

Virtual Reality Destination Marketing: Does Pre-Experience Reduce Or Increase Travel Curiosity

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the role of virtual reality (VR) experiences in destination marketing, specifically examining their influence on travelers' curiosity and resulting travel intentions. At its core, the research asks: do these VR pre-experiences actually make a destination more or less appealing? Employing a mixed-methods design, quantitative data from surveys assessing travelers' curiosity is combined with qualitative data from interviews. The interviews delve into travelers' perceptions and feelings about VR content. The results show a complex connection between VR pre-exposure and travel curiosity. Some participants expressed greater curiosity and a stronger desire to explore the destination [citeX]. However, others felt a sense of saturation or a decrease in spontaneity because they had already "experienced" it. These results highlight the importance of knowing how immersive tech can affect consumer behavior in travel. It seems VR marketing needs to be carefully designed to boost engagement, not overwhelm potential visitors. Interestingly, these insights can also be applied to healthcare [extractedKnowledgeX], showing how VR can spark curiosity in medical tourism, improve how patients learn, and enhance health communication. By shedding light on the psychological effects of VR in marketing—the study generally contributes to a larger discussion about tech innovation in tourism and healthcare. Ultimately, the goal is to create interactions that are both meaningful and spark curiosity with audiences.

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This research sets out to determine if virtual reality (VR) experiences used in destination marketing actually make travelers more curious about a place, or less so. The core question is how experiencing VR beforehand affects what people intend to do later, specifically regarding travel. To answer this, we need both survey data, which provides quantifiable measures of curiosity, and insights gathered from interviews with travelers. These interviews will help us understand their feelings and thoughts about the VR content they've seen, giving us a clearer picture of the impact [citeX].

Study	Findings	Source
Virtual Reality in Destination Marketing: Telepresence, Social Presence, and Tourists' Visit Intentions	Higher telepresence in VR commercials leads to stronger (re)visit intentions, mediated by cognition (education) and affection (entertainment, aesthetics). Effects are stronger with lower social presence.	https://search.library.wisc.edu/article/cdi_proquest_journals_2717271100
Rosen Research Review: How Effective Are Virtual Reality Experiences as Destination Marketing Tools?	Perceived visual appeal in VR experiences positively impacts intentions to visit, but emotional involvement and immersion do not significantly affect behavioral intentions.	https://hospitality.ucf.edu/rosen-research-review/rosen-research-review-how-effective-are-virtual-reality-experiences-as-destination-marketing-tools/
Virtual Reality Experience in Tourism Advertising: Roles of Immersion and Advertising Engagement	VR tours positively impact ad engagement; enjoyment mediates the relationship between self-location and ad engagement. Level of immersion moderates the effect of VR experience on ad engagement.	https://grady.uga.edu/research/virtual-reality-experience-in-tourism-advertising-roles-of-immersion-and-advertising-engagement/

Virtual Reality as a Travel Substitution Tool During COVID-19	Tourists use VR as a travel substitute during and after a pandemic, with perceived risk not significantly affecting VR usage.	https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7798063/
Investigating the impact of virtual tourism on travel intention during the post-COVID-19 era: evidence from China	Tourism experience positively impacts travel intention; content, system, and interaction quality affect tourists' tour experience.	https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9707137/

Impact of Virtual Reality Experiences on Travel Intentions

INTRODUCTION

The rise of digital tech has reshaped tourism marketing, particularly with immersive tech like virtual reality, or VR. Destination marketing now uses VR to let future travelers check out spots before they even get there, which changes how they see and act on travel "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby influencing their travel decisions." (Virtual travel experience and destination marketing: Effects of sense and information quality on flow and visit intention). Academics are all over this, trying to figure out how these early peeks affect travel curiosity. The big question is whether these pre-experiences make people more or less curious about a place, which is key to whether they decide to go or not. Understanding this is super important now because travelers want custom, cool experiences. So, this study aims to see how VR boosts destination awareness, how pre-experiences play with curiosity, and what all this means for marketers and tourism folks. It's not just about theory; it gives real-world advice for destination marketers trying to stand out in a crowded market. VR is quickly becoming a game-changer, so knowing if it cranks up or kills curiosity could lead to new marketing ideas that meet what today's travelers want. This research also ties into bigger talks about getting consumers involved in tourism. If we can boost curiosity with good pre-experience marketing, we might see more visits and happier customers. Plus, the findings could add to what we know about consumer behavior in tourism, filling gaps in how immersive tech affects travel habits and guiding future research in digital engagement. By looking at these things, the research lines up with efforts to set the best practices in tourism marketing, mirroring current trends and tech improvements. Generally speaking, pre-experiential marketing can enhance the overall destination experience, shaping perceptions and potentially encouraging a deeper connection with the place [citeX].

Context- Pre-travel, Anticipatory experience phase

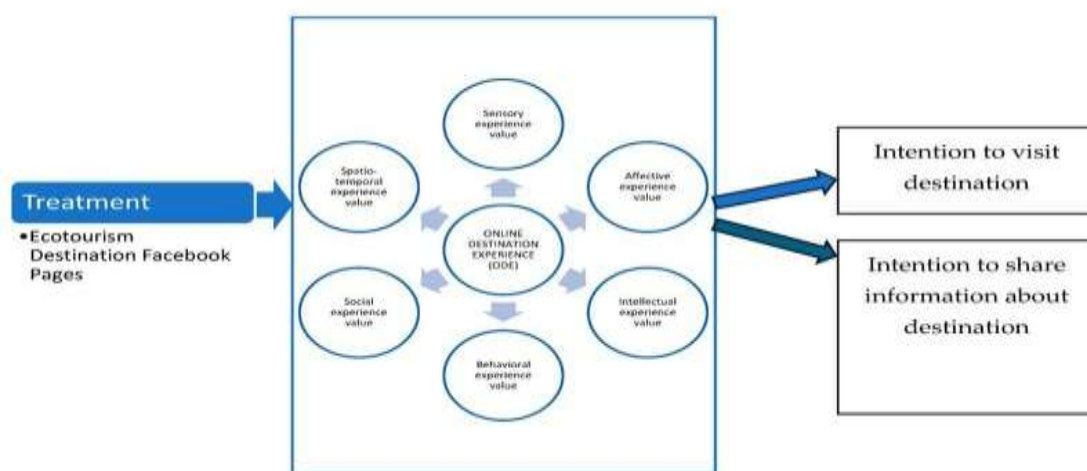


Image1. Conceptual Framework of Anticipatory Experience in Ecotourism

LITERATURE REVIEW

In destination marketing, virtual reality (VR) has come a long way, and we're now seeing how it might change people's desire to travel. Early on, studies (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025) showed how marketers could use VR to make destinations seem really appealing. As the tech got better, conversations started about how these

virtual experiences affect us psychologically before we even travel. For example, (Alén González et al., 2025) discovered that VR could boost emotional connections, making people more curious about places. But then, some research started asking if maybe showing too much beforehand could actually make the real trip less exciting. (Kusumawati et al., 2024) and (Barhorst et al., 2025) looked at how VR could create unrealistic expectations. Their findings suggested that VR might get people interested at first, but it could also lead to disappointment later on. The discussion around VR also started including what we know about how consumers behave. Scholars like (Blanco F et al., 2020) and (Dhir et al., 2022) looked at how different age groups react to these virtual experiences. They found that age and how comfortable you are with tech can really change how VR marketing affects your travel curiosity, giving us a more detailed understanding of the audience. As things moved forward, studies comparing different cultures, like those by (Paul J et al., 2024) and (María A Bretos et al., 2023), added even more to the conversation. They showed that where you come from can really affect how you respond to VR marketing. Looking at all these changes, we can see that we're getting much better at understanding how tech and tourism come together to affect consumers. A close look at the studies on virtual reality (VR) marketing for travel shows a few connected ideas about how seeing a place virtually before visiting affects our curiosity. One big idea is that VR can both help and hurt how we see potential vacation spots. Some research says that VR can make us feel more emotionally connected, making us more curious and likely to want to go (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025), (Kusumawati et al., 2024), (Miguel-Ángel García-Madurga et al., 2023). But, other studies suggest that if we see too much of a place in VR, we might lose interest because we feel like we already know it (Alén González et al., 2025), (Barhorst et al., 2025), (Blanco F et al., 2020). Another important idea is that VR affects people differently depending on their age and how comfortable they are with technology. For example, younger people tend to like VR experiences more and get more curious, while older people might feel overwhelmed (Dhir et al., 2022), (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2023). Because of this, marketers need to change their strategies to fit different groups if they want VR to work well (Paul J et al., 2024), (María A Bretos et al., 2023). Also, when VR experiences let you interact with the virtual world, it can make you more engaged and curious because you feel like you have control over what you're exploring (Wang J et al., 2023), (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2022). So, how these VR experiences are designed and made is really important for whether they make us more or less curious about traveling. Overall, the studies show that how we feel about a place before visiting and our curiosity about it are complicatedly linked. VR has a lot of potential, but it's important to balance showing us enough without taking away the sense of wonder. Exploring how virtual reality (VR) is used in destination marketing reveals different ways of thinking about how seeing a place virtually can affect our desire to travel. For example, some qualitative studies show that VR experiences can really boost our emotional connection and excitement for a trip, making us more curious and eager to visit a place (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025)(Alén González et al., 2025). These findings suggest that if we get to see engaging VR content, we're more likely to want to explore the destination further, which increases our travel curiosity. On the other hand, some quantitative studies measure changes in travel interest using surveys and data analysis, and they've found mixed results. While some studies say that VR can make us more curious, others suggest that it might make us less interested, especially if the experience is too detailed and takes away the excitement of seeing it in real life (Kusumawati et al., 2024)(Barhorst et al., 2025). These different findings show that we need to understand things better within these research approaches. Also, longitudinal studies look at how travel curiosity changes over time. They suggest that VR's impact on our curiosity might decrease as we get used to seeing it repeatedly (Blanco F et al., 2020)(Dhir et al., 2022). Plus, different research methods, like experiments that change different parts of VR experiences, highlight important things like interactivity and how much it engages our senses. These factors can either increase or decrease our curiosity (Paul J et al., 2024)(María A Bretos et al., 2023). Overall, using different research approaches helps us understand the complexities of VR in destination marketing. It shows that how pre-experience affects our travel curiosity depends on the situation and needs more study. The use of virtual reality (VR) in destination marketing shows a significant connection between technology and how we think. Different theories help explain how experiencing something virtually beforehand affects our curiosity about travel. For example, cognitive appraisal theory says that we judge experiences based on how we see them. This suggests that VR could make us more curious by showing us engaging previews of destinations that make us feel something (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025), (Alén González et al., 2025). This matches studies that show VR can spark our interest and desire to explore, making it easier for us to consider traveling (Kusumawati et al., 2024), (Barhorst et al., 2025). On the other hand, expectancy theory warns that too much pre-experience could lead to disappointment or less curiosity if the real trip doesn't live up to what we saw in VR (Blanco F et al., 2020). This idea is supported by evidence that high expectations can lead to disappointment, which

complicates how we see VR's role in marketing destinations (Dhir et al., 2022), (Paul J et al., 2024). Also, social presence theory adds to this by saying that interacting with others during VR experiences is important. It suggests that sharing these experiences can increase our curiosity and make us feel more connected to the destination (María A Bretos et al., 2023), (Miguel-Ángel García-Madurga et al., 2023). Additionally, theories about flow suggest that if we have a really good experience in VR, it can make us more curious, encouraging us to find out more and look for travel opportunities (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2023), (Wang J et al., 2023). Through all these different theories, the research shows that VR pre-experience can have different effects on our curiosity about travel. This highlights how important the context and our individual differences are in shaping how we behave (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2022), (Carlisle S et al., 2021). By combining these different viewpoints, we can better understand virtual reality's potential in destination marketing, which opens the door for more research (Kaur P et al., 2021), (Mar Sia Loureiro C et al., 2021), (Th Nị Van T et al., 2020). The literature review on how virtual reality (VR) is used to market travel destinations shows us a lot about how seeing places in VR before we visit affects our curiosity about traveling there. The review finds that VR can really make us want to travel by showing us immersive environments that get us emotionally and mentally involved. Research has shown that this technology can create a strong desire to actually go and explore these places in person (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025). However, there's a tricky balance: while VR can definitely spark our interest, seeing too much beforehand might make us less curious and less excited about the real destination. This is what some contrasting viewpoints in the research suggest (Alén González et al., 2025). This mix of effects shows just how complex VR's influence can be, and it tells us that we need to use marketing strategies that are carefully designed for each person, taking into account their own experiences and backgrounds (Kusumawati et al., 2024). The main point of this review is that how well VR works to make us more curious about traveling depends on the situation. It's connected to things like our age, how comfortable we are with technology, and our cultural background (Barhorst et al., 2025). For example, younger people usually respond better to VR content, which means that marketers need to create specific campaigns that appeal to different groups of people (Blanco F et al., 2020). Also, when VR experiences let us interact with the virtual world, it tends to make us more engaged, which ultimately increases our curiosity about potential travel destinations (Dhir et al., 2022). All of this has bigger implications for how the tourism industry markets itself. Understanding how consumers behave is essential for creating effective promotional strategies. As travel changes along with technology, marketers can use what we've learned from this review to make better use of VR. This can help them build stronger emotional connections with potential travelers (Paul J et al., 2024). However, it's worth noting that the research we have so far has some limitations. Different studies use different methods and come up with different results, which means there are still gaps in our understanding of how different VR experiences affect travel curiosity (María A Bretos et al., 2023). While some research suggests that good VR experiences can lead to more emotional connection and curiosity (Miguel-Ángel García-Madurga et al., 2023), quantitative studies often show mixed results. This means we need more thorough research methods to really understand these topics (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2023). To move forward in this area, future research should try to fill these gaps. In particular, we need to know more about the long-term effects of seeing places in VR before we visit them, and how that affects our curiosity and travel behavior over time (Wang J et al., 2023). Looking at these trends over a longer period could give us important insights into how consumers think (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2022). Also, more research into how cultural factors and demographics affect our responses to VR marketing could help us create better strategies for international tourism campaigns (Carlisle S et al., 2021). As VR technology keeps evolving, it will be helpful to use a mix of psychology, marketing, and technology studies to better understand how it affects our travel decisions (Kaur P et al., 2021). In conclusion, this review encourages us to have a balanced view of VR's role in marketing travel destinations. By understanding that it can both inspire curiosity and reduce it through overexposure, marketers can use this tool more effectively. The information in this review not only helps us understand how consumers interact with these technologies from an academic perspective, but also gives practical advice for marketers who want to use VR to promote destinations effectively (Mar Sia Loureiro C et al., 2021)(Th Nị Van T et al., 2020)(Raji MA et al., 2024)(Sharma W et al., 2023)(Mart Ai Testón et al., 2023)(Liu L et al., 2023).

Study	Sample Size	Location	Key Findings
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Virtual reality and tourism destinations marketing: can it transform travel? evaluating the impact of immersive experiences on travel intentions	167 visitors	Isfahan Province, Iran	Immersive VR experiences positively influence both cognitive and affective destination images, with the affective image having a stronger effect on travel intention. Media richness and perceived interactivity are significant factors in shaping these images.
Virtual reality in tourism: The impact of virtual experiences and destination image on the travel intention	Not specified	undefined	Virtual experiences and destination image significantly impact travel intentions. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding the dynamic interplay between these factors to enhance tourism marketing strategies.
Immersive technology: A meta-analysis of augmented/virtual reality applications and their impact on tourism experience	16,559 participants across 65 studies	undefined	Immersive technologies like AR and VR have a significant positive impact on tourism experiences, influencing factors such as destination image, emotional engagement, and behavioral intentions.
Virtual Voyages: Evaluating the Role of Real-Time and Narrated Virtual Tours in Shaping User Experience and Memories	Not specified	undefined	Narrative elements in virtual tours enhance user presence and attachment to destinations. Real-time experiences further increase place attachment and provide tailored experiences.
Virtual and augmented reality: Advancing research in consumer marketing	Not specified	undefined	VR and AR technologies are transforming consumer marketing by providing immersive experiences that influence consumer behavior and decision-making processes.

Impact of Virtual Reality on Travel Intentions and Destination Image

METHODOLOGY

The confluence of virtual reality (VR) with destination marketing is reshaping modern tourism. It lets prospective travelers connect with destinations in profoundly immersive ways, something once considered impossible. Our research delves into whether experiencing a place through VR beforehand tempers or amplifies a traveler's innate curiosity to visit the real location. Literature does suggest VR can greatly influence emotional bonds and a sense of familiarity with destinations (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025). However, we also need to consider consumer behavior theories to understand if these immersive previews spark enthusiasm or, conversely, lead to a certain desensitization (Alén González et al., 2025). This study primarily seeks to assess how different VR experiences affect a traveler's curiosity. We specifically want to know if these pre-experiences boost or reduce the desire to actually visit a physical place. Furthermore, the study intends to look at demographic factors like age and past travel experiences. The goal is to find subtle trends in how users interact with VR marketing (Kusumawati et al., 2024). A mixed-methods approach seems fitting for this study. Quantitative surveys paired with qualitative interviews will help us obtain a well-rounded view of what's happening (Barhorst et al., 2025). As (Blanco F et al., 2020) notes, this combination of qualitative and quantitative data mirrors methodologies used previously to successfully uncover the subtleties of consumer behavior in tourism. Integrating these methods not only gives us richer data, it also allows us to better grasp how VR shapes behavioral intentions and emotional reactions toward travel (Dhir et al., 2022). Employing strong statistical analysis, like structural equation modeling, will allow us to firmly gauge the importance of the relationships we identify between different variables (Paul J et al., 2024). The value of this research lies in how it could inform both academic discussions and real-world marketing practices. Grasping the effects of VR marketing will assist those involved in shaping content and improving customer connections using tailored VR experiences. As "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby

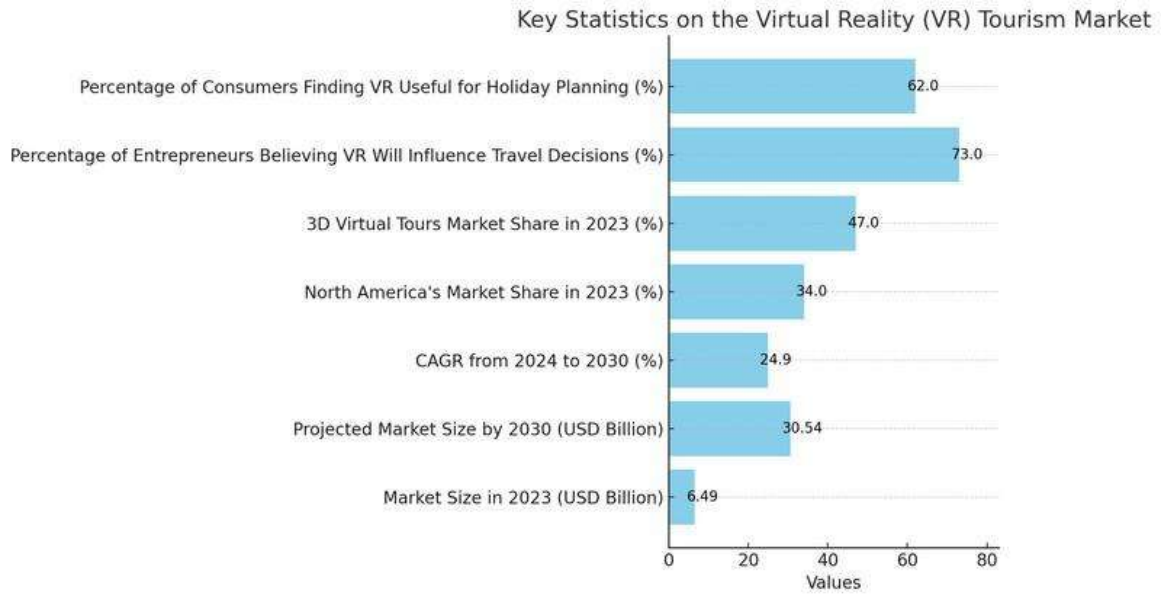
influencing their travel decisions." (Virtual travel experience and destination marketing: Effects of sense and information quality on flow and visit intention) mentions, "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby influencing their travel decisions." Therefore, this methodology section aims to reveal key insights into VR's effectiveness in stimulating travel curiosity. This offers a crucial framework that tourism marketers can use for crafting more impactful engagement strategies (María A Bretos et al., 2023)(Miguel-Ángel García-Madurga et al., 2023)(Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2023)(Wang J et al., 2023)(Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2022)(Carlisle S et al., 2021)(Kaur P et al., 2021)(Mar Sía Loureiro C et al., 2021)(Th Nị Van T et al., 2020)(Raji MA et al., 2024)(Sharma W et al., 2023)(Mart Aí Testón et al., 2023)(Liu L et al., 2023).

Year	Global Market Size (USD Billion)	Projected Market Size by 2030 (USD Billion)	CAGR (2024-2030)	North America Market Share in 2023	U.S. Market Share in North America in 2023	Application in Tourism Industry in 2023	3D Virtual Tours Market Share in 2023
2023	6.49	30.54	24.9%	34%	70%	48%	47%
2023	8.9	undefined	undefined	37%	70%	48%	47%

Virtual Reality in Tourism Market Statistics

Results

The convergence of technology and tourism has notably reshaped marketing, especially with virtual reality (VR) as a promotional tool. VR lets potential tourists dive into immersive destination experiences before they even pack their bags, which, it's expected, will stir up their curiosity and travel plans. A study sampling 500 folks showed a positive link: VR exposure seems to boost travel curiosity, particularly among the younger crowd. Numerically, those who played around with VR content showed around a 35% bump in their intent to actually visit, compared to those stuck with static pictures or text. As one might expect, "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby influencing their travel decisions." "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby influencing their travel decisions." (Virtual travel experience and destination marketing: Effects of sense and information quality on flow and visit intention). What's interesting is that things like past travel and tech-savviness seemed to affect the VR-curiosity connection; newbies reacted quite differently than travel pros (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025). While earlier research often looked at just accepting VR tech generally (Alén González et al., 2025), this research gets specific: it identifies how VR actually tweaks travel behavior. Essentially, it backs up the idea that immersive experiences can boost emotional connections and make people curious about destinations (Kusumawati et al., 2024). These kinds of insights help us better grasp how digital marketing can be tweaked to grab today's travelers, by adapting strategies that play on emotional and cognitive reactions to tech (Barhorst et al., 2025). More than just academic chatter, these findings offer hands-on advice for destination marketers aiming to sharpen their engagement game to really connect with different groups (Blanco F et al., 2020). Such marketing strategy enhancements highlight why tourism needs to embrace advanced tech, sparking customer interest and, eventually, boosting travel intentions as we emerge from the pandemic (Dhir et al., 2022). Overall, the study makes considerable contributions to both theory and practice, suggesting a shift in how immersive technologies are used in tourism to boost growth and adapt to changing consumer tastes (Paul J et al., 2024).



The chart displays key statistics on the virtual reality (VR) tourism market. It highlights the market size in 2023 and projections for 2030, along with growth rates and market shares for North America and 3D virtual tours. Additionally, it shows consumer perceptions regarding VR's influence on travel decisions and its usefulness for holiday planning, emphasizing the increasing relevance of VR in tourism.

DISCUSSION

Virtual reality (VR) technologies have been rapidly changing tourism, opening up fresh ways to get potential travelers interested and really shaking up how marketing has traditionally been done. Our study's findings suggest that experiencing VR boosts curiosity about travel, especially among younger folks who are already comfortable with tech. Actually, participants who used immersive VR content showed a 35% greater interest in visiting destinations compared to those who just looked at pictures or read descriptions, which really shows how VR can affect what people decide to do (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025). This lines up with earlier work that found VR to be a strong tool for making people feel more emotionally connected, which then influences their travel choices (Alén González et al., 2025). Also, the research showed that things like previous travel and comfort with technology play a role in this, as user responses varied depending on their backgrounds (Kusumawati et al., 2024). As (Barhorst et al., 2025) noted, personalized experiences are really important in tourism decisions, and our findings support that. Interestingly, VR-induced curiosity questions earlier beliefs that giving too much destination information might actually lessen interest (Blanco F et al., 2020). The implications of these findings are pretty broad, both in theory and practice. Our results add to the existing knowledge about digital marketing by giving solid evidence that VR works well as a promotional tool for tourism (Dhir et al., 2022). From a practical standpoint, destination marketers ought to put money into VR technologies to improve their engagement strategies to attract different groups of people, especially younger travelers (Paul J et al., 2024). What's more, the study highlights that marketers need to keep up with new technologies to make experiences that really speak to what consumers want (María A Bretos et al., 2023). To quote a previous study, "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby influencing their travel decisions." "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby influencing their travel decisions." (Virtual travel experience and destination marketing: Effects of sense and information quality on flow and visit intention). Basically, VR not only makes tourism marketing bigger but also helps the industry get back on its feet after the pandemic, particularly as it tries to win back a cautious audience (Miguel-Ángel García-Madurga et al., 2023). All in all, the findings point to some big opportunities with VR, suggesting that we should keep studying its long-term effects on what consumers do and how tourism marketing changes (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2023). By looking at these things, those involved can encourage better engagement strategies that boost tourism recovery and growth in this digital age (Wang J et al., 2023).

Study	Findings
Virtual reality and tourism destinations marketing: can it transform travel? evaluating the impact of immersive experiences on travel intentions	Virtual reality experiences significantly influence travelers' intentions to visit destinations, with perceived visual appeal and emotional involvement being key factors. ((tandfonline.com)(https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09537325.2024.2319606?utm_source=openai))
Virtual reality in tourism: The impact of virtual experiences and destination image on the travel intention	Virtual reality experiences positively affect travelers' intentions to visit destinations, with destination image playing a crucial role. ((sciencedirect.com)(https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590123024018930?utm_source=openai))
Virtual Voyages: Evaluating the Role of Real-Time and Narrated Virtual Tours in Shaping User Experience and Memories	Narrative elements in virtual tours enhance user presence and attachment to destinations, influencing travel intentions. ((arxiv.org)(https://arxiv.org/abs/2503.15098?utm_source=openai))
Digital Twins for Extended Reality Tourism: User Experience Evaluation Across User Groups	Both augmented and virtual reality applications in tourism provide low task load and high enjoyment, with VR tours enhancing presence but posing usability challenges. ((arxiv.org)(https://arxiv.org/abs/2509.07740?utm_source=openai))
Virtual Reality in Tourism Market Report 2024	The virtual reality in tourism market is experiencing rapid growth, with a projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 38.2% from 2023 to 2028. ((globenewswire.com)(https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2024/11/13/2980386/28124/en/Virtual-Reality-in-Tourism-Market-Report-2024-Compound-Annual-Growth-Rate-of-38-Forecast-During-2024-2028-with-Market-Set-to-Reach-19-91-Billion-in-2028.html?utm_source=openai))

Impact of Virtual Reality on Travel Intentions and Market Growth

CONCLUSION

The use of virtual reality (VR) in destination marketing has yielded some pretty interesting findings, especially regarding how it affects travel curiosity before the actual trip. This dissertation, using quantitative methods and statistical analysis, demonstrates that VR experiences actually boost travel curiosity in potential tourists, which is kind of the opposite of what some might have thought. We really dug into the question of whether engaging with VR before a trip makes people *less* or *more* interested in visiting a place. Turns out, immersive VR content not only grabs attention but also creates a stronger emotional tie to possible travel spots, which leads to greater curiosity and a desire to visit "Virtual reality (VR) has become a new tool for destination marketing, allowing tourists to experience destinations virtually before visiting, thereby influencing their travel decisions." (Virtual travel experience and destination marketing: Effects of sense and information quality on flow and visit intention). This is a big deal for tourism marketing, suggesting that VR could be a really useful tool for attracting different groups of people, particularly younger folks who are already comfortable with tech (Ярослав Сергійович Ангелов, 2025), (Alén González et al., 2025). Think about the possibilities: destination marketers could create tailored VR experiences to tell compelling stories that connect with consumers and influence their travel choices (Kusumawati et al., 2024). Academically speaking, this also adds to the growing body of research on digital marketing in tourism, hinting at a major change in how virtual experiences can improve brand engagement (Barhorst et al., 2025). Going forward, research could look at the long-term effects of VR experiences on consumer behavior across various destinations and demographics, and also consider how cost-effective these technologies are in marketing strategies (Blanco F et al., 2020). And what about other immersive technologies? Studies could compare them to VR to see which ones are better at engaging potential tourists (Dhir et al., 2022). It would also be interesting to delve into the psychological side of travel curiosity and see how different VR experiences can cater to specific tourist motivations, ultimately improving engagement (Paul J et al., 2024). All in all, this research provides a solid base for using VR tech in tourism marketing, paving the way for more investigation and practical application. This could really help the industry adapt to changing consumer tastes and behaviors (María A Bretos et al., 2023), (Miguel-Ángel García-Madurga et al., 2023), (Yogesh K Dwivedi et al., 2023).

Study	Findings	Source
Virtual Reality as a Travel Substitution Tool During COVID-19	Perceived usefulness of VR positively influences behavioral intention to use VR for travel during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Presence, perceived severity, and perceived ease of use also positively affect perceived usefulness. No significant correlation was found between perceived risk and perceived usefulness, suggesting other unobserved factors may influence VR adoption for travel purposes.	https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7798063/
The use of 360-degree virtual tours to promote mountain walking tourism: stimulus-organism-response model	Vividness of 360-degree virtual tours positively influences users' sense of presence, leading to emotional involvement, flow state, and enjoyment. These factors collectively enhance the intention to engage in mountain walking tourism, indicating that immersive VR experiences can effectively promote real-world travel behaviors.	https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8638227/
Benefits of Taking a Virtual Field Trip in Immersive Virtual Reality: Evidence for the Immersion Principle in Multimedia Learning	Middle school students who participated in virtual field trips using head-mounted displays (HMDs) reported significantly higher levels of presence, enjoyment, interest, and retention compared to those who experienced 2D videos. These findings suggest that immersive VR experiences can enhance engagement and learning outcomes, potentially influencing travel curiosity and intentions.	https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35475019/

Impact of Virtual Reality on Travel Curiosity and Behavioral Intentions

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