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The Contribution of Digital Advertising to the Development of Domestic Tourism in Algeria.

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Abstract :

This study aims to identify the extent of the contribution of digital advertising to development of local tourism in Algeria, the study adopted the descriptive approach by extrapolation and analyzing studies, research and books that relate to its subject, the study reached several conclusions, the most important of which are: lack of awareness among some tourism operators about the importance of digital advertising and its tools, weak digital infrastructure, especially in remote or desert areas, the study presented several recommendations, including: the need for more efforts by the state to advance the tourism sector in Algeria and emulating the experiences of leading countries in the tourism field.

Key words: Digital advertising; local tourism; local tourism development

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1. INTRODUCTION:

The world is moving towards an unprecedented digital revolution that has significantly impacted various aspects of daily life, including the economy and tourism. With the increased use of the Internet and social media, reaching a wide audience has become more accessible. This accessibility has made these media a primary tool in marketing strategies across various sectors. Among these sectors, tourism has notably benefited from digital advancements, gaining new opportunities to promote tourist destinations and attract visitors from all over the world

1.1. Problem Statement

Digital advertising represents one of the most prominent tools that can effectively contribute to the growth of domestic tourism in different countries, including Algeria, which has considerable potential in this area due to its geographic and cultural diversity. In an era where technology increasingly influences purchasing and travel decisions, it has become essential to leverage digital tools to highlight and promote Algeria's local tourism resources in innovative ways that attract both domestic and international visitors. This context highlights the need to study the contribution of digital advertising in stimulating domestic tourism and how these tools can enhance interaction with local tourist destinations and increase interest in them, making tourism an essential element in supporting the national economy. This leads to the study's central question:

To what extent does digital advertising contribute to the development of domestic tourism in Algeria?

1.2. Sub-Questions

What is digital advertising?

What is domestic tourism, and what is its role in economic development?

Does digital advertising play an effective role in developing domestic tourism in Algeria?

1.3. Importance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in examining both digital advertising and domestic tourism and connecting them through a relationship based on the impact on the development of domestic tourism in Algeria via digital advertising.

1.4. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to explore tourism, particularly this sensitive sector, as Algeria seeks, by all means, to boost productive sectors to reduce reliance on hydrocarbons. It also aims to understand digital advertising in tourism.

1.5. Methodology

To achieve the study's objectives, the descriptive-analytical method was employed by reviewing and analyzing studies and research related to the field of study.

1.6. Previous Studies

Below is an overview of the most relevant studies related to the topic of this research?

"The Role of Electronic Advertising in Activating Tourism Services - A Case Study of Several Tourism Agencies," a doctoral dissertation in Tourism and Hotel Marketing by Ketaf Mebkhout, 2024.

The study aimed to highlight the role of electronic advertising in activating domestic tourism by identifying and analyzing the most widely used and popular forms of electronic advertising. The study concluded that electronic advertising methods have a positive role in activating tourism services from the perspective of tourism agencies. It recommended maximizing the use of information technology in designing tourism advertisements to encourage domestic tourism.

"Domestic Tourism in Algeria: Its Reality and Ways to Develop It," by Lotfi Makhzoumi, Feroz Zarouqi, and Oqba Abdellawi, Journal of Financial and Accounting Studies, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2020.

This study aimed to highlight the reality of domestic tourism in Algeria and examine various measures to develop and grow the tourism sector as an alternative to the hydrocarbons sector. The study revealed several issues, the most notable being poor management and a low level of customer service. Among the study's recommendations was the emphasis on advertising and promoting domestic tourism.

"The Status of the Tourism Sector in Algeria: Current Situation and Aspirations," by Abdulrahman Abdulqader and Hassani bin Ouda, Al-Haqiqa Journal, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2018.

Key findings from this study include the weak institutional and promotional aspects of tourism in Algeria and the low contribution of the tourism sector to the gross domestic

product. The study proposed several recommendations, most notably creating a favorable work environment to encourage both national and foreign tourism investment, particularly by combating corruption, favoritism, and bureaucracy.

1.7. Study Plan

To address the study's main problem, it has been divided into three main sections as follows:

Section One: A conceptual introduction to digital advertising.

Section Two: A conceptual introduction to domestic tourism.

Section Three: Digital advertising and the development of domestic tourism in Algeria.

2. Conceptual Introduction to Digital Advertising

The recent revolution in communication and information technology has led to rapid developments that have significantly impacted people's lives. Adapting to these changes has become an urgent necessity to help societies progress in various fields, thereby enhancing their overall welfare.

2.1. Definition of Digital Advertising

Definition 1: "A non-personal transmission of information through various media channels, usually persuasive in nature, about products (goods and services) or ideas, generally paid for by a known sponsor. All paid spaces on websites or email are considered digital advertising." (Nasir, 2005, p. 366)

Definition 2: "An electronic communication method for transmitting product or service information to convince the customer to make a purchase decision." (Abu Fara, 2004, p. 281)

2.2. Difference Between Digital Advertising and Traditional Advertising

Advertising is one of the most significant promotional activities, with digital advertising emerging as the most widely used promotional display method. Below are the main differences between digital and traditional advertising (Bakhti, 2002, p. 86):

- **Speed of Interaction:** Digital ads provide immediate feedback from website visitors, facilitating the measurement of campaign effectiveness, whereas traditional ads lack this feature.

- **Precise Targeting:** Digital ads allow messages to be tailored to fit each target group based on user interactions, increasing the chances of reaching the right audience.
- **Lower Cost:** Digital advertising is more cost-effective than traditional advertising, allowing organizations with limited resources to gain advertising coverage at low costs.
- **Customer Conversion:** Digital ads help convert potential customers into actual buyers through attractive design and innovative messaging, drawing their attention and encouraging repeat visits to the site.
- **Use of Modern Technologies:** Digital ads leverage techniques such as audio-visual effects to capture attention, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the advertisement.

These differences make digital advertising a powerful and advanced tool in modern marketing.

2.3. Importance of Digital Advertising

Digital advertising holds significant importance for various reasons:

- **Rapid Dissemination:** Digital ads reach a wide audience within seconds, allowing companies to target a large number of customers quickly.
- **Informing Customers about Products:** Digital ads provide details about products and their usage.
- **Promotion of Offers:** They help promote special offers and discounts provided by companies.
- **Precise Targeting:** Companies can accurately define target groups, such as targeting men for men's clothing products.
- **Increased Traffic and Sales:** Digital ads drive customers to visit websites, increasing sales opportunities.
- **Market Expansion**: Companies can reach new markets previously inaccessible.
- **Enhanced Competition:** Digital advertising improves the quality of offers among companies, benefiting consumers.
- **Continuous Presence:** Companies remain in customers' minds through frequent appearances on various sites.

(Source: "The Importance of Digital Advertising," available at: https://www.passion-company.com/dets.php?page=288&title=أهمية_الاعلانات_الالكترونية, accessed on: 08/28/2024)

2.4. Digital Advertising Tools

- **Website Advertising:**

"A website consists of a group of web pages linked together, which can be viewed through web browsers on a computer or mobile devices via web technology" (Al-Bendari, 1999, p. 16).

- **Email Advertising:**

"This is email that allows sending and receiving messages to and from anyone with an email address" (Fendoushi Rabia, 2012, p. 89).

- **Social Media Advertising:**

"Refers to the use of these platforms to publish ads and marketing content with the aim of communicating with an audience that has agreed to receive and share the organization's advertisements, allowing for personal interaction between users and ad content" (Mebkhout, 2024, p. 47).

- **Search Engine Advertising**

Definition: Also known as paid search, "it is a form of online advertising where companies pay to display their ads on Google, Yahoo, and other major search engines."

(Source: https://great.content.com/search-engine-advertising/page, visited 10/08/2024)

- **News Group Advertising**

Definition: "Also known as chat forums or electronic conferences, they allow participants to exchange information on various topics through written, audio, or visual messages. These electronic groups are used to share ideas and opinions on diverse topics online, making them an effective marketing tool for sending messages to specialized groups and researching user opinions and competitor news" (Al-Ihyar, 2016, p. 10).

3. Conceptual Introduction to Domestic Tourism

3.1. Concept of Tourism

3.1.1. Definition of Tourism

Definition 1: The World Tourism Organization defines it as "the activities carried out by individuals during their travels and stays in places outside their usual environment for a consecutive period of not more than one year, for purposes of leisure, business, or other activities" (Pierre, py, 1996, p. 14).

Definition 2: German scholar Froehlich described it as: "In its modern sense, tourism is a phenomenon of our time, stemming from the growing need for relaxation, a change of air, an appreciation of natural beauty, and the enjoyment of residing in areas with unique environments. It also results from increased communication, especially between different societies and social circles, a byproduct of expanded trade and advancements in transportation" (Mahmoud Kamel, 1975, p. 13).

3.1.2. Definition of Domestic Tourism

Definition 1: "The movement of citizens from their usual residence to a place of visit for a period of no less than 24 hours and no more than six months, for purposes other than earning a livelihood or migration" (Mostafa Abdelkader, 2012, pp. 35-54).

Definition 2: "Tourism implies travel, that is, the movement from one place to another; if it takes place within the country, it is considered domestic or local tourism, and if outside the country's borders, it is international tourism" (Ismat Adly, 2017, p. 113).

3.2. Conditions for Domestic Tourism

There are three basic conditions for domestic tourism (Shehata, 2006, p. 49):

- **Location:** The destination must be at least 40 km away from the tourist's residence.
- **Duration:** The stay must be at least one night; otherwise, it is considered a visit rather than tourism.
- **Purpose:** The purpose should be for leisure, relaxation, religious, medical reasons, or attending a conference; if the purpose is work or earning a livelihood, it is not considered domestic tourism.

The table below presents statistics on domestic tourism visitors.

Table (1): Statistics of Domestic Tourism Visitors

Visitors Included in Domestic Tourism Statistics	Visitors Not Included in Domestic Tourism Statistics
1. People traveling for leisure, family reasons, health, etc. 2. Individuals participating in conferences, meetings, sports events, visiting historical sites, or attending cultural and civilizational events, etc. 3. Travelers on business, administrative, or religious missions, etc. 4. Business travelers (such as employees of commercial and industrial companies). 5. Students in boarding schools or universities located in other regions or cities.	1. Individuals traveling to a place within the country with or without a work contract to start a job, gain employment, or engage in a professional activity (including all their family members and employees). 2. Travelers relocating their place of residence to their destination within the country. 3. People commuting daily to and from work. 4. Members of the armed forces traveling to other areas to carry out duties, participate in maneuvers, or similar activities. 5. Nomadic individuals.

Source : Boukhari , 2012, p 15.

3.3. Importance of Domestic Tourism

Domestic tourism has many benefits, including: (Challal, Rattoul, 2019, 270-271)

- Diversifying sources and resources of the national economy.
- Enhancing the balanced distribution of national income.
- Improving the operational level of tourism establishments.
- Encouraging the creation of new services and educating citizens about their country, thus enhancing their sense of citizenship.
- Supporting the development of small cities and remote areas.
- Providing investment opportunities for both locals and foreigners.
- Reducing the outflow of national income abroad by promoting domestic tourism.
- Contributing to the improvement of the economic well-being of individuals and society.
- Providing job opportunities for local populations.
- Domestic tourism acts as a foundation for international tourism, where it can replace it in cases of political or economic emergencies.
- Increasing cultural and social awareness among citizens about the nature of tourist destinations, as it is a means of intellectual and cultural communication between residents of different regions and helps spread environmental awareness.
- Strengthening social ties and supporting connections between regions within a country.

3.4. Requirements for Boosting Domestic Tourism

To develop the domestic tourism sector, the focus should be on the following: (Belbali and Ben Al-Arba, 2018, 338)

- Innovating new tourism offers and identifying and promoting tourist attractions across the country.
- Developing new tourism products, such as medical tourism, to reduce reliance on international tourism.
- Promoting the culture of domestic tourism and increasing interest in it.
- Offering affordable tourism packages to domestic regions for all categories of tourists.
- Enhancing cooperation between different sectors (transportation, security, public works, etc.) to implement the tourism strategy.
- Improving tourism facilities (parks, public gardens, museums, theaters, etc.) and ensuring high-quality services.
- Using information technology to facilitate communication with tourists (such as online booking, service requests, inquiries, etc.).
- Focusing on boosting domestic tourism.
- Improving and developing the services of travel agencies nationwide.
- Enhancing the quality of tourism research in general, and domestic tourism in particular, and organizing coordination between academics and relevant authorities.

4. Digital Advertising and Domestic Tourism Development in Algeria

4.1. Components of Domestic Tourism in Algeria (Makhzomi et al., 2020, 59-60)

A. Natural Resources: Algeria has significant natural resources that enable it to offer competitive and high-quality tourism products. These include the country's unique environmental and climatic diversity:

- **Geographical Location**: Algeria is located in the center of North-West Africa, between longitudes 9° West of Greenwich and 12° East, and latitudes 19° and 37° North. It spans an area of 2,381,791 km², making it the largest African and Arab country by area, and the 10th largest globally. It holds a central position in the Maghreb region.
- **Climate**: Algeria experiences three main climate types from north to south:

- Mediterranean climate along the coast.
- Semi-continental climate in the high plateaus.
- Desert climate in the south.

- **Topography**: The country features a variety of terrains from north to south, including:

  - The coastal strip: The inherited length from French colonization is 1200 km, but the actual length is 1622.48 km.
  - The Tell Atlas and high plateaus.
  - The desert and the Saharan Atlas: The desert is the largest tourist attraction in Algeria, covering 80% of the country's total area and being one of the largest deserts in the world.

- **Natural Reserves**: Algeria has several natural reserves, including:

  - **El Kala National Park** (78,000 hectares): Located in the northwest, it includes three beaches and three reserves home to 50 bird species and other animals.
  - **Djurdjura National Park** (500.18 hectares): Located in the heart of the Tell Atlas.
  - **Cedar Forest Park (Thénia El Had)** (616.3 hectares).
  - **Tassili National Park** (100 hectares): A UNESCO World Heritage site since 1982.
  - **Hoggar National Park**: Established in 1987, also recognized by UNESCO.
  - **Algiers' Botanical Garden**: A natural museum with 2,500 plant species, including ancient trees, located in the heart of Algiers, covering 32 hectares.

- **Hot Springs**: Algeria has many natural thermal springs, making it an excellent destination for wellness tourism.

B. Historical and Cultural Resources: Algeria's rich historical and cultural heritage makes it a cradle of human civilizations, with archaeological sites, museums, and historical documents that attest to its long and diverse history. Notable UNESCO World Heritage sites include:

- **Timgad**: Founded by Emperor Trajan in 100 AD, located 37 km from Batna.
- **Djemila**: An ancient Roman city in Sétif.
- **Beni Hammad Castle**: Features Roman ruins and Islamic sites.

- **M'zab Valley**: Built in the 10th century, a fortified desert city in Ghardaïa.
- **Tipaza**: An ancient Roman town.
- **The Casbah of Algiers**: Built by the Ottomans in the 16th century, it overlooks a small island that was a trading post for the Phoenicians in the 4th century BC.

C. Infrastructure: Key infrastructural elements include:

- **Road Networks**: Algeria has about 104,720 km of roads, including 67,000 km of national roads and 38,100 km of regional and municipal roads. The East-West highway is also a significant development.
- **Transport Networks**: Critical to tourism development:
  - **Railways**: 4,500 km of railways, with 215 km electrified and 200 stations, covering 17% of northern Algeria's land transport.
  - **Air Transport**: Algeria's air travel capacity has seen significant growth, with the domestic lines carrying 316 million passengers annually.
  - **Maritime Transport**: Algeria has 13 multipurpose ports, along with many smaller fishing and leisure ports.
- **Telecommunications**: Algeria has satellite communication stations that support international internet access, and the telecommunications sector has expanded with the introduction of digital and mobile networks across the country.
- **Accommodation Capacity**: Algeria offers a wide range of accommodation, from public and private hotels to tourist complexes and campsites, mainly concentrated in the north. However, there is room for improvement in promoting desert tourism in the south.

4.2. Efforts to Develop the Tourism Sector in Algeria

In the context of developing the tourism sector, Algeria has undertaken various measures to enhance and promote its tourism industry:

4.2.1. Legal Measures

Algeria has implemented several legal reforms to stimulate the tourism sector, including the following key laws:

- **Order No. 03-01, dated August 20, 2001, on Investment Development**: This order includes significant reforms in the investment system, aiming to provide exemptions and privileges within an exceptional investment system. It also

established the **National Investment Development Agency (ANDI)** to assist and monitor both local and foreign investors in the sector.

- **Law No. 03-01 on Sustainable Tourism Development, dated February 17, 2003**: This law aims to improve the tourism sector by supporting investments, promoting tourism projects, and enhancing the status of hotels and other tourism facilities. It focuses on integrating Algeria into the international tourism market, preserving its natural, cultural, and historical heritage, and improving living conditions and the quality of tourism services to meet both local and international demands.
- **Law No. 03-02, dated February 17, 2003, on the Use and Exploitation of Tourist Beaches**: This law sets out the general rules for the exploitation of tourist beaches to ensure the protection of these areas and guarantee that visitors can enjoy safe and clean environments for swimming and recreation. It also aims to improve services related to beaches, such as cleanliness, health, and security.
- **Law No. 03-03, dated February 17, 2003, on Tourist Expansion Areas and Sites**: This law focuses on the principles and rules related to the protection, development, and promotion of tourist areas. It seeks to ensure sustainable development of these regions through rational exploitation of tourist spaces and natural resources, while preserving cultural and historical elements.
- **Tourism Sector Spatial Planning Scheme (2006)**: This ministerial decision, dated July 9, 2006, outlines the foundations and strategies for restructuring the tourism sector in Algeria, aiming for sustainable and effective development.

4.2.2. Organizational Measures

Organizational efforts have included the establishment of agencies and bodies responsible for tourism development in Algeria:

- **Ministry of Tourism and Traditional Industries**: Established on September 20, 1963, this governmental body is responsible for formulating and implementing tourism policies, overseeing tourism projects, and promoting investment in the sector.
- **National Tourism Development Agency (ANDT)**: Established on February 21, 1998, the agency's role is to coordinate efforts for tourism development, encourage investment, organize tourism activities, and align Algeria's tourism offerings with local and international market demands.
- **National Tourism Office (ONT)**: Created by Decree 214/88, dated October 31, 1988, the office is tasked with promoting Algeria's tourism destinations,

developing tourism infrastructure, and providing information to visitors about available services and attractions.

- **National Institute for Tourism Studies**: Established on March 10, 1998, this institution conducts research on tourism development, identifying opportunities and challenges, and contributing to strategic planning to improve the tourism sector.
- **National Committee for Facilitating Tourism Activities**: Established on February 25, 1994, this committee aims to simplify administrative and technical procedures related to tourism development, facilitating the process for investors and operators to obtain necessary permits and licenses.
- **National Office for Animation, Development, and Tourism Information**: This office focuses on revitalizing the tourism sector through the organization of tourism events, festivals, and exhibitions. It also conducts promotional campaigns to showcase Algerian tourism destinations both locally and internationally.

4.2.3. Tourism and Hospitality Education Institutions

Algeria has established several schools and training institutes focused on tourism and hospitality to qualify and develop human resources in this vital sector. Notable institutions include:

- **National School of Tourism**: Established on August 17, 1994, it offers advanced education in tourism and hospitality, preparing qualified professionals to work in various tourism and hotel management fields.
- **National Institute of Technical Hotel and Tourism Techniques**: Founded on August 17, 1994, this institution provides technical and professional training in tourism and hospitality, aiming to equip specialists with the necessary skills for the sector.
- **Hotel and Tourism Center**: Also established on August 17, 1994, this center offers specialized training in hospitality and tourism, ensuring a skilled workforce to meet local and regional market needs.

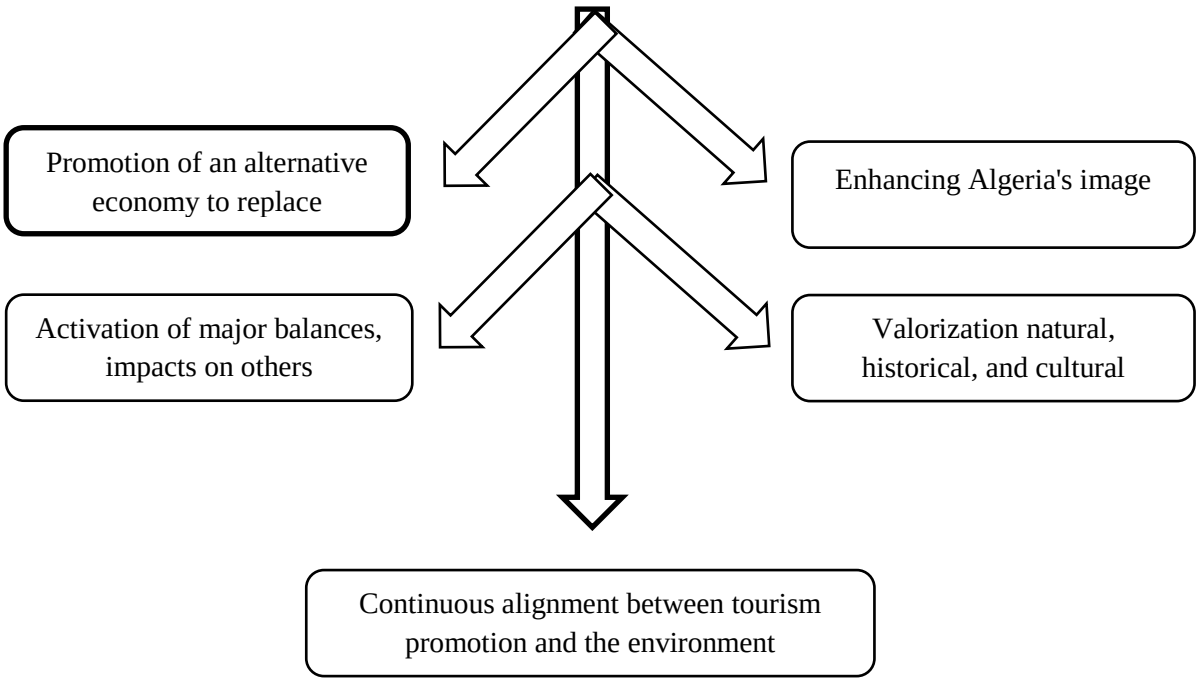
However, challenges remain, particularly in continuous professional development in modern service techniques. There is also a need to expand training programs to include areas such as **eco-tourism** and **cultural tourism**, which are gaining increasing global importance.

4.2.4. The SDAT2030 (Tourism Spatial Planning Master Plan 2030)

The SDAT2030 is a strategic framework for the sustainable development of tourism in Algeria, initially set to run until 2025 but extended to 2030. The plan consists of six volumes, each addressing different aspects of tourism development:

- **Volume 01: Diagnosis of Tourism in Algeria**.
  This volume provides an in-depth analysis of the current state of the tourism sector in Algeria, including strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities.
- **Volume 02: The Five Dynamics and Priority Tourism Action Programs, Strategic Plan**
  This section outlines the key strategic actions and priority programs aimed at boosting tourism, including infrastructure development, marketing strategies, and human resource training.
- **Volume 03: Tourism Excellence Poles and Tourism Villages**
  This volume identifies key tourism hubs and villages that will serve as centers of excellence, aimed at developing specific areas with strong potential for tourism and ensuring they are equipped to handle growing tourist demands.
- **Volume 04: Implementation of the Tourism Spatial Planning Master Plan, Operational Plan**
  This section lays out the practical steps for implementing the overall strategy, detailing the necessary actions, timelines, and stakeholders involved in executing the plan.
- **Volume 05: Priority Tourism Projects**
  This volume lists the most urgent tourism projects that will play a central role in the plan's success, focusing on high-impact initiatives that can drive growth in the short term.
- **Volume 06: Summary of the Tourism Spatial Planning Master Plan**
  The final volume provides an overall summary of the plan, including its key objectives, strategies, and anticipated outcomes.

Figure No (01) : The five objectives of the tourism planning master plan.



Source : Ministry of Regional Planning, Environment, and Tourism, Tourism Development Master Plan, 2008, p. 24.

4.2.5. Measures for Domestic Tourism in Algeria

Algeria has taken various measures and incentives to boost domestic tourism and encourage citizens to explore the country's diverse tourist regions. These measures aim to develop the tourism sector, particularly focusing on desert tourism and historical and cultural sites. Some of the key measures are:

- **Reduction of Travel Ticket Prices to the South**

  The national airline, Air Algerie, decided to reduce ticket prices for flights to the southern regions of Algeria between September and April each year. This initiative encourages Algerians to visit the desert regions, offering unique natural and environmental landscapes. It aims to boost internal tourism, particularly in Algeria's southern desert areas, which are home to one-of-a-kind natural scenes.

- **Cultural and Heritage Festivals**

  Algeria organizes numerous festivals in historical and archaeological sites to increase awareness of the country's cultural heritage and attract both local and international tourists. These festivals celebrate the diverse cultures of Algeria's

regions, contributing to the promotion of the country's rich heritage and encouraging visitors to explore its deep history.

- **Attracting Investments in the Tourism Sector**

  The Algerian government encourages both local and international investors to invest in the tourism sector, especially in the southern desert regions, which are home to rare tourism attractions such as oases and the vast Sahara Desert. These areas are rich in history and cultural diversity, making them prime tourist destinations.

- **Revitalization of Tourist Areas**

  The authorities have focused on revitalizing tourist areas by investing significant resources in improving infrastructure. This includes enhancing the attractiveness of these areas to both local and international visitors.

- **Financial Allocations for Renovating Tourist Facilities**

  The government has allocated a substantial budget of 58 billion DZD for renovating public tourist facilities. Among this, 12 billion DZD is dedicated to revitalizing tourist centers, including those with mineral baths that are important tourist destinations in areas such as Ain Draham and Ain Témouchent.

These initiatives are designed to enhance domestic tourism, encouraging citizens to visit local tourist spots while also attracting international tourists. By leveraging Algeria's rich natural and cultural resources and improving tourism infrastructure, these measures aim to contribute to the national economy through tourism.

4.3. Digital Promotion for Tourism in Algeria

Despite the efforts of the government to develop the tourism sector, these efforts remain insufficient when compared to global trends towards the digital and smart world. Today's tourists no longer rely on traditional, cumbersome methods for planning their trips, such as booking tickets or making arrangements. Instead, they seek quick and relevant information on places, prices, and availability. Digital advertising is thus the most effective way to provide valuable information, including guided tours, price comparisons, interactive maps, and discounts.

4.3.1. Digital Promotion of Tourism in Algeria via Websites

Digital promotion in Algeria primarily relies on apps and websites that allow tourists to explore detailed information about tourist destinations, compare prices and services, and make informed travel decisions. Some key apps developed in recent years by Algerian youth include:

- **ONAT Instinct Travel App**

  Launched in 2017 by the National Algerian Tourism Office (ONAT), this app provides free access to all tourism services available in Algeria, with a focus on desert tourism. It offers an innovative marketing approach in line with technological developments and promotes tourism projects, especially in southern Algeria, such as the renewal of the city of Ghardaïa.

- **Dzair Voyages App**
  Launched in 2015, this app aggregates offers from Algerian travel agencies. It allows users to easily browse, search, and save travel deals. The app reflects the diverse range of services available in Algeria.
- **SIYAHA DZ Tourism App**
  Developed by Touch In Motion, this app launched in July 2016, allows users to discover travel agency offers and highlights attractive destinations to meet tourists' needs.
- **Oued Kniss Travel App**
  Initially popular as a marketplace app, Oued Kniss added a hotel rating service based on TripAdvisor, allowing users to compare prices and quality based on tourists’ reviews.
- **Algeria Travel & Explore App**
  Released in January 2019, this app offers guides and images of lesser-known tourist sites. It helps tourists discover secret locations, interact with locals, and enjoy local food, festivals, and culture.
- **Algeria Guide App**
  Launched in 2013, this app provides tourists and locals with practical information on major Algerian attractions, such as national parks and UNESCO-listed heritage sites.
- **Tourism Agency Websites**
  Travel agencies serve as a link between tourists and tourist products, offering tour programs and services through their websites. However, many Algerian

travel agencies lack dedicated websites and rely on social media platforms like Facebook. For example, the travel agency "Al-Najah" has over 839,000 followers on Facebook but lacks a website.

These digital tools are crucial in enhancing Algeria's tourism visibility, facilitating easier access to information, and encouraging both domestic and international tourism.

4.3.2. Digital Promotion of Tourism in Algeria via Social Media

Digital advertising for domestic tourism in Algeria through social media has experienced continuous development. Various techniques have been used, including:

- **Paid Advertising Campaigns on Social Media Platforms**

2023, the Algerian Ministry of Tourism launched a paid advertising campaign on Facebook and Instagram to promote tourist destinations in Algeria such as Tassili, Oran, and Algiers. This campaign successfully reached an audience interested in cultural and historical tourism, increasing visibility for these regions.

- **Influencer Marketing**

The National Tourism Development Agency in Algeria collaborated with local influencers to visit cities like Bejaia and Tizi Ouzou. Influencers documented their trips and shared them on Instagram, attracting the attention of young people and local citizens. This strategy effectively tapped into a wider, engaged audience.

- **Hashtags to Promote Tourist Locations**

The Ministry of Tourism in Algeria created specific hashtags for some of their campaigns, such as #Discover_Algeria. This allowed many users to share their photos and experiences from places like the Algerian deserts or the Kabylie mountains, creating organic promotion through user-generated content.

- **Promotional Videos and Storytelling**

The National Tourism Center posted a video on YouTube showcasing tourist excursions in the Djurdjura National Park, highlighting activities such as mountain hiking, camping, and wildlife watching. The stunning visuals in the video attracted many viewers and sparked interest among potential tourists.

- **Direct Engagement with Followers on Social Platforms**

On Facebook, the Algerian Tourism Agency publishes weekly posts offering travel tips for various tourist regions in Algeria. The team responds quickly to comments and inquiries, fostering interactive relationships with followers. This real-time engagement positively influences their travel decisions and builds trust with the audience.

- **Organizing Contests and Promotional Events on Social Media**

The National Tourism Agency organized an Instagram contest, inviting participants to capture and share unique tourist photos from their trips within Algeria. The best entries won prizes such as free stays at tourist hotels or internal trips, motivating people to explore new areas of the country.

Through these strategies, Algeria has significantly improved its ability to promote its tourist destinations, opening up new opportunities for local tourists to discover the beauty of their country. Social media has proven to be a powerful tool in boosting tourism awareness and engagement.

4.4. The reality of tourism development in Algeria

Tourism development in Algeria can be measured based on several indicators, the most important of which are:

4.4.1. Number of tourists:

The tourism sector in Algeria witnessed a significant decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as the country recorded in 2021 only about one million tourists due to health restrictions and border closures , as the movement of international tourists was not significant, and the greatest reliance was on limited domestic tourism, in 2022 the sector began to recover gradually with a slight increase in the number of tourists, as the number of tourists reached 1.4 million, there was an improvement in domestic tourism, but the numbers have not yet reached pre-pandemic levels

the pandemic, and in 2023 the tourism sector saw a big jump, with the number of tourists reaching 3.3 million compared to the previous year, this significant improvement reflects a full recovery in the 135.5% increase in the sector thanks to the lifting of health restrictions and the opening of borders.

The sector thanks to the lifting of health restrictions and the full opening of borders.

4.4.2. Domestic Tourism:

Domestic tourism in Algeria witnessed a remarkable development during the period from 2021 to 2023. In 2021, domestic tourism was the main alternative to international tourism in light of the health restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. 19, which greatly affected travel, although some domestic destinations such as desert areasand the Algerian coast were attracting domestic tourists, but the numbers were lower than usual, and in 2022, domestic tourism began to gradually return with a slight improvement in the situation, as the summer and winter holiday periods witnessed an increase in demand for major cities and desert areas, although the numbers have not yet reached pre-pandemic levels, while in 2023, domestic tourism witnessed a significant recovery, especially in desert tourism during the 2023-2024 season. 2024, where more than 245,000 tourists were registered, including 239,759 Algerian tourists and 14,315 foreign tourists , and

coastal areas witnessed an increase in the demand of local tourists, especially during holiday periods, reflecting a significant recovery of domestic tourism activity.

4.4.3. Haematological tourism:

Despite the health restrictions during the pandemic, hammam tourism witnessed limited activity, as in 2021 about 2.5 million visits were recorded to hammam institutions in Algeria, the vast majority of these visits were from local Algerians who took advantage of the mineral baths for recreation and treatment, and hammam tourism in Algeria continued to expand slightly, as 2022 recorded about 3 million visitors to hammam institutions such as: Ain Saleh and Hammam El Kebir, in 2023 the number of visitors increased significantly, reaching 3.24 million people, of whom 2.97 million were tourists and 2.97 million visitors for the same day , this increase reflects the growing demand for 275 191 treatment and recreation in Algerian baths.

4.4.4. Hotel Infrastructure:

Algeria's hotel infrastructure has been significantly affected over the past three years, in 2021 the hotel sector was suffering from the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, where a sharp drop in hotel occupancy was recorded due to travel restrictions, which led to a significant decline in demand for hotel services, and new hotel projects were affected by the slowdown in investment, making the sector operate at low capacity, in 2022 the sector started to recover gradually, as some new hotels opened especially in coastal areas and major cities like Algiers , despite this improvement the total number of hotels remained below.

4.4.5. Travel and Tourism Agencies:

Tourism and travel agencies have been significantly affected in Algeria over the past years as a result of the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic, in 2021 tourism agencies were facing major challenges due to restrictions on international travel, which led to the closure of many of them or the suspension of their activity , tourists at the time were mainly dependent on domestic trips only , which affected the performance of tourism agencies in general, and with the beginning of the gradual recovery in 2022, a slight increase in the number of agencies was recorded, as some new agencies were opened despite the ongoing health restrictions, however the sector was still suffering from the effects of the pandemic on demand, while in 2023 it witnessed.

4.4.6. Tourism investment:

Tourism investment in Algeria in 2021 was limited due to the slowdown in the economic movement and the lack of investment confidence as a result of the pandemic, as many major tourism projects were postponed, and the focus remained on improving basic services in tourist sites, in 2022 tourism investment began to return gradually with

the launch of small and medium projects in the hotel sector and desert tourism, but the numbers were still limited compared to previous periods, while in 2023 tourism investment witnessed a great leap, as 23502 new tourism projects were approved with a capacity of 271 336 beds, which contributed to creating more than 94 468 new job opportunities.

4.4.7. Traditional Industries:

During 2021, many artisans lost a large part of their income due to the decline in demand and the disruption of commercial activities, which forced them to turn to online markets and innovate new solutions to sell their products, in 2022 the sector began to gradually recover despite the continued effects of the pandemic, as artisans adapted to the new situation, by expanding their internal markets and finding innovative marketing methods, 2023 witnessed a significant recovery in the sector compared to the previous two years, the number of new activities reached 26,735 activities and 68,797 jobs were created, these figures reflect the sector's remarkable recovery.

5. Conclusion:

Domestic tourism in Algeria witnessed a remarkable growth in 2023 after the decline due to the pandemic in 2021 and 2022, with increased demand for desert and coastal tourism, digital advertising is an important tool to drive tourism development in the country, but it faces many challenges:

- Lack of awareness among some tourism operators (hotels, travel agencies, transport companies ...) about the importance of digital advertising and its tools.
- Weak digital infrastructure, especially in remote or desert areas, which affects the ability of tourism organizations to benefit from digital advertising.
- Concerns related to cybersecurity and privacy may lead to a decrease in user confidence in dealing with digital platforms for booking and tourism.
- Lack of sufficient funding to support large-scale digital campaigns targeting domestic tourism, as well as limited investment in improving the technology needed to implement comprehensive digital advertising campaigns on online platforms.

Recommendations:

To achieve an effective improvement in the development of domestic tourism through digital advertising, a set of recommendations can be adopted:

- Invest in digital training and education by intensifying training courses and workshops for tourism operators to familiarise them with the importance of digital advertising.

- Create a unified electronic platform that includes all information related to Algerian tourist destinations, tourist facilities and available offers, making them easily accessible to tourists.
- Supporting and incentivising digital tourism projects through tax incentives or financial support for tourism organisations that adopt digital advertising in their promotional campaigns.
- Producing high-quality digital content (photos, videos, 360-degree videos, virtual tours) that reflects the beauty and diversity of Algerian tourist destinations in a professional manner, which can be published online to enhance interaction with the public.
- The need for more efforts by the State to promote the tourism sector in Algeria.
- To emulate the experiences of leading countries in the field of tourism.

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