviews were transcribed, authors conducted analysis of the manuscripts. Semi-structured interviews were chosen with the purpose of analysing the interview data in an inductive way.

To understand how to analyse interviews inductively, a variety of literature sources were consulted. All interviews were analysed through the steps suggested by the literature found in Azungah (2018), Sauders et al. (2008) and Thomas (2003). Since the theory of inductive analysis varied from one source to another, just the core points were extracted from literary sources and some steps were adapted for this specific analysis. The literature was summarised in four steps that fitted this research. As seen in , the steps were supported with help of a coding tree.

1st Step: Determining the unit of data

Since the data needed to be analysed systematically, the experts' answers usually divided either into paragraphs, or sentences and phrases. The most fitting unit of analysis for this work was chosen to be a sentence.

2nd Step: Preliminary coding

This step assessed the sentences through the 1-, 2- or 3-word codes. The codes served as categories and described the overall meaning of the sentence. To maximise the efficiency, this step was done electronically, and the sentences were explicitly copied from the original interviews. In this step, redundant codes were eliminated. The authors kept important patterns, similarities and contradictions between the codes in mind to best interpret the results later in the research process.

3rd Step: Final Coding

The codes were summarised into final categories. After analyzing the interviews through the mentioned process, the authors gathered the most relevant knowledge for the paper.

The results of the interviews' analysis can be seen in the chapter four: Results. After the findings were summarized, chapter five – conclusion and recommendations was written.

3.6. Ethical implications

The research ethics principles were applied all the time during the interview with the participants and in the process of the data collection and analysis.

The ethical implications in the research are aiming to understand how to balance the interest of researcher and experts in the context of study (Bogner, Littig, Menz, 2009). The researchers are entitled to provide reliable and credible results based on the data which quality totally depends on the goodwill of an expert. On the other hand, the experts are qualified to have their data protected as well as they have a right to withdraw from the research study at any time.

In order to ensure the quality of data and to protect the data privacy, the following foundational ethical principles were applied during the interview and during the data analysis (Vanclay, Baines, Taylor, 2013):

- respect for participants, which means a researcher always demonstrated respect in terms of all their interactions with participants including not judging them, not discrediting them, in ensuring that their views were faithfully recorded and given due consideration in the assessment process.
- informed consent, which meant that participation should be the voluntary choice of the participants and should be based on sufficient information and an adequate

understanding of the research and the consequences of their participation. This implied that the researcher must disclose all relevant information and any possible risks of participation, especially any issues around what would happen to the data obtained. Each interviewee signed the consent form, which provided the overview of the research study and underlines the data protection guidelines as well as the right of the interviewee to refer to the research study results at any time during and after research.

4. Results

In all our findings, we realized that the travel hospitality business in the digital marketing aspect needs to become more advanced either digitally better for the consumers or the digital marketing channels across all borders. Whether it is the classic marketing method of writing a review or using smart marketing tools to remember the purchase behavior on the booking site and the basic information you share on the web. However, due to different types of data collection methods, digital technology is becoming more visible in the hotel and tourism industries.

Hotels, travel companies and other hotel industries are using more and more digital solutions to help improve their brand image, while also trying to increase customer satisfaction and promote quality services (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019). However, thanks to smart marketing technology tools provided through Google Analytics, social media, and data collection methods, companies can better understand their customers. Thus, sometimes they have all this data but can't fully understand it, use it, or predict what they can do with it.

In the data economy field, there are different types of data collection methods, which later marketers and businesses can utilize for a particular purpose (Grisby, 2018). Thus, our goal is to make a way for the realization of the zero-party data into the economic world and the benefits for marketers to start using it as their new way of getting data for the potential of helping their business. Customers are hesitant when sharing personal information with a stranger or when it comes to booking in the hotel personally. But when using social media or other online platforms, they don't realize how personal it gets when you type all your personal information and contact credentials when setting up an account (Martin, Murphy, 2017).

Hotel marketing managers have made significant efforts to gain good experience and establish long-term customer relationships. **The hospitality and tourism businesses show importance in retaining their existing customers as a key success factor, but also the want of the**

potential customers that they can't reach out too (McGuire, 2017). It comes with the idea of loyalty in marketing, however, the data presumed and perceived may not be so clear. In the long run, this can save marketers and customers time and target the audience most suitable for your business.

There is a fine line between using advanced tools such as social media for data collecting but also the old school way of just having a simple conversation or answering a few questions via email or form (Nesamoney, 2015). It is visible to have this shift and going back and forth, wondering what is the best way to collect data about a potential customer without not knowing enough, but not coming across invasiveness on what the hotel wants to know (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019).

Understanding and having what could be basic knowledge about what is zero-party data, seems to be a problem for the participants we have interviewed. Thus, they (the hospitality businesses) are interested in learning and finding out more how to use this consent data and being more personal with the customers know (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019). Some brands may think what they are doing is fine, however your close connections and satisfied customers are the ones who show their appreciation. In order for these industries to expand, they should plan and emerge new ideas on targeting the right consumers. In order to do so, they must maximize their digital marketing technology and the proper use of understanding their data. Thus, diving into the new topic of zero-party data and becoming more relevant in the data economy.

4.1 Analysis and Coding

The role of zero-party data in the Tourism and Hospitality industry is visible according to the methods they use. For example, traditional ways of receiving feedback and personalizing customer's needs and accommodations. Thus, the fact that Hospitality industries are not so advanced in digitalization, and the marketing approaches via social media and data collection methods (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019). Meaning, they are still trying to understand how the data collection is being used and interpreted via the platforms they use. While that either be first, second, or third party data collecting. Depending on the hotel or tourism company, they portray their business on the satisfaction of the customers (McGuire, 2017). Some old customers like the old method of providing feedback through personal conversation and digital forms.

The problems are that they are not exposed to the topic enough. When they hear the term zero-party data as a part of the other data types, they know little to no information. The term is not familiar because it is not dominant in the data economy itself. However, the interviewees are quite interested in the idea. As they are explained and informed more about what the topic of zero-party data really is, then they realize they have such marketing tools or want to incorporate more into their business marketing approaches. Hospitality and Tourism companies are interested in understanding their customers more and willing to accommodate them as much as possible (McGuire, 2017). However, the main concern is trying to figure out who are the potential customers and target only those who are interested and willing to care. As you can see in the figure below, the collection of answers from all the interviewees for the same question in “what have you heard of zero-party data and its application in marketing?”

Table 3

Interview Analysis Results to Zero-Party Data Question

| Interviewee | Question about Knowledge about Zero-Party Data |
|----------------------|---|
| Interviewee H | “Not much to be honest.” |
| Interviewee A | “I mean not much I know about it[...] what zero party marketing was, that it is essentially you meant it is coming directly from the customer without any filter in-between us and them.” |
| Interviewee D | “Nothing.” |
| Interviewee E | “I think our company uses most marketing tools. I think everyone we see, we use it, and if we see something from competitors, we watch it every day, everywhere.” |
| Interviewee B | “I hear about it for the first time to be very honest and I was not aware of this. I haven't heard before. It's quite a shift of the mindset. It should be implemented on large scale `because the customers are so used to put data on the internet, stored somewhere, sold and as long as you get the service. I think now that people would need to invest much more of thinking, of |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| | consciousness, of what I am doing, what I actually want to do with the data. It will be revolution, but it will take time to implement because people's mindset are so used to Google and Facebook of today.” |
| Interviewee F | “No.” [...] Our strategy is not to buy data. That is exactly the point you mentioned earlier. [...] Zero party data, as I now understand it, is absolutely a possibility. People should tell us what they want so that we can try to send more targeted advertising or information. It is absolutely exciting. For a small destination like us, that should be a goal at some point. But I think we have to work on it.” |
| Interviewee C | “Zero-party data you said?” I am afraid I have never heard about this term so far.” |
| Interviewee H | “When you sent me the questionnaire, yes. Maybe I didn’t know about the specific term, but I know what it is. [...] I think once you see that there is something happening in the branch and people know, show interest, we think about concepts and models in order to work with zero party data, but at the moment they are very far from that. Once they understand this term, it might be too late because technology is so fast. We can use Google every week, but first we ask ourselves: Is it relevant for our clients?” |

Source: own creation, 2020

Zero-party data has a role in the data economy, but is not a familiar term or discussed in a business marketing tool. It should receive more recognition in the field of business marketing because this is the future experience about how to build customer relationships and trust in society. **Where these terms such as customization, personalization, and digital loyalty, are becoming more popular for the future of how we collect and perceive a customer's buying behavior via data tools** (Petersen, Peterson, Nash, 2014).

The common concerns and thoughts throughout all the interviews were that they needed to increase customer relationships, be more transparent, advance in digital marketing tools, understand the data they get and how to use it properly, and the ideas of personalization and privacy coming together. Overall, we found through our research that the hotel/tourism industry needs to improve technology to attract the most suitable customers and establish a strong relationship between people and brands. Here are some common themes and our research findings we have observed among our interviewees in the position of the data economy and how it can help lead towards the role of zero party data in the tourism and hospitality industry.

4.2. Data: Key themes in Interview Analysis

Data is generally important for the marketing world because, without it, we won't be able to understand the old and potential customers. Companies still have access to the other types of data, first, second, and third, which is data collected by a company on its websites, social media, signing up personally, and others that are visible for the company and for personal use (Sathi, 2014). The main limitation here is that companies must comply with privacy rules and ensure that the data collected is correct, transparent, and appropriate. Thus, data leaves a lot of room for misinterpretation and false data accusations (Sumner, 2015).

The key to zero-party data is that the consumer has total control over what information they give a brand and no confusion over permission (Khatibloo, 2017). In the interviews, they have mentioned that surveys and filling out forms were one of their most direct ways of getting data. Thus, tailoring the right quizzes, forms, chats, and surveys can allow more information about a person. Being more personal to a brand and the brand to the consumers can be very beneficial (Kingsnorth, 2016). **Meaning, they can be more personalized with experiences, recommendations, access to premium content or services, and rewards. It is an important shift for marketing right now, because the collection of data and the use is changing, and they need to get the right type of data for the consumers (Kingsnorth., 2016). The goal is to get more accurate data, with a stronger and more trustworthy relationship.**

4.2.1 Customer Relationship Data

By collecting data directly from customers and providing them with some value in return, you can convince them to tell you more information and provide more feedback to the company (Arthur, 2013). When collecting more information about consumer needs and desires, it will have a positive impact on customer value relationships (Baker, Hart , 2016). **By meeting their needs and knowing that they have been heard, customers are more obligated to share**

themselves. An example would be a survey or an interesting quiz that tells them the best destinations they liked. Then, that data collected can be used to target them with more relevant offers, coupons, discounts, experiences, and more based on the personal one-on-one data you have collected (Khatibloo, 2018).

Customer satisfaction in the hospitality and tourism business is a complex topic and it can be difficult to measure (McGuire, 2017). People and hotel managers read reviews on websites or social media platforms, but when someone gets good 5-star review feedback, and then someone reviews it as a 1 star, we get confused. The data for the hospitality industry becomes mixed on what is honest and what is unclear. Building customer relationships through the data that they provide is important for the hospitality industry (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019). The reason is that when they understand their customers better, they can best meet their needs (Fader, Thomas, 2018).

“Guests can get a perfect service when we have information about his preferences.”(Interviewee E, Appendix F, 2020, p. 71). As mentioned in the quote, it is important that the data they collect from the customers is true and accurate as possible. The hotels are there to help make us feel welcome and happy, for a pleasant stay and to market a better environment to be around. “We send letters out to all our guests when they leave the hotel, like a follow-up and we get the feedbacks from these emails.”(Interviewee D, Appendix E, 2020, p. 64)

Customer reviews and feedback are very important to the hotel and tourism industry because it is the most accurate data they have (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019). Google analytics, bookings, and social media may show numbers, demographic information, and popular interests, but if people remain honest about their comments and personal feedback, technically, this is already zero-party data, without them knowing the term. It can be seen that zero-party data is out there and that consent data and information exists. However, the marketing industry is caught in the dilemma of digitization and social media, that personal data is the best and most meaningful (Kosorin, 2018).

We have a nice high quality service, well trained staff and I think the most important thing is that the Hotel Manager and I show up almost at every breakfast and meets the customers. He asks about their staying, if there is something that bothers them, negotiate with them. I think this brings a lot of value.(Interviewee C, Appendix D, 2020, p. 58)

In order to build a customer relationship, you need to personally get to know them. Zero-party data is the type of data we're getting to know the true person is the most valuable part of the whole idea (Khatibloo, 2017). Not like how overrated Facebook or LinkedIn has become where you think you may know someone, connect with them via profiles (Selinger, Polonetsky, Tene, 2018). However, how many of those are your truly close connections and knowing specifically towards a certain topic and narrowing it down to the right niche of detailed information (Strong, 2015). In the quotation quoted by a participant above, it shows the value of listening to customers. Listening is a crucial term in relationships, businesses, political arguments, and pretty much anything that deserves a response or recommendation. Hence, zero-party data is the type of data where customers want to be listened to and heard when making a business decision or targeted (Rowan, 2020)..

4.2.2 Social Media and Digital Marketing

The tactics and tools that are present in social media marketing in the hotel and tourism industry are constantly evolving. There are several digital marketing tools that are used for collecting data and through the different types in the data economy. Through social media, emails, advertising, video interaction, analytics, and more (Petersen, Peterson, Nash, 2014). **Mainly what we found in the interviews for the types of marketing they use are customer insight marketing, email, and content marketing.** Companies that are early adopters of new social media marketing tools hope to gain an edge over the competition. **A positive outlook remains for the hotel industry as companies expand their social media ways of the use of data collected. This is one of the ways to generate new opportunities for personalization, engagement, and conversion** (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019). **This leads to the idea of zero-party data becoming the next competitive advantage in social media marketing and targeting the "right" consumers.**

It would be interesting to know why do we have Mr. Millar in this hotel, golfing, skiing, business, what did he like, so we could make personalized marketing with this information. We tried hard to talk, to convince our clients to fill in this information, but it takes time. It would work in the future for Marketing Automation (**Interviewee H, Appendix I, 2020, p. 93**)

With the above quote from Interviewee H, it is clear that he is hopeful and hopes for a new way to collect consumer data and understand their feedback as honestly and accurately as possible. The importance of the vision of the quote where there needs to be more consent and contribution from the customers. Marketers and managers are constantly improving the way they understand data and what can be improved next time in the future (Strong K, 2015).

And then we also receive feedback from what is happening on Facebook or wherever it is happening for getting information and learning more about our organization that way. I think that's also hugely important for us as well. For understanding where things are happening and what needs to be improved. (Interviewee A, Appendix B, 2020, p. 43)

Another participant felt the same that social media is empowering the future and that in order to gain positive data is by understanding what is happening from the consumer's point of view. Having a voluntary conversation or interaction with consumers gives you data (Kitchin, 2014). However, the issue is how much they are willing to provide depends on how much they trust and value the brand. It is important to understand that zero-party data is a value exchange (Rowan M, 2020). Where marketers want to understand the consumers in the right way by not overloading them with unnecessary content. As a result, consumers have received some rewards in exchange for data with no guesswork between the company.

4.2.3 Transparency

This has been a popular topic of showing full activities from the brand's point of view and the customers. However, some companies are open and willing to share their data practices, but others prefer to control what is seen. Zero-party data will be consent data and that it must be agreed and set terms by both parties being involved. The value they should collect should be valuable and meaningful. In order to be fully transparent, the brands and the customers must be honest and willing to give out information (Palmer, Martin, 2019).

The customers always complained that we asked for card details when checking in. They become very suspicious if we would just book or shop something. All the other data they put on online, on booking. They never cared at all. I think it has a lot to do with the brand - it is recognized in the world. They had a trust from the beginning on. Maybe also combined with Lucerne, Switzerland (Interviewee B, Appendix C, 2020, p. 51).

As mentioned in the quote above, there is a fine line on whom to trust. Some customers' trust in online digital platforms more than in-person contact. It goes back to trusting the people and then can go to trusting the brands and the data collection methods. In this case, they trust putting more personal information online and digital platforms, thinking no one has access to them. It comes down to trusting the experience and the brand (Petersen, Peterson, Nash, 2014). Where you are willing to share more information if the brand has satisfied the consumers' needs and experience in the hotel/tourism industry.

It's better when the customer tells you directly what s/he is looking for, than guessing what they need. I believe it would be more cost effective and time efficient as well and our position will improve in the market. (Interviewee C, Appendix D, 2020, p. 59)

Transparency is clear to say that there is full trust in both parties. There is no reason for a business to guess according to "some data " and misinterpreted data when there are sources and platforms to help increase the accuracy of data. It would make the marketing world and consumers' lives easier when it is clearly mentioned what he or she is looking for and wanting (Baker, Hart, 2016). Thus, transparency and the term zero-party data in the data economy go hand in hand when wanting to go further in making marketing decisions. Where working together equally and consenting proper data along the way.

4.2.4 Understanding Data

An important point in the interview is that there is data everywhere, but it can be difficult to understand it, and sometimes even difficult to explain. And how to deal with all the data in a large hotel brand, or how to attract more data and understand from a smaller focus. Using these tools and being able to understand the data correctly, can help them predict and optimize and meet the needs of the potential consumers (Arthur, 2013). Understanding the big data that they collect, can help to more effectively target their marketing content, which saves time and money. The most important thing is that the way they collect data through marketing strategies must be beneficial and can be translated into meaningful facts and figures, otherwise the collection is in vain (Fader, Thomas, 2018).

But all the info we gathered in our HS3 and property management system as I already mentioned, we have a lot of data about current customers but not yet the potential customers [...] It is called simple booking. They also have similar features like google studio and stuff and provide a dashboard of the data that is collected via the guess booking and our website. We try to combine both those dashboards and better understand the data (Interviewee G, Appendix H, 2020, p. 85)

The goal is to improve and become more beneficial in data collection (Grisby, 2018). Learning the specific aspects of consumers and putting it into meaningful content. Interpreting on how people think and want is a very difficult task unless you physically know what they want. Where websites, online platforms, and emailing to hotels and tour companies, to ask questions and get insights on what your concerns are. Where reviews and surveys are sometimes basic and won't help in the data collection and some are so detailed that people who are not

caring, won't give the time. However, in businesses, they don't want to waste time and resources on those who are not willing to accept and appreciate it. It is given in the consumerist world that we don't like doing things for free. Where humans are more encouraged in doing something when they get something in return (Kosorin, 2018).

4.2.5 Personalization and Privacy

It is clear that technology and social media play a huge role in collecting data and helping marketers better understand people. However, it generates concerns on what is true and how much is crossing the line in collecting data. Businesses or the hotel industry in this case want to get more information about you and your feedback. Thus, how many of them violate our privacy by collecting assumed data via the data economy methods of first, second, and third party data.

The topic of privacy has been a difficult topic in the modern technology world. The topic in the modern technology world with stories of being hacked, collecting private information without permission, and the exposure of social media networks, where people mix business and personal life (Bakhoum, Gallego, Mackendrodt, Surblyte-Namaviciene, 2018). Sometimes, on these online platforms, we don't show our true selves and the recommender systems and data collection in the data economy, collect only what they see. However, it can be described as false assumptions and portray a person's personality and interests falsely (Sumner, 2015). The future of zero-party data is a slow process in the digital world, due to trust issues, personalization, and willingness to connect with brands (Khatibloo, 2018).

Yes, we have a book on the desk reception, where guests can write their reviews, but you know this is not effective because when guests are checking out, they usually rush. We have a system which automatically asks what she/he desires to have in addition on the next stay. (Interviewee C, Appendix D, 2020, p. 58)

The quote above states the classical way of receiving information about the hotel. However, as mentioned how well does it work when you notice many customers are in a rush and don't use the review method you provided. Making an approach personalized and protecting one's privacy is difficult in one term, which is trust (Palmer, Martin, 2019). The marketer wants more information about you, but our unbelief in this century is what they will use it for, and will it be used in the right way. It is hard to believe that marketers want to use the data collection for good and not overuse the power in overselling something. The solution is using zero-party data; however, the area of privacy becomes the main sensitive concern to

move away from the other data. Where we have become in an environment where we trust machines more than people (Chavez, O'Hara, Vaidya, 2019).

5. Conclusions

The following conclusions concerning the position of zero-party data in the global tourism industry and its role in the developing data economy are based on the analysis of the expert interviews, which were conducted in order to obtain relevant data for the present exploratory research. The answer to the exploratory research question: "What is the position and the role of zero-party data in the data economy of global tourism and hospitality industry?" includes multiple levels of understanding and unraveling of the research problem.

First, based on the results of findings gained from the conducted interviews the initial assumption, that the hospitality industry is a data driven industry, was not sufficiently grounded. Although the heavy digital presence outlines the importance of data in the decision-making process, it is not yet considerably reflected in the global tourism and hospitality industry as these businesses stay committed to the standard tools and traditional online platforms. Even some hotels, which are considered to be innovative, still rely on the analog tools or use marketing analytics tools from the public social media platforms such as: Google Analytics, Booking.com, etc. Moreover, there is still a strong belief that the most valuable measure of the customers' satisfaction is a feedback, which cannot be positively influenced through high investments in digital marketing as long as the company provides poor services (Sigala, Rahimi, Thelwal, 2019).

Secondly, there is a necessity to collect data in a fairer way as today customers are concerned about their data privacy and grow high expectations to receive personalized content. At the same time, businesses understand that customers become more skeptical concerning sharing their information in person rather than on the web, where by definition their personal data is more exposed (Bakhoun, Gallego, Mackendrodt, Surblyte-Namaviciene, 2018). However, many tourism and hospitality businesses continue to use traditional ways of collecting personal data such as face-to-face review or a customer feedback book.

As far as the position of zero-party data in the global data economy is concerned, there prevails the profound lack of awareness in comparison with other types of data. The uncertain position of zero-party data in the data economy and insufficient expertise of the data economy principles resulted in difficulties to find potential interviewees, who would be ready to discuss the research topic in question. **Nevertheless, those who participated in the research showed the**

genuine interest to enrich the marketing approach through personalized marketing practices. However, the global tourism industry has no capacity to value the potential of adapting to a new type of data yet. Though, the advantages of zero-party data application are recognized by the interviewees, the adaptation to the new marketing approach depends on the multiple factors, such as: investments, resources and culture. Disruption of the traditional context in marketing is a long-term strategy that implies transparency on both sides. Change requires time, which may lead to extensive effort.

Based on the insights from the interviews the confusion about zero-party is associated primarily with the way the zero-party is collected and subsequently applied. Abundance of several data types and responsibility to react proactively while providing value makes it difficult to accept change easily. After the zero-party data is clarified, the interviewees recognize the advantages such as retargeting and encouraging new leads as well as the drawbacks: a wide set of information, that needs to be filtered before collection, analyzed and put into practice (Interviewee F, Appendix G, 2018.).

According to the interviewees an ideal marketing tool includes in-app customization, capture of consumer motivations, intentions, interests and preferences in one place, while privacy of personal data is respected, and customer's trust is rewarded.

5.1 Recommendations

As the research subject is not sufficiently investigated, it is recommended to the future researchers to use this study as a ground research. It is recommended to widen the range of potential target group (e.g. conduct elite or expert interviews) and approach different industries. for more data saturation. Further recommendation is the use of quantitative research methods to substantiate the data findings.

For the companies monetizing the use of zero-party data it is recommended to promote new marketing approaches in the data economy and educate brands on customers data privacy and security. It is important to underline that zero-party data may come as a help to augment and improve the insights from the other types of data and marketing practices.

Brands can benefit from zero-party data collection and applications by using gamification, questionnaires and social polls. The process of data collection requires solid reasoning in order to let customers share their data voluntarily. The key to meet customer demands is through an exchange of value from both parts which reduces the marketing waste,

permits customization across channels, whether they are paid, owned or earned and overall improves the communication strategy. As technology evolves over time, customers require more attention and protection, therefore it is recommended to leverage the strengths of each type of data to use them when appropriate. By using customers' self-reported data, the businesses would be able to meet customer privacy demands and drive long term relationships (Khatibloo, 2018.). When a company within the tourism and hospitality industry wants to personalize the customer journey, they should consider themselves which type of data fits their budget and mission.

Based on our findings and sub-themes, and to answer our research question, it is clear that zero-party data is becoming more useful in the marketing set for the tourism sector. By providing the marketers unique information about the potential customers. It is shown that the other data types in the data economy will still be out there, however the shift into more personalized value exchange marketing will be making its way into the future. As a result, it is the goal to no longer use approximations and guess work to build strong relationships with customers and marketers.

5.2 Research Quality Criteria

The quality criteria such as: credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, were taken into consideration in the course of the whole research process and during writing up the research paper.

Credibility

The establishment of the credibility of findings entails both ensuring that research is carried out according to the canons of good practice and submitting research findings to the members of the social world who were studied, for confirmation that the investigator has correctly understood the social world (Bell, Bryman, Harley, 2019). For this measure to occur, the triangulation method was used, where different researchers coded and interpreted the answers. In addition, through the member validation method, all members of the group presented to each other their findings to assure a wide understanding and accuracy of data.

Transferability

Transferability or external validity implies the degree to which a study can be replicated to a different context, population, background and times. This criteria is fulfilled through the use of a thick description as Guba and Lincoln argues that it "...provides others with what they

refer to as a database for making judgements about the possible transferability of findings to other milieu.” (Bell, Bryman, Harley, 2019, p.365). For a more in-depth insights, it is recommended to interview industry experts from other countries and industries.

Dependability

The dependability aspect is based on the consistency and accuracy of the information gathered during the conceptualization of the study, collection of the data, interpretation of the findings and their report. The conducted interviews were transcribed accordingly and as stated by Bryman and Bell that “...complete records are kept of all phases of the research process-problem formulation, selection of research participants, fieldwork notes, interview transcripts-in an accessible manner.” (Bell, Bryman, Harley, 2019, p.365).

Confirmability

In order to conclude a valid research result, the forth criteria, that “...is concerned with ensuring that, while recognizing that complete objectivity is impossible in business research, the researcher can be shown to have acted in good faith; in other words, it should be apparent that he or she has not overtly or manifestly allowed personal values or theoretical inclinations to sway the conduct of the research and findings deriving from it must be accomplished (Bell, Bryman, Harley, 2019, p.365). The researchers must act neutral when collecting and analyzing the data.

5.3 Limitations

The findings of this study have to be seen in regard to some methodological and research limitations, but as well possibilities that may impact the findings.

The primary limitation of generalization of these results is the access to data as the topic is new and there was no explicit access to books regarding zero-party data, whereas the collection of information on the Internet might lead to false sources.

Including the idea that it is a fairly new approach in the data economy field. Where some technology platforms such as Netflix or Amazon have a more remembering system that pinpoints to our interests and personalized appeal. Where in zero-party data you are more personalized with one another, thus the role of the consumer is mainly in charge. Where if they no longer want a company to use their consumer data, the company must comply. Where zero

party data is more liquid in a sense that the consumer can provide, update or revoke data access at any time. Thus, showing in the research field of the data economy and how zero-party data is within them, shows a limitation not on the knowledge of what it is, but more how can it be incorporated into the marketing field and applied towards a technological era.

The results should be interpreted with caution, as with most studies, where there are several limitations that should be considered. Due to the time constraint of COVID-19, our ability to conduct thorough research was limited. We had the chance to interview eight expert clients in the marketing field. Due to a small sample size, we cannot assume our findings to be entirely true amongst the industry of tourism and hospitality. Our participants come from different backgrounds and locations, which varies the knowledge level in regard to the Tourism and Hospitality sector, in regard to our research results.

If given more time, we would have increased the sample size and done more interviews to deepen our research and in our themes. By updating a new interview guide, possible survey scenario's in order to better narrow our search. For example:

“Out of the four types of data in the data economy, which you think is the most useful?”
and explain why?

- a) first-party data
- b) second-party data
- c) third-party data
- d) zero-party data

Where we then would also proceed in conducting interviews among customers to see their insights in the marketing approaches and behaviors of the use of data, in the technological sector and for the industry of hospitality. This would give us further insight into the challenged being faced within the industry, allowing us to formulate better recommendations.

The research design of this research is exploratory and, hence it supposes a small sample number, which makes it impossible to generalize for the whole industry. Another disadvantage is the period in which the project took place, as the COVID-19 crisis influenced negatively the hunt for interviewees. There were about 80 attempts to reach Marketing Managers in the chosen industry, but the COVID-19 situation affected the capacity and availability of more people to be interviewed. Moreover, considering where the interviewees were located and the regulations of the COVID-19, the discussions were held virtually with the help of online tools.

The businesses for which some interviewees are working, are controlled by a marketing department overseas that might be more or less aware and willing to implement innovative practices. Where the limitation of different cultural backgrounds, marketing tactics, and knowledge of how to market their brand and attract reoccurring customers, can differ among participants and when using a small sample size.

Even though this paper provides mostly consistent and significant insights, the previous mentioned limitations indicate the need to possibly conduct further research, especially quantitative ones in order to eliminate confusion in the results.

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Appendix K: Declaration of Sole Authorship

We, Bortos Cerasela, Florek Sabina, Niederberger Elena and Zaitsev Victoria, hereby certify that the attached work, “Zero-Party Data in the Tourism Industry”, is wholly and completely our own and we have indicated all the sources (printed, electronic and personal) that we have consulted. Any sections quoted from these sources are clearly indicated in quotation marks or are otherwise so declared. We further attest that we have included acknowledgement to the names of any persons consulted in the course of preparing this assignment.

Lucerne, June 15th, 2020



Bortos Cerasela



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