

How is the usage of video marketing for different players in the tourism industry in the alpine regions of Switzerland; and how do they compare to their competitors in France, Austria and Italy?



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## Management Summary

This study examines the different approaches toward video marketing by the DMOs in Austria, France and Italy and compares them with the video marketing done by Swiss DMOs and hotels. 100 samples have been analysed according to predefined criteria. The information shared in this paper can help Swiss DMOs and hotels to understand how they compare to their competitors in terms of video marketing. In addition, the list of recommendation can be used in order to improve one's video marketing.

The benchmarking analysis was realized by comparing the video content on websites and the different social media channels. Therefore, with this external point of view, one can clearly identify how a DMO or a hotel presents themselves towards their customers. The information taken out of the interviews help understanding the internal situation of an actor in the tourism industry. Furthermore, it outlines the challenges they might have and how they see the future of marketing and video marketing.

The analysis revealed that there is room for improvement when it comes to video marketing by DMOs and hotels in the alpine region. There is still a lack of informative video content shared on the different marketing channels. Important aspects of a Video Marketing Strategy such as Storytelling or Call to actions are still used very rarely by DMOs and hotels. In addition, multilingual content and subtitles should be provided more in the future. However, most samples are sharing vertical videos on their social media channels and make sure to offer content with people in it that speaks directly to a specific target market. It is mostly understood that a pull strategy is the way to go and that they should post their videos on multiple channels. In addition, different types of videos have been posted which made the content quite varied.

DMOs had overall a better performance than hotels in most criteria. It stood out that hotels provide on average far less videos on social media, especially on YouTube. In addition, the DMOs quality of the video content is much higher. However, the analysis revealed that Swiss DMOs have a very similar approach towards video marketing. Even though the foreign DMOs were in some criteria slightly better, one can clearly identify that the Swiss alpine DMOs are performing very well compared to their neighbouring alpine competitors.

**Keywords:** Video marketing, Benchmarking analysis, Alpine Destinations, Hotel, DMO

## Foreword

During the search for an exciting topic for my bachelor thesis, I was given the opportunity to write about video marketing for the tourism observatory Valais/Wallis. I knew that I would have to write a benchmarking analysis to compare the different DMOs and hotels in the alpine region. It was interesting for me to work on such an analysis, having always been in charge for benchmarking analyses during different group projects during my studies. It gave me some sense of security which was ideal before starting a bachelor thesis. Video as a medium has always been exciting for me. I have always been an avid consumer of that medium and I have already produced short videos as well. To understand, how videos are used in the tourism industry, was therefore very valuable for me. In addition, I am happy to propose some valuable recommendations that actors in the tourism industry can use in order to improve their video marketing.

Without the support of my Professor and supervisor, Mr. Roland Schegg this bachelor thesis would not have been feasible. He has stood by my side with great advice and his constructive remarks helped me to implement this study. Thank you very much! I would also like to express a special thanks to the three experts, who have taken the time to answer my questions, shared their knowledge of video marketing and gave me an in-depth insight into their take on video marketing in their respective companies: Madeleine Savioz (Valais/Wallis Promotion), Guli Brentel (Gastgeber 3.0 AG), Axel Breuer (Corporate Media Academy).

Malika Zouaoui

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## List of abbreviations

3D	Three-dimensional
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CTA	Call to action
DMO	Destination Management Organisation
EWOM	Electronic Word-of-Mouth
ICT	Information Communication Technologies
IGTV	Instagram Television
SEO	Search Engine Organisation
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UGC	User Generated Content
VR	Virtual Reality



## Introduction

The increasing intensity in tourism and the numerous tourist offers are leading to an increasing competition among tourism providers worldwide. Therefore, it is important to stand out as a DMO or as a hotel. With a good marketing strategy and by using different available channels correctly, a business can have a clear competitive advantage. One important medium that is gaining more and more attention in tourism marketing is video. In the last few years the use of video has increased tremendously. However, even though it is a trend, many companies in the tourism industry find it a rather challenging one.

Currently there is no research available that focused either on the alpine region or compared the Swiss marketing channels in terms of video marketing with the ones in Austria, Italy and France. This indicates that there is a clear research gap, which this bachelor thesis intends to close. This research topic is very fascinating for the author, being very interested in tourism marketing and the medium video.

This study has the goal to understand where Swiss DMOs and hotels stand in terms of video marketing compared to their competitors. Specifically, compared to their neighbours in Austria, Italy and France. The first chapter “literature review”, therefore, laid out an overview of the different aspects of the trend video marketing. It is not only important to know for which channels one should use video marketing but also how the content should be presented. The key challenges in digital marketing and the state of marketing in the alpine region is highlighted as well. It is important to know where businesses still struggle and how the actual state is. In the second chapter the goals and the hypothesis are defined more closely and in the third chapter the methodology is explained. After having identified different criteria, the author could start analysing different DMOs and hotels in the four different countries. The current state of video marketing is analysed with the help of a benchmark analysis and the expert interviews. In addition, the results of the analysis are presented in the chapter evaluation and analysis of results. The discussion compares the results with the literature in order to understand how they fit into the research already available. Last but not least a list of recommendation is being presented. They are structured according to the golden circle in order to understand why readers should start implementing the mentioned recommendations.

## 1. Literature review

This literature review will help to identify the different ways to use videos in a marketing strategy. It will have a closer look at current trends in hospitality and tourism marketing. In addition, the literature review will examine different ways videos can be used by Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) and hotels in a marketing strategy. Furthermore, the meaning of Content Marketing and User Generated Content will be examined. Lastly, the current state of marketing in the alpine region will be illustrated.

### 1.1. Marketing

The digital traveller has been changing since the last decades. Planning a vacation used to be very complex and involved the help of a travel agent. The options and the number of destinations were small. Today, the digital traveller has a huge amount of options thanks to the internet. However, such a vast number of options can make people feel anxious and hard for them to choose. This is what psychologists call the paradox of choice (Dichter, 2019). Digitalisation influenced not only people and our society but also the market. Therefore, it is vital for companies to accept that change and to adapt accordingly. Digitalisation means more transparency as well. Today's tourists want to know more about the services they are interested in. They want to be more personally involved, one way to do that is video marketing (Das Unternehmerhandbuch, 2017).

#### 1.1.1. Social Media Marketing

One of the big current marketing trends is Visual Storytelling. According to PhocusWire (2019) Visual Storytelling is the best way to connect with today's consumers. Since videos are a very visual medium, they are ideal for embracing Visual Storytelling. They help bringing digital marketing campaigns to life.

Social Media Marketing is one important aspect of those campaigns (Taylor, 2019). Social media has a high relevance in the tourism industry, the reason for that is it being a very 'information-intensive-industry'. It is vital for a consumer to make decisions about destinations, accommodations and tours, that are based on information attained in the trip-planning process. The necessity of this information is high for the reason that tourism experiences are an intangible product. Therefore, recommendations on social media are a big influence (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013). Facebook Stories, Instagram Stories and

Instagram Television (IGTV) are on the rise and YouTube is the most-used search engine after Google (Taylor, 2019). Moreover, mobile video consumption on YouTube rises 100% every year (Travel Trade Gazette, 2017). With social media, consumers can be reached actively in order to inspire them (Taylor, 2019). According to Potter (2019), nearly two-third of all consumer online traffic will be video by 2019. The driver of this phenomenon is considered to be the high use of mobile devices (Costa-Sánchez, 2017). Furthermore, Potter explains that one has only to analyse ones Twitter, Facebook or Instagram feed to see the evidence of video content being on the rise (Potter, 2019). The reason why videos are successful among consumers is that they allow easy, fast and shareable consumption through social media. Videos are not only multiplying the participation they are also increasing consumers affection towards brands and they help spreading the brands messages (Costa-Sánchez, 2017). When uploading videos on social media one should take advantage of the platform and post them in a vertical format. This is due to the reason that people are usually on their smartphones when they use platforms such as Instagram or Facebook (Wibbitz, 2018). According to Hays et al. (2013), only few tourism organisations are studying social media and think about strategies they could use to their advantage. Those tourism organisations lack a competitive advantage by not adopting social network systems. On the other hand, those organisations should not adopt social media if they do not understand how it works. This could have a far worse influence on their competitive advantage than not using social media networks completely.

#### 1.1.2. Digital marketing - A key challenge

Digital marketing has become more complex, this is one of the key challenges for the Travel Marketer. The number of tools is increasing, and technology is evolving, marketers must keep up to date constantly in order to do their jobs effectively and efficiently (Sojern, 2019). Sojern (2019) asked more than 600 Travel Marketers around the world about the digital state of the travel industry. Around half of all the Hotel Marketers asked said, that keeping up with the technology landscape and the fast-paced advertising is a big challenge for them. This feeling of being overwhelmed makes sense. Since the beginning of the last decade there has been an increase of 150% in the number of publications that were focusing on marketing channels. This clearly indicates that today's marketers need to sort through

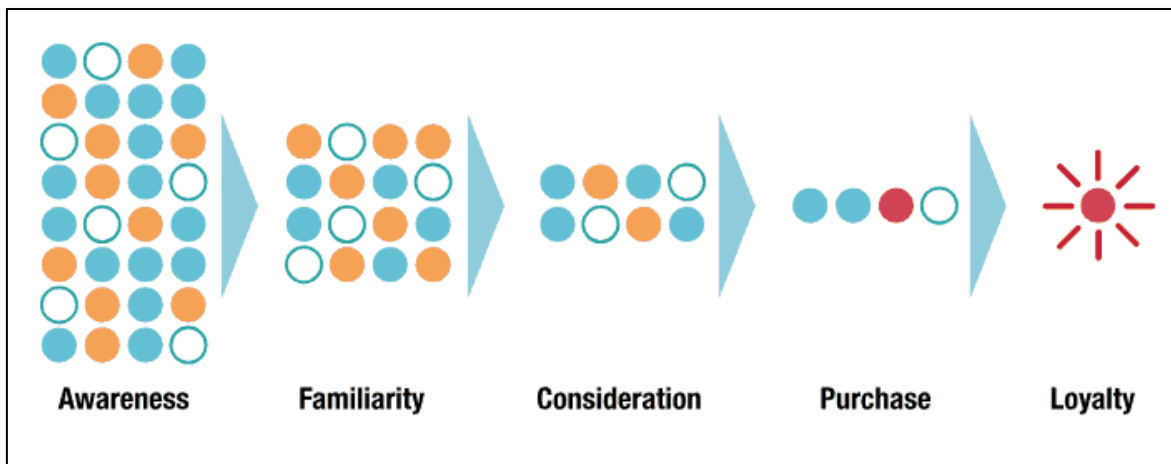
numerous ever growing publications to find the latest trends in order to put them into practice (Watson IV, Worm, Palmatier, & Ganesan, 2015).

In order to offer a product or service to an end-user, marketers need to use certain intermediaries to make a product or service available to the consumer. Those intermediaries are called “marketing channels” (Krafft, Goetz, Mantrala, Sotjiu, & Tillmanns, 2015). Out of all the different channels that can be used in Digital Marketing, four of them stood out. Global marketers intend to spend more money for the following channels in 2019: Facebook/Instagram, video, Paid Search and Mobile Marketing. It is important to understand that one can not only choose one channel in order to have a sound marketing strategy. Variety is highly effective which is why a multi-channel and a multi-device strategy is vital in order to reach consumers (Sojern, 2019). According to Stavrakantonakis et al. (2013), being visible on all channels and using new forms of technologies is a necessity that came with the rapid development of Information Communication Technologies (ICT). The evolvement of the ICT technologies led to an immense growth in online communication opportunities such as the websites of the touristic service providers, blogs, photo and video sharing, social networks, mobile platforms and the Destination Management websites. All these mentioned channels are vital for a successful Online Marketing Strategy and no longer just an option for touristic service providers, but a requirement (Stavrakantonakis, Toma, Fensel, & Fensel, 2013).

#### 1.1.3. Video Marketing in the Tourism Industry

Stavrakantonakis et al. (2013) examined different Swiss hotel websites. The study clearly showed that most websites include pictures. However, the use of videos, 3D presentations and other multimedia formats were minimal. They point out that using this kind of media could help hotels to differentiate themselves and improve their brand awareness. The role of videos is especially important in the beginning of the consumers decision journey. A video can grab the attention of people, make them inspired and make them consider the product as a valuable option and furthermore encourage them to buy the product (Weinstein, 2019).

Figure 1: The Consumer Decision Journey

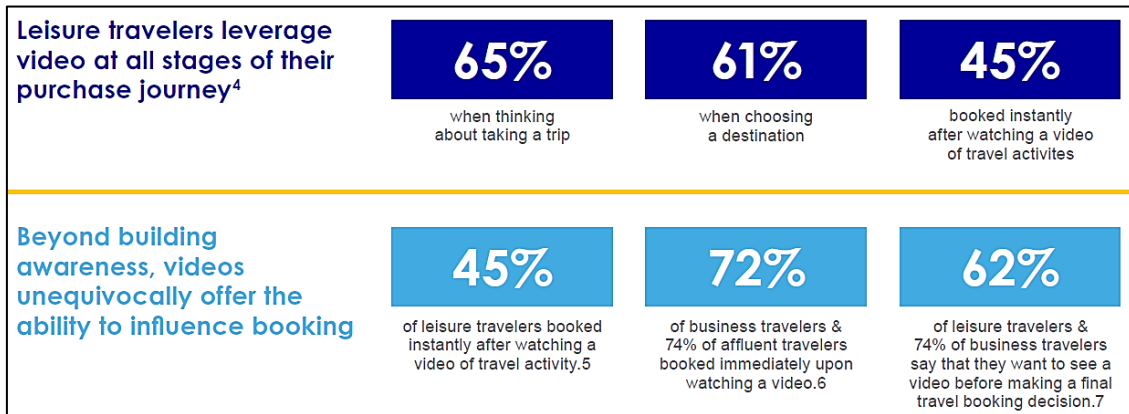


Source 1: (Court, Elzinga, Mulder, & Vetvik, 2009)

Videos help to inspire travellers that are in the dreaming phase. Which is why many European Travel Marketers advertise their products with videos in order to be more engaging and to create excitement (Sojern, 2019). Grüter (2013) states that video is a great medium for getting information as well as being useful by minimizing the uncertainty of a tourist. With video marketing one can connect with different senses which is why it informs more thoroughly about a product than pictures or text would. Since tourism is a service industry and therefore offers immaterial experiences it is often difficult to show an authentic picture of the specific service. Compared to physical products one cannot control the quality of a product by touching it. This is one of the biggest reasons why it is riskier to buy a service. However, most services still have a material component in them. Such as employees, physical interior design and general equipment used to offer this service. According to Grüter (2013), videos help to improve the image, trust and general publicity of a tourism supplier. Videos and virtual tours make a service more tangible. Furthermore, they are, compared to written text, not just information about a service. They can also convey a certain feeling that can give a client a better understanding of a specific experience (Grüter, 2013). Video content is highly valuable on websites as well. If it is included on a landing page, it can increase conversion by 80%. Consumers are 64% more likely to buy a product after having watched a video. It also helps to attract more people on a website of a business. Website listings receive 4 times more enquiries when they include a video opposed to the ones that do not (Travel Trade Gazette, 2017). *Figure two* below perfectly illustrates how important videos actually are, throughout the whole purchase journey. Business travellers or

leisure travellers, both want to see videos in order to decide what they want to do and where they want to do it (Expedia group media solutions, n.d.).

Figure 2: Videos during the purchase journey



Source 2: (Expedia group media solutions, n.d.)

Since videos are important for today's tourism market one has to know the different ways to follow this trend. Firstly, it is important to know that video marketing does not have to be expensive. It can be done by all kinds of businesses. Sometimes a video taken with a smartphone can be enough. Especially when it is content for social media it should not be too polished (Cheng, 2019). The first thing a user sees is the thumbnail, the picture that is visible before the video is even played. It has to be engaging in order to grab the user's attention (Hoben, 2018). In addition, it is important to spread the message quickly, notably on social media. If the viewers after three seconds do not know what the video is about it is likely that they will keep scrolling through their feed (Cheng, 2019). It is vital to realise the importance of people in videos. They help to make the content more personal (Travel Trade Gazette, 2017). The reason for that is that as soon as we see people that showcase certain emotions our mirror neurons are activated, which helps to enhance the identification with the protagonists and therefore with the message as well (Costa-Sánchez, 2017). Those people should be a part of a story that is captivating and catches the attention of viewers with visually and musically pleasing content (Barrett, 2017). In addition, a video should be directed to a specific audience with a message that speaks directly to them. This message should be clear and easily understandable for viewers. There has to be a Call to action somewhere in the video. This can be written or spoken but it has to make viewers react (Travel Trade Gazette, 2017). Furthermore, a video should be as immersive as possible. A traditional video just tells a story, however, if a video is interactive or shot from the first-

person, it creates an unusual experience that makes travellers feel as if they are already at the destination (Expedia Media Solutions, 2016). In addition, there should be a video strategy behind each video, it should either inform, entertain or educate its viewers. The video content should be up to date since search engines reward websites that update content on a regular basis. The video should be shareable, as soon as a video is shared on social networks it improves its positioning in web search rankings. A video should also be supportive, meaning it should inform about aspects of a product or service that the viewer did not know before and therefore support them with needed information. Moreover, the video should be very specialised and specific to a chosen area of information. In addition, content should be provided regularly in a sustainable manner, which means, it should always be periodic (daily, weekly, monthly etc.) (Costa-Sánchez, 2017). Furthermore, after having produced the video, it is crucial to include it on the website, share it on social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Vimeo) and use other e-marketing channels if possible (Travel Trade Gazette, 2017). At the end of the video there should be a Call to action (CTA) users should be encouraged to like, comment and share the content they have just watched (Hoben, 2018). In addition, the design of a website should be responsive in general. If there is a video on a website, it should be mobile friendly, otherwise it has a bad impact on the guest experience (Higgins, 2019). Chiou et al. (2010) emphasise that content in general and therefore also video content on a website should be up-to-date, appealing and consistent with the style of the website, load quickly, be useful and relevant and easy to understand. In addition, the content should be multilingual and there should not be any grammar errors (Hasan & Abduelrub, 2011). Rich (2018) stresses that having closed captions is vital as well. Not only for the deaf community but also for a better understanding of the spoken content, for people who do not speak the language very well and for people who want to watch the video with no sound on. Furthermore, in order to have Video Marketing and Search Engine Organisation (SEO) Success one must choose a fitting meta title and description, transcribe the video and give the video a suitable filename (Hoben, 2018). Moreover, tourism stakeholders should foster the creation of videos and stories since they have a high potential to influence customers positively. Therefore, they should generate resources in order to support tourists to share their holiday videos (Huertas, 2018). They should be aware that they are not the major controller over their brand and messages anymore, they have to

share this control with their consumers since some of the video content or content in general is distributed by them (Lim, Chung, & Weaver, 2012).

When it comes to video marketing there is another channel that is about to grow immensely; Connected Television (CTV). Connected Television users are growing constantly, the reason for that is that every day numerous consumers are cutting the cord on linear television (Sojern, 2019). When consumers decide to switch to CTV it is important for advertisers to follow them. It is a large opportunity for advertisers and allows them to attain new audiences and to increase the effectiveness of their video advertisement campaigns. The number of CTV Users clearly indicate how important that market is. There are 147.5 Million Netflix users, 88.7 Million Prime users, 55 Million Hulu users and 17.1M HBONOW users that watch CTV at least once a month (Higgins, 2018).

#### *1.1.3.1. Different types of videos*

According to Costa-Sánchez (2017) and Pattiss (2018), these are the different types of videos in marketing and communication that could be used by a hotel or DMO:

- Host video: This video is usually on the landing page of a website.
- Product / service video: It gives detailed information about a specific product or service.
- Tutorial: They show viewers how a service or product could be used.
- Testimonial or interview video: These videos include influencers, customers or professionals of a company. Their goal is to humanise the company.
- Informative branded content: The main purpose of this video is to inform viewers about something specific and not sales.
- Videos related to identity of the companies and their current affairs: They are about events or should help the viewer to understand the company better as a whole.
- Videos of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): These videos showcase the actions a brand takes in order to be more socially responsible. They are a great tool for improving the reputation of a brand.
- Advertising: This form of marketing video has the intention to increase brand awareness and advertise specific products. They should use a storytelling



technique, grab the attention of viewers, be not too long, emotional and entertaining.

- Teaser video: It is a video that teases the audience. It is shown just before a new product is available on the market.
- Live video: This video is shown through platforms like YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. It is live and very interactive with the viewers.

There are not only different types of videos, there are different video formats as well. Ragovin from Adweek (2018) stresses that exploring alternative video formats can make a company stand out because they catch a person's eye.

- Stop motion videos: They are an animation technique. Objects are moved slightly with every photographed frame. When putting all the frames together it gives the illusion of movement when played (Ragovin, 2018).
- Cinemagraph videos: They bring traditional images to life. Small movements are included in an image in a seamless loop (Ragovin, 2018).
- 360-degree videos/immersive videos: Every direction can be viewed in this form of video. This is because every direction was recorded at the same time. They can be uploaded to Facebook and YouTube (GCF Global, n.d.).
- Virtual Reality (VR): This is not a video; however, it is a technological application that is about to grow in the tourism industry. People can dive into virtual realities in order to see a destination before going there, which makes it easier for them to make a decision (Laesser, et al., 2018).

#### 1.1.4. Content Marketing

Since video marketing is a specific form of Content Marketing it is crucial to examine this term more closely and to show exactly what it means. 90 percent of organisations are now marketing with content in order to give more value to the customers (Jutkowitz, 2014).

People do not trust traditional advertisement anymore since the usage of the internet and social media increased. Traditional advertisements are no longer effective because potential clients are mostly immune to them. One approach to this change of perception of advertisement is Content Marketing (Hilker, 2017). According to Hilker (2017), the main difference between “content” and “advertisement” is that advertisement just promises to

fulfil customers' needs while content is actually fulfilling their needs. Content is useful in itself by giving helpful information and a certain benefit to the customer. Therefore, instead of pushing advertisement to consumers, customers should be pulled to exiting content. Another crucial part of Content Marketing is choosing the target group, which is supposed to receive the content of the message (Świeczak, 2012). Jutkowitz (2014) stresses, that the idea of keeping the knowledge of a brand quiet is over. Everyone has access to the internet anyway, and therefore to all the information imaginable. Companies need to distribute already sorted out information to their audience and will receive brand loyalty and readership in return.

Robert Rose from the Content Marketing Institute defines Content Marketing in the following way: „Content Marketing is a marketing technique of creating and distributing relevant and valuable content to attract, acquire, and engage a clearly defined and understood target audience – with the objective of driving profitable customer action“ (Hilker, 2017).

One important aspect of Content Marketing is the website of a company itself. It should be very rich in content such as, podcasts, blogs and news releases. All parts of a Content Marketing Strategy should come together on the corporate website (Meerman, 2015).

Hilker (2017) states that the most common content are pictures and blogs. However, videos are increasing in importance of a sound Content Marketing Strategy. Meerman (2015) emphasises that video content is created more and more. In addition, he stresses that there is a trend towards less formal content, this goes for business videos as well. It is a trend towards the casual which should be easier for people to consume. Social media is seen as the main fuelling factor for this tendency.

#### *1.1.4.1. User Generated Content*

In the past the branding of destinations was made by professionals. DMOs created content to create a positive image in order differentiate themselves and to stay competitive. The conversation was only one-way with the consumer. However, this one-way communication evolved to a two-way communication. With the beginning of the Web 2.0 era, users started to generate content themselves through different Web 2.0 application tools (Yoo & Gretzel, 2016). Consumers are now actively participating in the development of

a destination brand image by using different social media platforms (Lim, Chung, & Weaver, 2012). The act of sharing videos has increased due to the technological progress. Better mobile cameras, editing systems, as well as the social media platforms that allow tourists to share their experiences has therefore led to a rise of video content created by tourists. Those platforms are still evolving, stories (accessible for 24 hours) and live videos (real-time) for instance are a newer phenomenon (Huertas, 2018). This change in available technological applications clearly changed the power relation between tourists and the host community (Usui, Wei, & Funck, 2017). Therefore, when looking at Video Marketing in tourism, one can not only analyse content created by marketers. Video content created by users also called User Generated Content (UGC) has an impressive impact on other users or tourist's opinions and decisions. Users on social media are seen as more credible than the information given by professionals (Huertas, 2018). This effect of Electronic Word-of-Mouth (EWOM) is even bigger when this content comes from friends or other people these users know. According to Lim et al. (2012), during the time consumers are informing themselves about future trips they are using social media as a major source for their travel information. Huertas (2018) explains that tourism-experience Video Content shared on social media platforms is not only informing other people about a destination. It makes people want to experience this destination themselves and it stimulates their imagination through mental pleasure. Hays et al. (2013) accentuate that marketers can stimulate conversation and encourage interaction when using social media. This can not only help developing brand loyalty it also increases awareness. In addition, tourism destinations that are using social media effectively and are fostering UGC are affecting their competitiveness immensely. This makes sense since the internet in general is now the most used channel by tourists to gather information. Great content about a destination or a tourism stakeholder is therefore vital whether it is generated by destination marketers or generated by users (Cillo, Rialti, Del Giudice, & Usai, 2019). There are different ways to foster User Generated Content. Firstly, it is important to have a platform that encourages community interact. In addition, customers should be encouraged to collaborate actively and to share the brand. There needs to be a certain structure as well, users need to know what is expected of them. Creating opportunities for users to create their own content is another way of fostering UGC. Offering symbols or digital badges that users can use is great to support users in content creation.

Allowing users to tell their own story by using provided templates is exciting for brand ambassadors (Muñiz Jr & Schau, 2011).

## 1.2. State of Marketing in the Alpine Region

Many tourism service providers are on the smaller side and very traditional hierarchically organized. This makes it hard for them, especially for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), to keep up with the quickly changing technological innovations (Laesser, et al., 2018). Continuous training and strengthening the network infrastructure is therefore crucial for surviving in the highly competitive tourism sector. The digital infrastructure in cities is much better than the one in peripheral destinations, even though they are more dependent on tourism. The reason for this gap of digital infrastructure is the lower financial means of peripheral locations in for example the Alpine Region (Laesser, et al., 2018). Furthermore, organisations in tourism are very hesitant to adopt new trends in Marketing. They have difficulties to use new trends for their advantage. Tourism organisations need to adapt and to use the possibilities that are now at their fingertips with the Web 2.0 (Stettler & Wagenseil, 2007). Swiss hotels are mostly not using any videos or three-dimensional (3D) presentation formats on their website. And if they do, they are usually higher-end hotels (Grüter, Schneider, & Myrach, 2013). In addition, there is another issue that is present in Swiss Tourism – the tendency to not choose a specific target market. Many Tourism Stakeholders marketing message is not speaking to anyone because they do not position themselves clearly. Whether it is Video marketing or some other form of marketing, hotels and DMOs need to define their target market and they must adjust their marketing to them (Stettler & Wagenseil, 2007).

An analysis of different Austrian hotel websites has already been made by Stavrakantonakis et al. (2013). However, in their report called “Hotel Websites, Web 2.0, Web 3.0” they do not focus on the Alpine region and they do not compare the Austrian marketing channels with Swiss, Italian or French channels. This bachelor thesis intends to close this research gap in order to find out how Swiss hotels and DMOs perform in terms of Video marketing compared to its main competitors in Austria, France and Italy.

## 2. Hypothesis

Video marketing is very important marketing trend as indicated in the Literature Review. However, Tourism Stakeholders seem to have difficulties to adapt to this trend. It is especially hard for Hotels and DMOs that are in destinations that are on the countryside such as destinations in the Alps. Since this benchmarking is for the Tourism Observatory Valais/Wallis in the Swiss Alps it is important for them to understand how Swiss tourism Stakeholders compare to their competitors in the Alps. The main competitors of those Stakeholders are the ones in the Italian, French or Austrian Alps. Therefore, the question arises how Swiss Hotels and DMOs compare to their Italian, French or Austrian competitors when it comes to Video marketing. The use of videos of the different stakeholders' websites as well as on their social media channels will be analysed. The goal is to identify the usage intensity and the different forms of video marketing among hotels and DMOs in an international context. Furthermore, best practice examples will be identified. The goal of this bachelor thesis is to get important insights of the current use of videos in the marketing strategy of Hotels and DMOs. Weaknesses of players in Valais/Switzerland will be identified and recommendations for improvement will be formulated. This will allow the Tourism Observatory Valais/Wallis to see how hotels and DMOs in the Swiss alpine region compare to their competitors and what could be improved in the future. The Hypothesis is accordingly the following:

***How is the usage of video marketing for different players in the tourism industry in the alpine regions of Switzerland; and how do they compare to their competitors in France, Austria and Italy?***

### 3. Methodology

In order to make a benchmarking analysis about video marketing in the Alpine Region, one has to make a clear overview of the subject matter. This first part of the thesis has been done with desk research, which mostly focused on the evolution of marketing and video marketing. The literature research has been done with both scientific articles and credible websites. In addition, current trends in video marketing will be broken down.

#### 3.1. Benchmarking structure

After theoretical analysis of Video marketing that focussed mainly on what should be done by companies in the tourism industry and what the current trends are; it is vital to examine what is actually done by the Swiss, Austrian, French and Italian Tourism Stakeholders in the Alps when it comes to Video marketing. To compare the different stakeholders from the different countries, a benchmark analyses will be carried out. It is seen as very helpful instrument to compare different products with each other. A competitive benchmarking will be done in this thesis. It is meant to compare direct competitor with each other. Such a competitive benchmark analysis has the benefit to know the competitor better afterwards and to see where one's own company stands (OSHAcademy, n.d.). Firstly, the criteria for this benchmark will be identified. They will be based on the literature review. Secondly, samples will be chosen in a stratified sampling method in order to have an equal number of random samples from every country. Especially their websites and different social media channels will be analysed for their video content.

After the analysis, a summary of the outcome will be done in order to showcase the most important insights that can be taken away from this benchmark.

#### 3.2. Expert Interviews

Whereas the benchmarking analysis gives an external view on the current situation of Video marketing in the alpine tourism industry, interviews can inform about internal processes and information. Suitable marketing experts have been contacted and interviewed to improve the understanding of the current trends as well as to understand more about the importance of video marketing in and out of the tourism industry. Different interview partners have been contacted between September and November 2019. Three experts have been interviewed, some had an immense knowledge in marketing in the hospitality and/or

tourism industry and some knew a lot about marketing trends and the production of videos. The three experts are presented in the chapter “Expert Interviews / Statements”. This helped to gain a better understanding of the current video marketing situation in the tourism industry.

The chosen interview style is semi structured. Therefore, questions are not necessarily fixed which means the interview cannot be standardised. The interview is quite organic, new questions and ideas can be brought up during the interview for that reason. This way of interviewing helps to interact with the interviewee and to receive the best qualitative data possible. The heart of the interview is an interview guide that is divided into topics and sub topics. Photographs, maps and diagrams can be included as well (Wageningen University & Research, n.d.). It is vital to keep the following criteria in mind in order to have a scientific result: The interviewer needs to be neutral and open minded, the approach theory-led and the process of the analysis and interpretation needs to be disclosed in a traceable manner (Kaiser, 2014).

The summary of the benchmark analysis, the information from expert interviews and the desk research are a good guideline for actors in the tourism industry to know what they should do now and in the future.

## 4. Evaluation and Analysis of Results

### 4.1. Benchmarking

Benchmarking is frequently used by manufacturing and service companies. It is an approach that the management uses in order to identify who the best player on the market is. In the tourism industry, a benchmarking analysis is usually used to compare services (Wöber, 2001). The supply of videos is a service that tourists like to use in order to inform themselves about a destination or a hotel. To examine how the Swiss alpine markets video marketing compares to its competitors in Austria, Italy and France one has to define criteria. In addition, all the DMOs and Hotels that have been randomly chosen need to be assessed under those previously defined criteria. On the part of the author the necessary neutrality is given to make sure the analysis is executed with no preconception. Here it should be mentioned that the analysis is done from the customer's point of view which limited the data collection. Thus, it was crucial which information is publicly available to the customer on the internet.

#### 4.1.1. Criteria

The criteria have been defined with insights received from the literature review. To make a valuable benchmarking analysis it is vital that all these criteria are measurable in an objective way. For this reason, some of the criterion have further defined under criteria in order to measure it accordingly. To define these new criteria new literature was necessary; therefore, the information was not extracted from the literature review. These are highlighted in yellow. Some criterion, highlighted in green, are objectively measurable on their own. And a few criteria are too subjective to use for this benchmarking analysis. They are highlighted in red.

#	Theme	Subtheme	Goal	Source
1	Video Content	Design	The Thumbnail of a video has to be engaging and should grab the user's attention.	(Hoben, 2018)
Criteria for an engaging thumbnail: well framed, in-focus, center on a specific subject (main character), specifically chosen.				(Yang & Tsai, 2015)
2	Video Content	Design	There should be people in videos to make it more personal.	(Travel Trade Gazette, 2017)
4	Video Content	Design	The video should be told in a storytelling way.	(Barrett, 2017)



#	Theme	Subtheme	Goal	Source
Criteria for storytelling: There needs to be a hero, challenges and a solution in the story.				(Content Marketing Institut, 2018)
5	Video Content	Message	Spread the message quickly.	(Cheng, 2019)
This criterion is not objectively measurable.				
6	Video Content	Message	The message of the video should be direct and it should be clear who the target market is.	(Travel Trade Gazette, 2017)
Criteria for a chosen target market: The target can be chosen according to demographic (age, gender, ethnicity...), psychographic (lifestyle, social class, personality...) or behavioral (knowledge, attitudes concerning the product) segmentation.				(Armstrong & Kotler, 2007)
7	Video Content	Message	The content should not be very formal.	(Meerman, 2015).
This criterion is not objectively measurable.				
8	Video Content	Message	The video content should be useful and easy to understand	(Chiou, Lin, & Perng, 2010).
This criterion is not objectively measurable.				
9	Video Content	Message	There has to be a CTA in the video. This can be written or spoken.	(Travel Trade Gazette, 2017)
Criteria for CTA in a video: It directs to a website, motivates to download/share/buy/like/comment and encourages to sign-up/subscribe.				(Movsisyan, 2019), (Henry, 2017)
10	Video Content	Language	The video should be multilingual with no grammar errors	(Hasan & Abduelrub, 2011)
11	Video Content	Language	Closed captions should appear automatically when the video is played muted.	(Rich, 2018)
12	Video Strategy	Goal	The video should have a pull strategy	(Laesser, et al., 2018)
Criteria for pull strategy: The video content could be news, updates, demonstrations and tutorials. It should not interrupt the viewer.				(Coots, 2015)
13	Video Strategy	Goal	The video should be supportive; inform viewers about aspects of a product or service; support them with information.	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017)
14	Video Strategy	Specificity	The video should either inform, entertain or educate its viewer.	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017).
15	Video Strategy	Specificity	The video should be specialist with specific information of a chosen area.	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017).
This criterion is not objectively measurable.				
16	Video Strategy	SEO	The video should have a fitting meta title and description.	(Hoben, 2018)
17	Video Strategy	SEO	The video should be transcribed.	(Hoben, 2018)
18	Video Strategy	SEO	The video should have a suitable filename.	(Hoben, 2018)
19	Video Strategy	Creation	Video content should be provided regularly, it should always be periodic (daily, weekly, monthly etc.).	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017)

#	Theme	Subtheme	Goal	Source
20	Video Strategy	Platform	Have multi-channel strategy.	(Sojern, 2019), (Travel Trade Gazette, 2017)
23	Social Media Videos	Format	Videos on social media should be posted in a vertical format.	(Wibbitz, 2018)
24	Social Media Videos	Format	Video content for social media should not be very polished.	(Cheng, 2019)
This criterion is not objectively measurable.				
25	Social Media Videos	Video Content	Amount of video content posted on their Social media platforms.	(Potter, 2019)
26	Social Media Videos	UGC	UGC should be fostered.	(Muñiz Jr & Schau, 2011)
Criteria for fostering UGC: Encourage the community to interact, encourage users to collaborate actively, offer certain structures, create opportunities for users to create their own content, offer symbols or digital badges that users can use, allow them to tell their own story by providing templates				(Muñiz Jr & Schau, 2011)
27	Website	Content	3D presentations on the website.	(Stavarakantonakis, Toma, Fensel, & Fensel, 2013)
28	Website	Content	Using videos on the website.	(Stavarakantonakis, Toma, Fensel, & Fensel, 2013)
29	Website	Content	There should be an interconnectedness of online social media with traditional media. Social media should be integrated on a Website.	(Hanna, Rohm, & Crittenden, 2011)
30	Website	Content	The video content should be up to date.	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017)
This criterion is not objectively measurable.				(van de Rakt, 2019)
31	Website	Design	The video should suit the design of the website.	(Chiou, Lin, & Perng, 2010)
This criterion is not objectively measurable.				
32	Website	Technical Aspect	A video on a website needs to be watchable via smartphone – the website design should be responsive.	(Higgins, 2019).
33	Website	Technical Aspect	The video should be easily shareable from the website.	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017).
34	Website	Technical Aspect	The video should load in quickly.	(Chiou, Lin, & Perng, 2010).
The video on a website has to load in two seconds or less. This criterion was tested with “Think with Google” and “GT Metrix”				(Anderson, 2019)
35	Website	Technical Aspect	There should be an entertainment / video or animation / multimedia feature on a website.	(Hashim, Murphy, & Law, 2007)
	Video Variety	Video Types	Different types of videos should be used.	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017), (Pattiss, 2018)
One of the following types of video could be used to fulfill this criterion:				(Costa-Sánchez,

#	Theme	Subtheme	Goal	Source
			Host video, Product/Service-video, Tutorial, Testimonial/Interview video, Informative branded content, Video related to the identity of the company and current affairs, Videos of CSR, Advertising, Teaser video, Live video	2017), (Pattiss, 2018)
36	Video Variety	Video Formats	An alternative video format should be used in addition to the traditional video format.	(Ragovin, 2018), (GCF Global, n.d.), (Laesser, et al., 2018)
			One of the following alternative video formats could be used to fulfill this criterion: top motion video, Cinemagraph video, 360-degree video, VR	(Ragovin, 2018), (GCF Global, n.d.), (Laesser, et al., 2018)

Table 1: List of Criteria

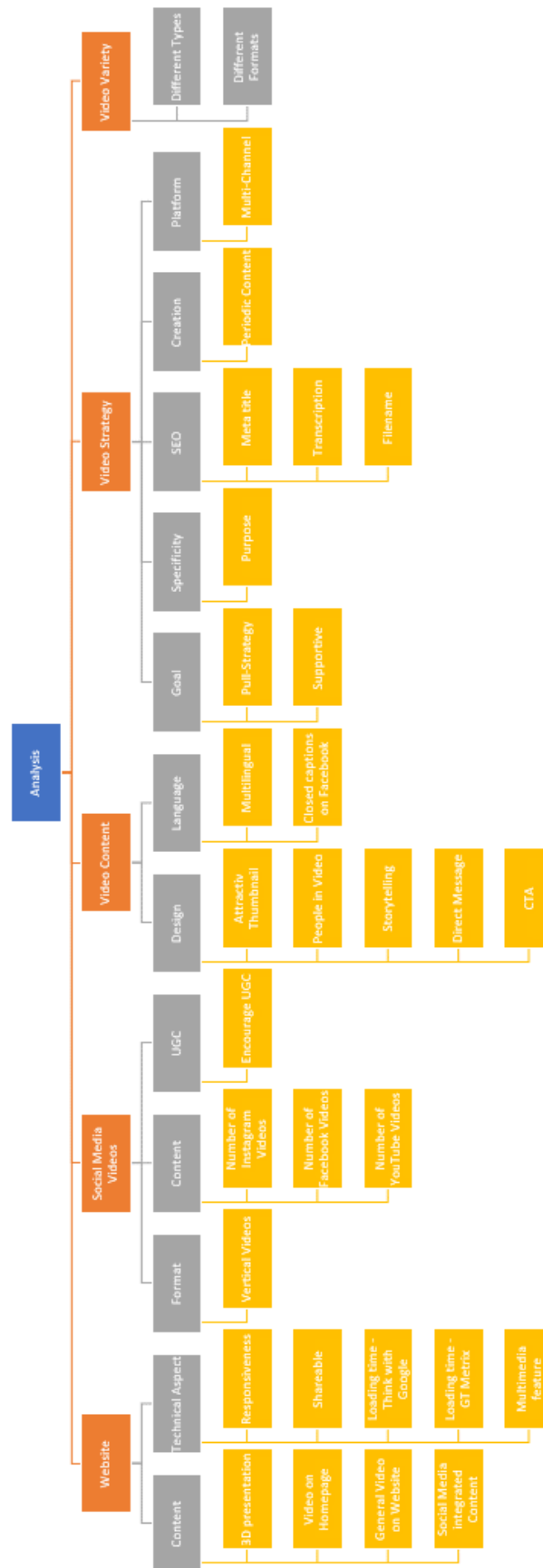
#### 4.1.2. Destinations

The destinations chosen to analyse are all in the alpine region in either Switzerland, France, Austria or Italy. They have been chosen randomly. The focus in Switzerland was on destinations in the canton of Graubünden and Valais/Wallis. The reason for that decision was the proximity to the neighbouring countries. In total 100 different DMOs and hotels have been examined. Out of those 100, 65 were Swiss, 12 Austrian and French and 11 Italian. The ones in Austria, France and Italy were all DMOs. Out of the 65 Swiss organisations analysed, 15 were 4 Star hotels, 12 were 5 Star hotels and 38 were DMOs. Around 50 percent of the Swiss tourism organisations are therefore located in Graubünden and the other half is located in Valais/Wallis.

#### 4.1.3. Evaluation Benchmarking

In order to create a sound analysis and evaluation the benchmarking, the criteria have been divided into five different categories and subsequent subcategories. All criteria listed in *4.1.1 Criteria* are divided ones more into the different subcategories. In this evaluation, each of the five categories will be examined on its own.

Figure 3: Display of different Criteria Categories

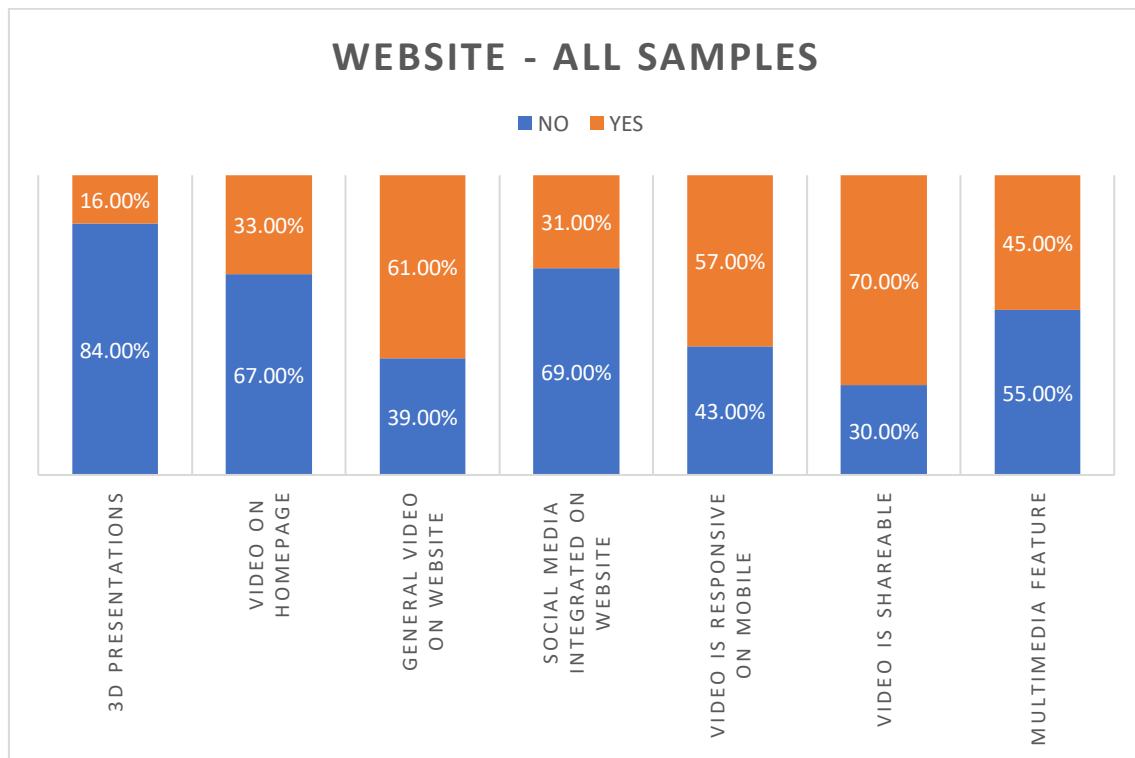


Source 3: Own source

### Category Website

The first category Website has seven subordinate criteria. One can detect in this first graph that answers vary greatly depending on the criterion. Therefore, all criteria need to be examined separately.

Figure 4: Graph, Category Website, all samples



Source 4: Own source

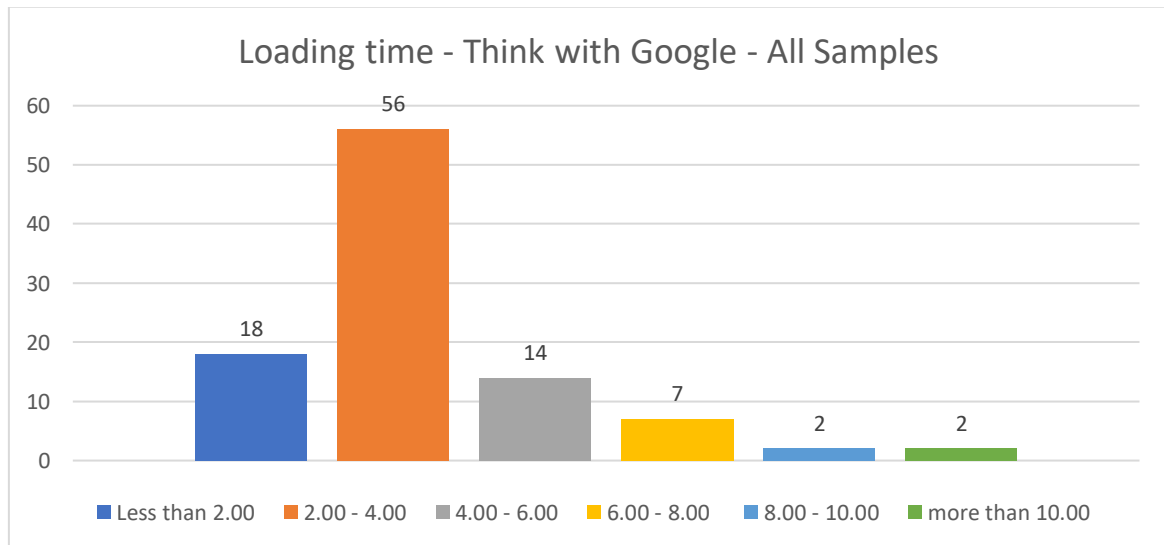
Most hotels and DMOs did not have any 3D presentations on their website. In addition, only one third of all samples had a video on their homepage. To locate videos on a website, it is important to have a multimedia feature on the website. Nearly 50 percent of all samples had such a multimedia corner. However, around 60 percent of all samples had a video somewhere on their website and this content was nearly half of the time responsive on mobile. Since a multichannel approach is important (Travel Trade Gazette, 2017), the social media integrated content on a website has been checked as well. Only three out of ten samples had such content.

There is one more criterion under the category “website”. The criterion is about the loading time of a specific website. Therefore, all websites have been measured with two

different online tools. “Think with Google” was used to measure the loading time on a mobile phone and “GT Metrix” was used to measure the loading time on a computer.

According to Anderson (2019), a video on a website has to load in two seconds or less. Some websites were fast enough, depending on the online tool with which the websites were measured.

Figure 5: Graph, Loading time, think with Google, all samples

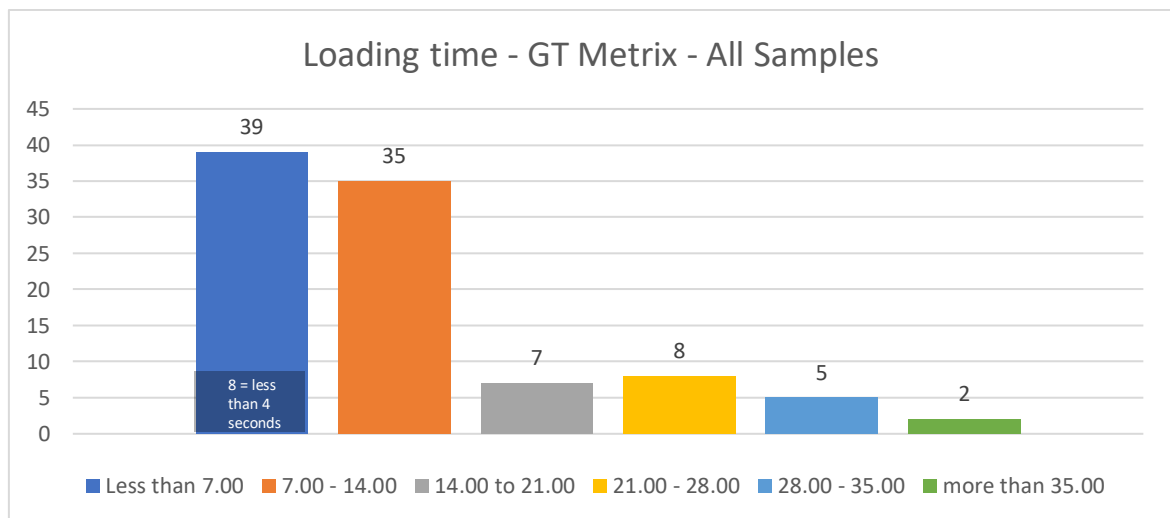


Source 5: Own source

When analysing the loading time of all samples measured with “Think with Google” one can spot that over 50 percent had a loading time between two and four seconds. Another 18 samples had a loading time that was lower than two seconds. This shows that most websites have the tendency to load rather fast.

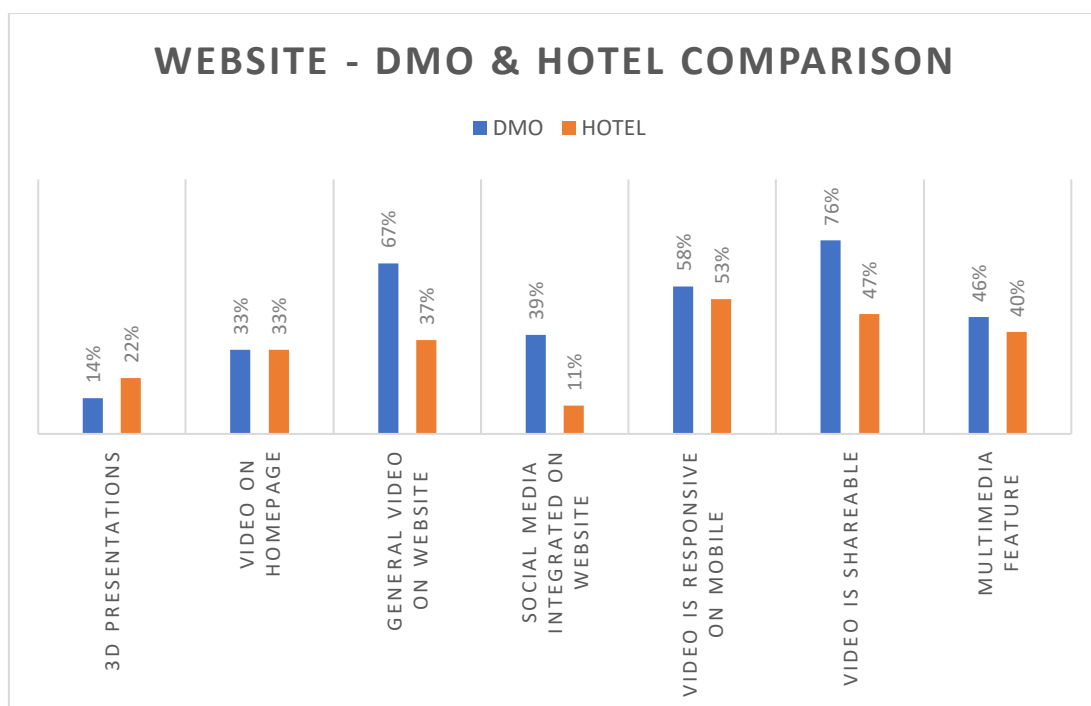
However, when one takes a look at the graph below one can see that GT Metrix measures quite a different loading time. Only 39 of all samples had a loading time that was less than seven seconds and out of those eight websites had a loading time that was shorter than four seconds.

Figure 6: Graph, loading time, GT Metrix, all samples



Source 6: Own source

Figure 7: Graph, Category Website, DMO/Hotel comparison

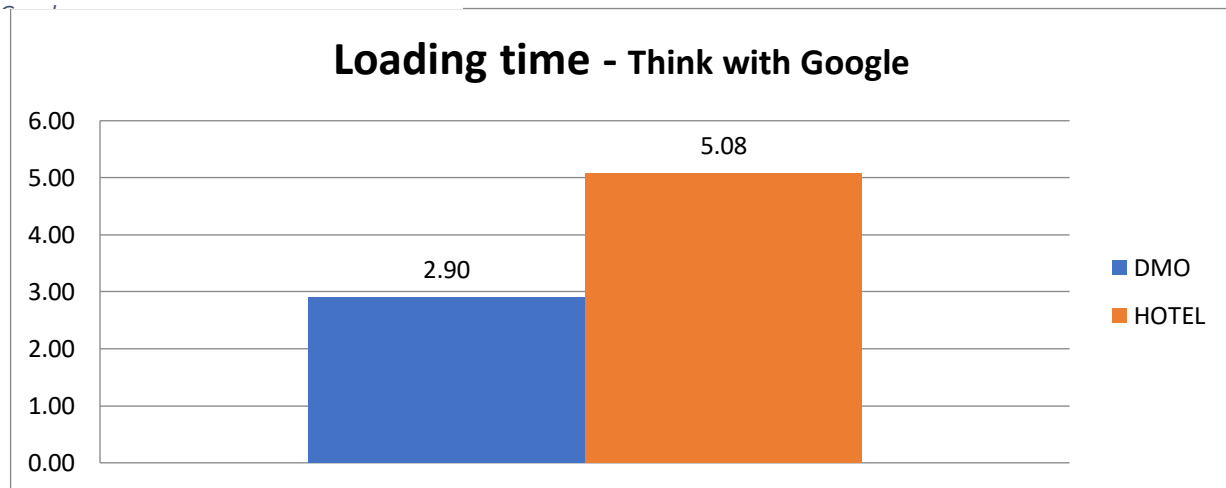


Source 7: Own source

In this graph one can see the same criteria as in the website graph before. However, this time one compares the performance of DMOs and hotels. The DMOs performed better in 5 out of 7 categories. The “3D Presentations” criterion was the only one where hotels performed better. This is due to the reason that some hotels had a virtual tour of the hotel on their website. Otherwise, the categories “General Video on Website” and “Social Media integrated on Website” stand out as well due to the reason that the difference between

DMOs and hotels is very significant. In addition, the difference between DMOs and hotels in the category "Video is shareable" is significant as well. This indicates that having videos on the website in general as well as the function to share them is more important to DMOs. In addition, DMOs also give a bigger importance to the display of content posted on diverse social media channels on their website.

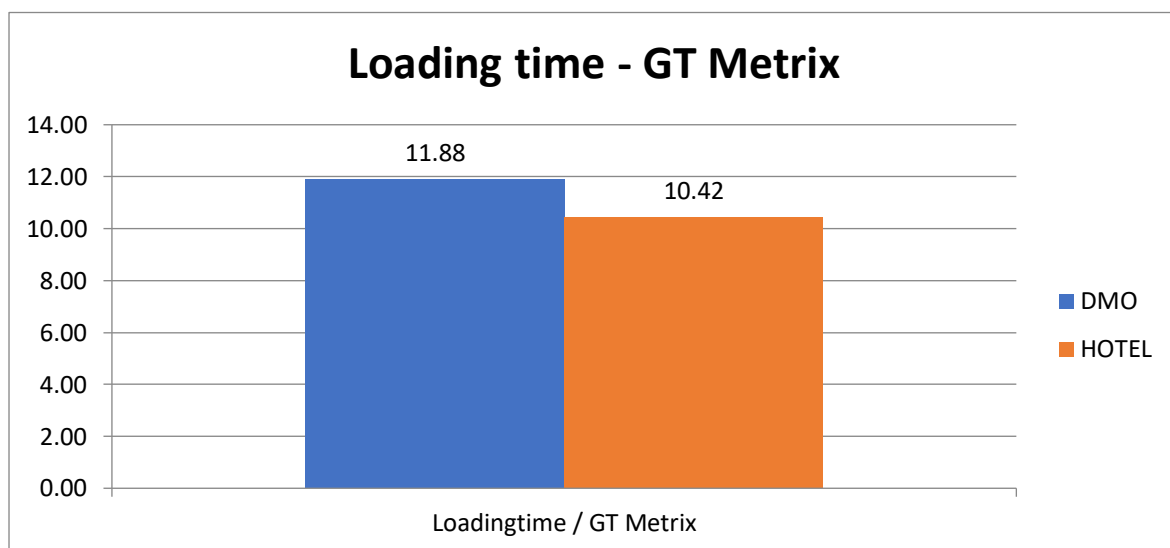
Figure 9: Graph, loading time, Think with



Source 9: Own source

An additional criterion was the time it took for a website to fully load on a mobile phone. In this criterion, the time was tested with "Think with Google". When hotels and DMOs were compared, the loading time was very significantly different. It showed that the website of a DMO was with a loading time of just under three seconds on average much faster than the one of a hotel with just over five seconds.

Figure 8: Graph, loading time, GT Metrix

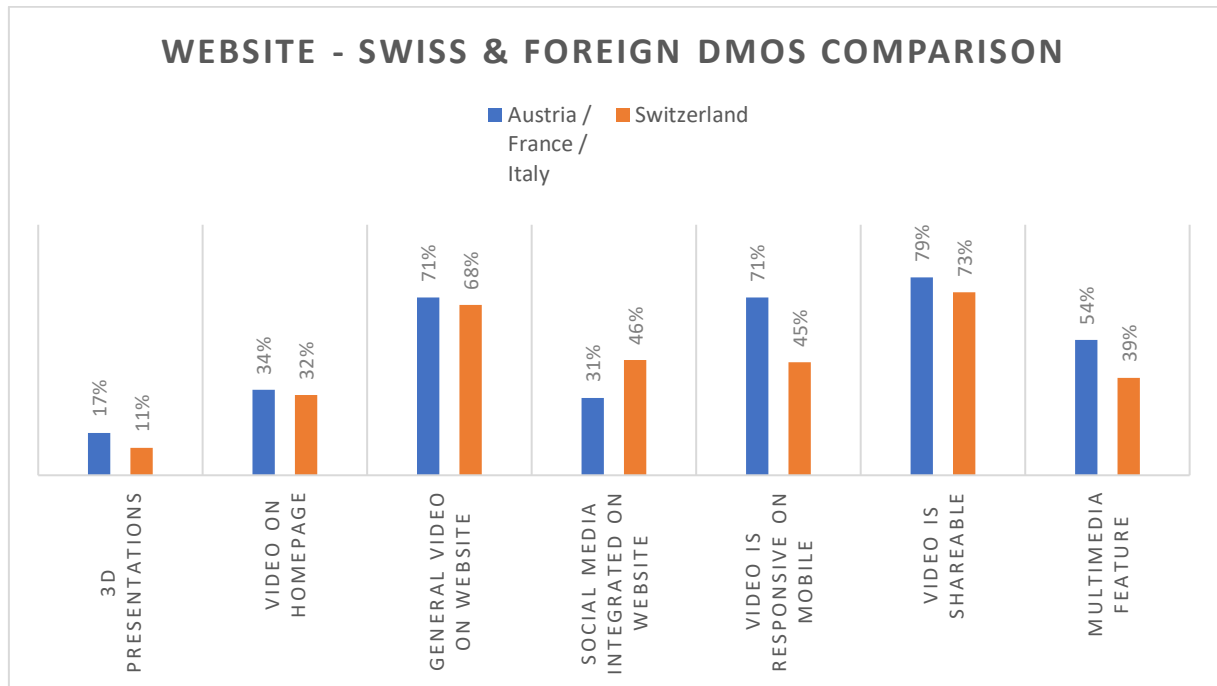


Source 8: Own source



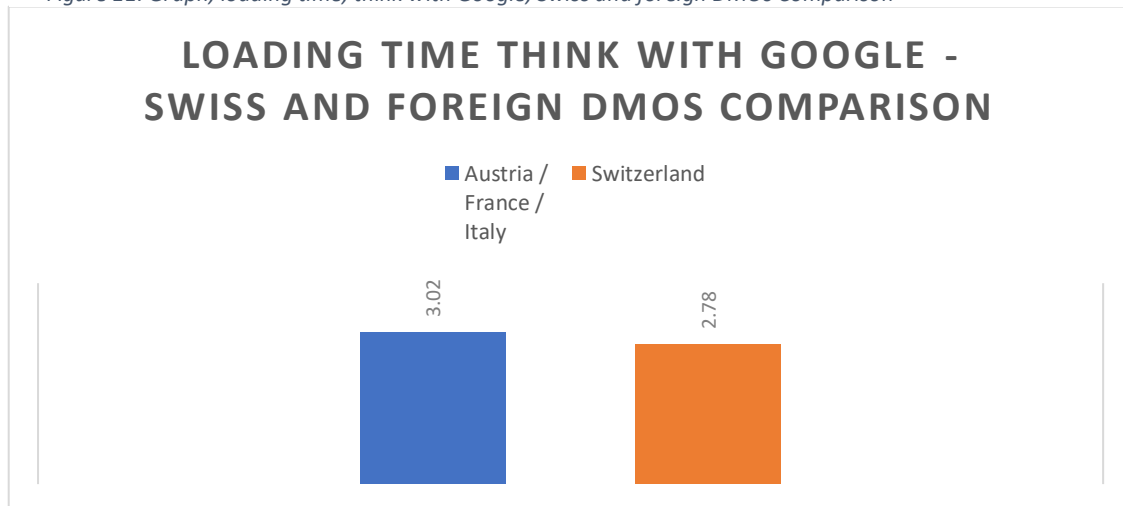
In addition, the loading time of websites on a computer was tested with GT Metrix as well. It is apparent that overall the times were much longer when tested with GT Metrix. However, there was no significant difference between DMOs loading time and hotels loading time on GT Metrix. Even though, hotels were on average nearly one second faster.

Figure 10: Graph, Category Website, Swiss and Austria/France/Italy DMOs comparison



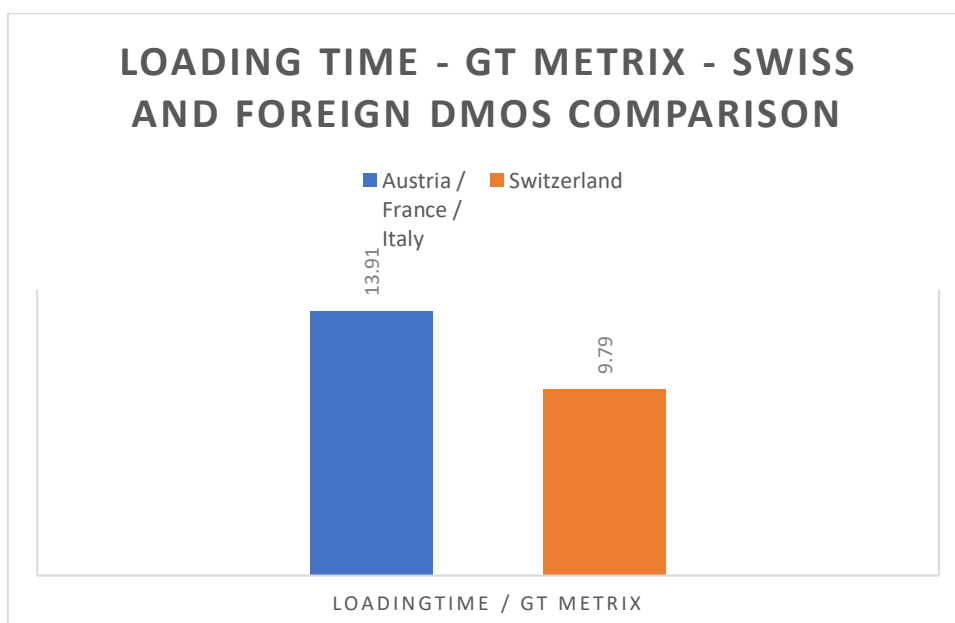
Source 10: Own source

In this graph, one can identify the difference between Swiss DMOs and the foreign ones. Austria, France and Italy performed better in six out of seven criteria. However, the difference is not significant and differs in usually just a few percentages. Only the difference of performance in the criterion “Video is shareable” is with a difference of 26 percent statistically significant.

*Figure 11: Graph, loading time, think with Google, Swiss and foreign DMOs Comparison*

Source 11: Own source

When the loading time of websites of Swiss and foreign DMOs was compared, it was visible that the Swiss ones were faster on average. However, the mobile the difference of loading times of foreign and Swiss DMOs when tested with Think with Google was not significant.

*Figure 12: Graph, loading time, GT Metrix, Swiss and foreign DMOs comparison*

Source 12: Own source

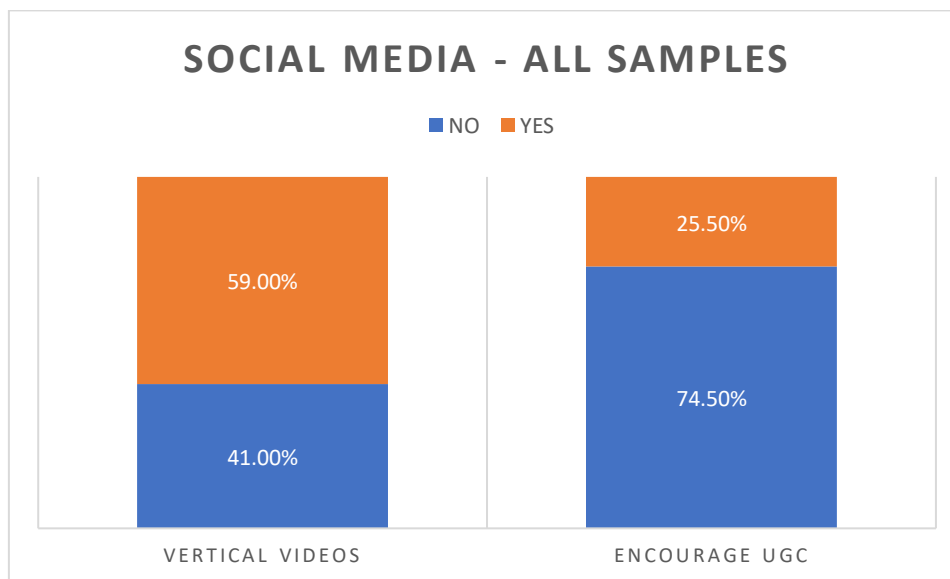
Nonetheless, the Swiss websites were significantly faster than the Austrian, French or Italian websites when they were tested with GT Metrix. The loading time of Swiss websites was 4 seconds faster on average.

To sum up, most DMOs and Hotels have still a lot of potential to improve when it comes to the Video Content they have on their Website. DMOs have generally a better website than hotels, according to the chosen criteria, and the difference between countries is very small. DMOs have a slightly faster loading time than hotels and the loading time of Swiss DMOs is faster compared to the ones in Austria, France and Italy.

### *Category Social Media Videos*

The category “social media” has five subordinate criteria. Two will be examined together and the other three will be examined separately. All the criteria have been analysed by going through the existent social media channels of each DMO and hotel. The focus was on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, since they are the most commonly used social media networks.

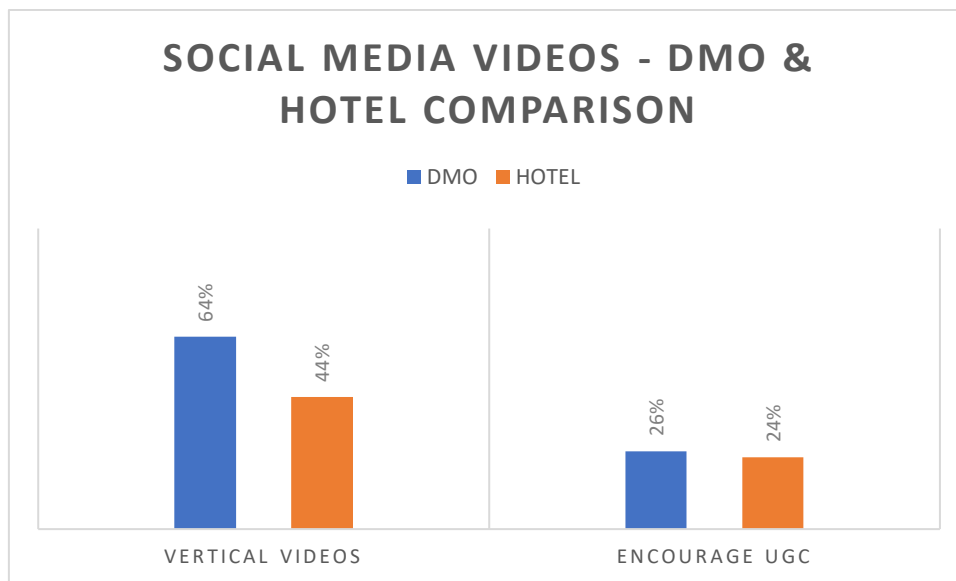
Figure 13: Graph, Social Media, all samples



Source 13: Own source

The criterion “Vertical Videos” was specially tested on Instagram. It was tested if the sample uses the function stories and/or Instagram television (IGTV). A good 60 percent were using Vertical Videos to showcase their destination or hotel. However, they rarely shared content and especially video content of their users. Around 70 percent of all samples did not create opportunities for users to share their content.

Figure 14: Graph, Social Media, DMO &amp; Hotel comparison



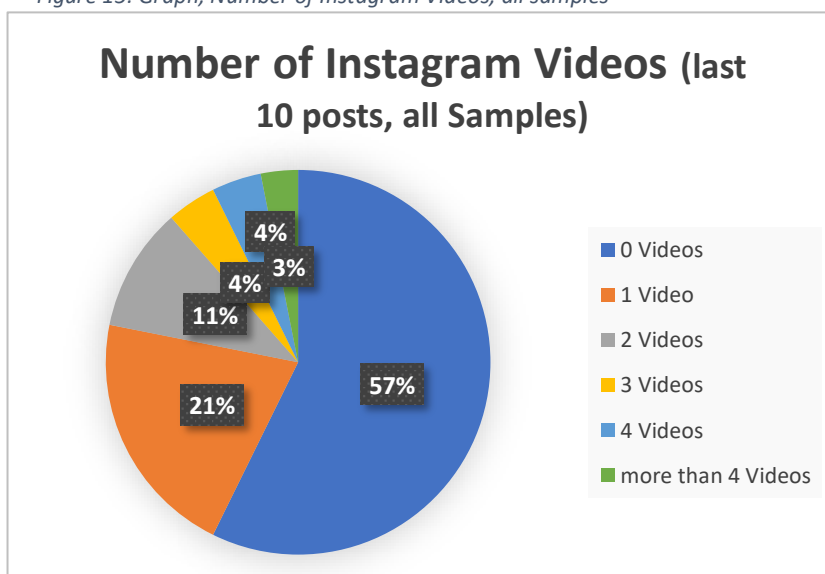
Source 14: Own Source

When comparing the social media video content of DMOs and hotels one can identify that DMOs usually perform better in that regard. However, only the difference of the criterion vertical videos is slightly significant with a difference of 20 percent. This shows that DMOs post more stories and videos on IGTV.

In addition, the difference between DMOs in Switzerland and Austria, France & Italy is neither big nor statistically significant.

The other three criteria of the category social media are the number of videos on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube. The last ten posts have been checked on videos on the

Figure 15: Graph, Number of Instagram Videos, all samples

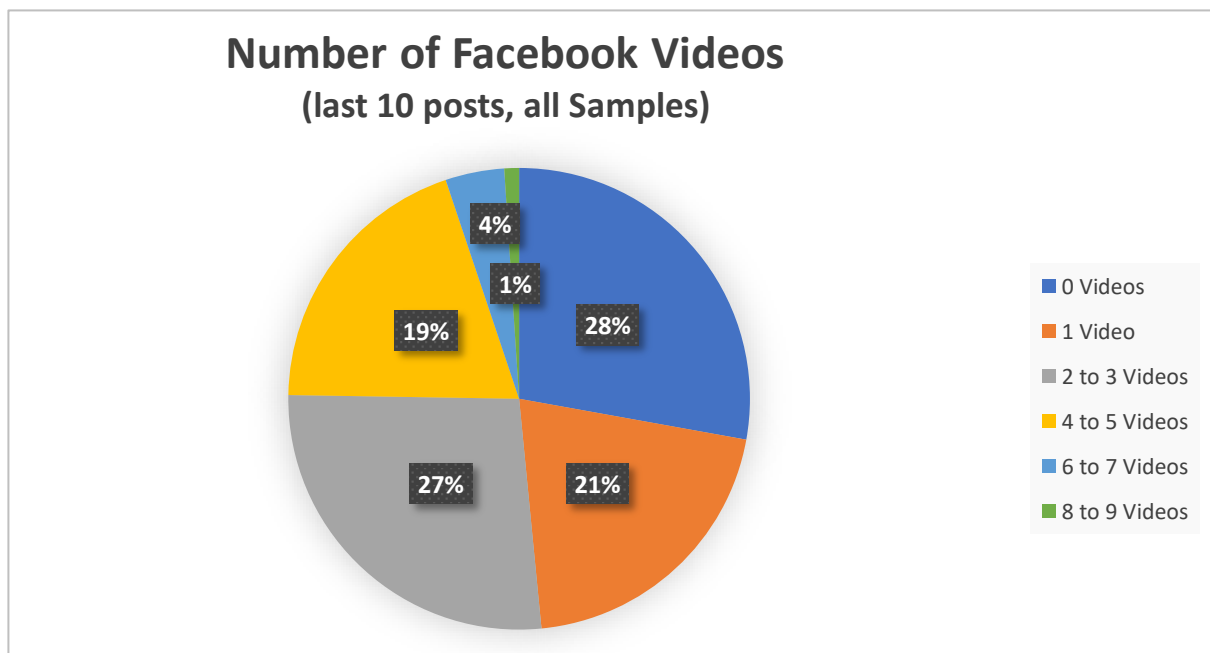


Source 15: Own source

social media channels Instagram and Facebook. The number of YouTube videos that have been uploaded in the last 12 months have been counted as well.

When focusing first on Instagram one can detect that 21 percent had one video post and 22 percent had two or more videos posts in the last ten posts on Instagram. With nearly 60 percent of the samples that did not even post one video on Instagram, it is clearly visible that the medium video is not a priority on this channel. In addition, there was neither a significant difference between *DMOs and hotels* nor *between Switzerland and France, Austria & Italy* in the number of videos posted on Instagram. When having a look at the

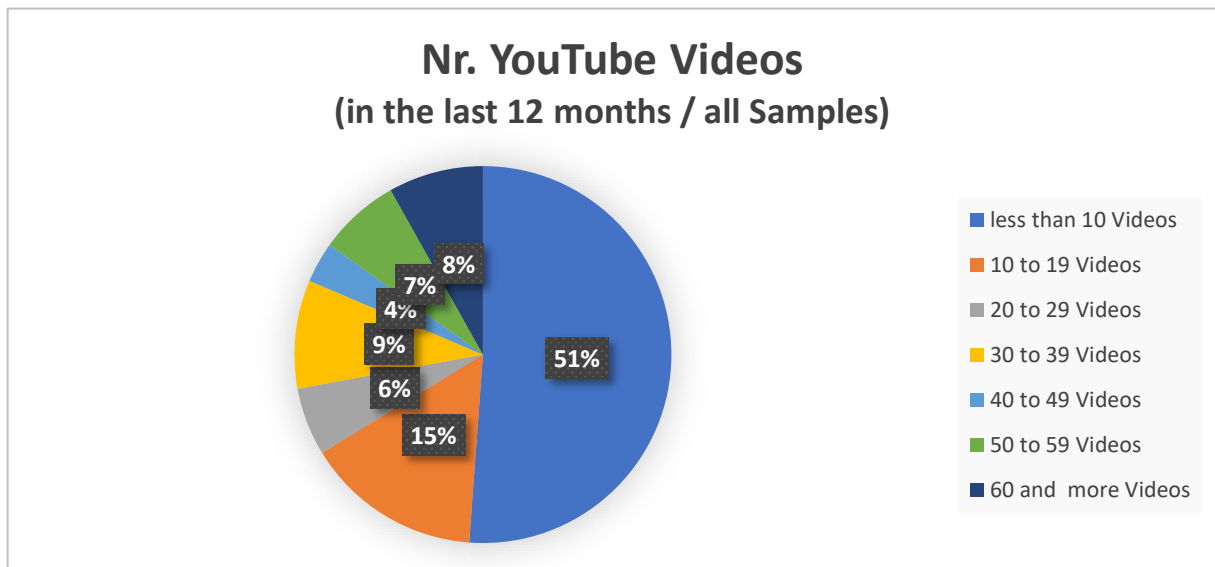
Figure 16: Graph, Number of Facebook Videos, all samples



Source 16: Own source

number of Facebook videos one can clearly recognize that the tendency to post a video on Facebook is greater than on Instagram. Only 28 percent of all the samples have zero video posts. On Instagram seven percent of all the samples posted 4 and more videos. This is very low, compared to the 24% of all the samples that posted four or more videos on Facebook. In addition, there was neither a significant difference between *DMOs and hotels* nor *between Switzerland and France, Austria & Italy* in the number of videos posted on Facebook.

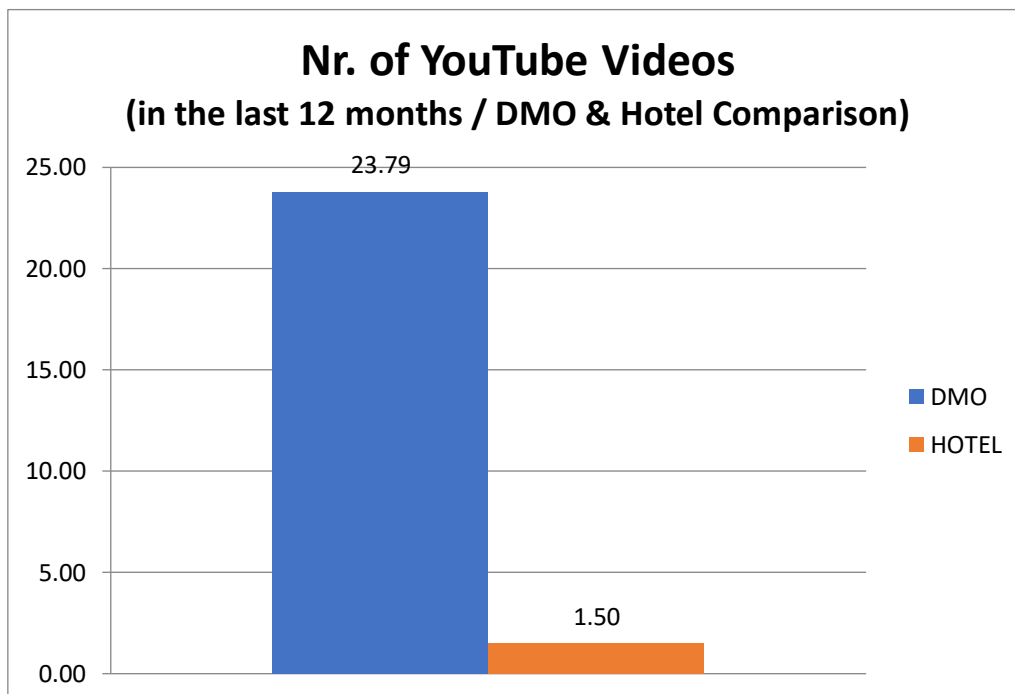
Figure 17: Graph, Nr. of YouTube Videos, all samples



Source 18: Own source

YouTube is the one channel that divides the different samples in two. One half of all samples posts nine or less videos on YouTube in a whole year. This is not even one video per month. The other half posts 10 to 60 videos and more. This shows some samples attach a higher importance to the frequent usage of YouTube than others.

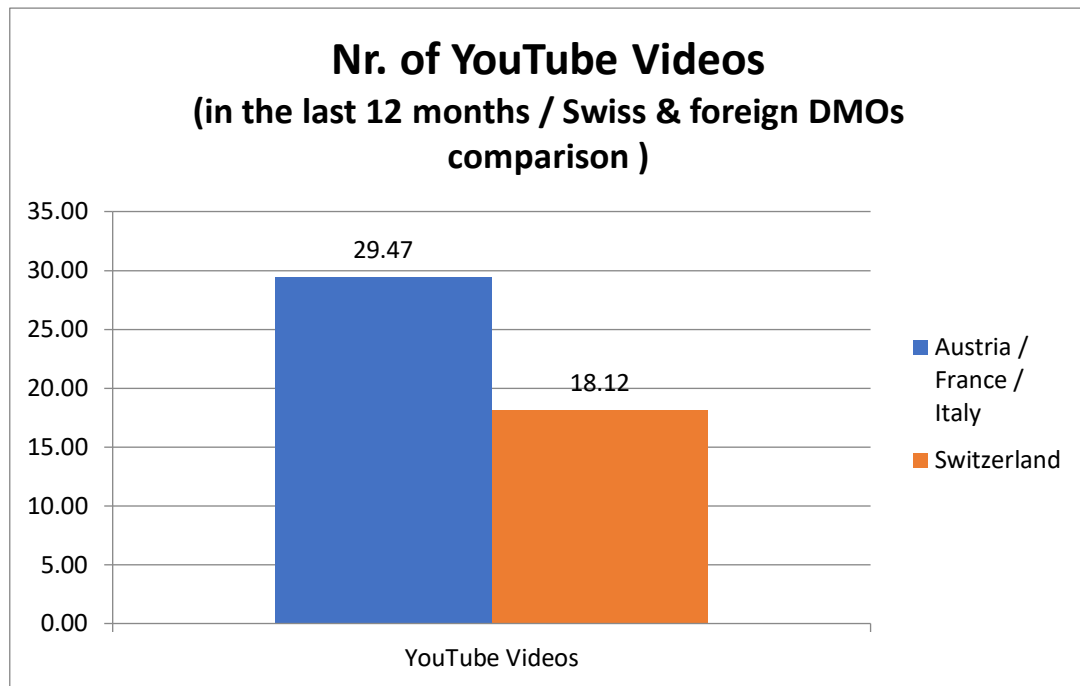
Figure 18: Graph, Nr. of YouTube Videos, DMO & Hotel comparison



Source 17: Own source

When one compares the number of YouTube video posts of DMOs to hotels, one can clearly identify that there is a big difference. Hotels post with 1.5 videos very rarely. DMOs on the other side post nearly two videos on average per month. This difference is statistically seen as very significant.

Figure 19: Graph, Nr. of YouTube Videos, Swiss & foreign DMOs comparison



Source 19: Own Source

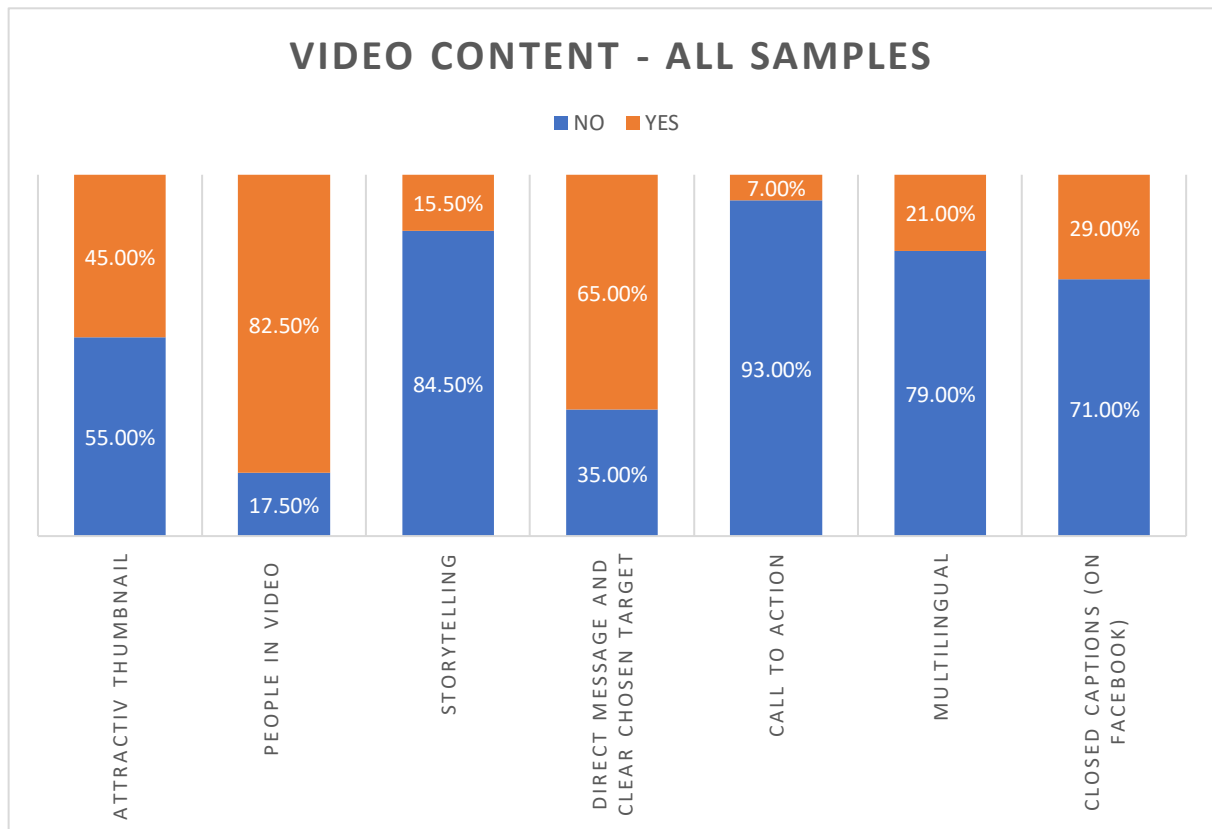
In addition, there is a significant difference of the number of YouTube videos posted by DMOs in Switzerland to the ones posted in Austria, France or Italy. Swiss DMOs post ten videos less per year on average.

To sum up, DMOs and hotels should try to foster User Generated Content more in the future. Furthermore, hotels should follow the example of DMOs and post more stories as well as vertical videos on IGTV. In addition, DMOs and hotels post much less video content on Instagram than on Facebook. There is a lot potential that needs to be filled. Foreign DMOs post the most videos on YouTube. Swiss DMOs are already posting a good number of videos per year on YouTube. However, compared to their competitors they could improve their presence on YouTube in the future furthermore. Hotels have on average less than 2 videos posted on YouTube. In that case a hotel should evaluate if it is even necessary to have a YouTube Channel.

### Category Video Content

The category Video Content has seven subordinate criteria. Those criteria closely focus on the content of a video itself; they focus on the attractiveness and usefulness of a video. These criteria have mostly been analysed by watching the last five YouTube videos posted by a DMO or hotel. The author switched to other social media channels such as Facebook and Instagram, in the case of a too small number of videos on YouTube or no existent YouTube channel altogether.

Figure 20: Graph, Video Content, all samples



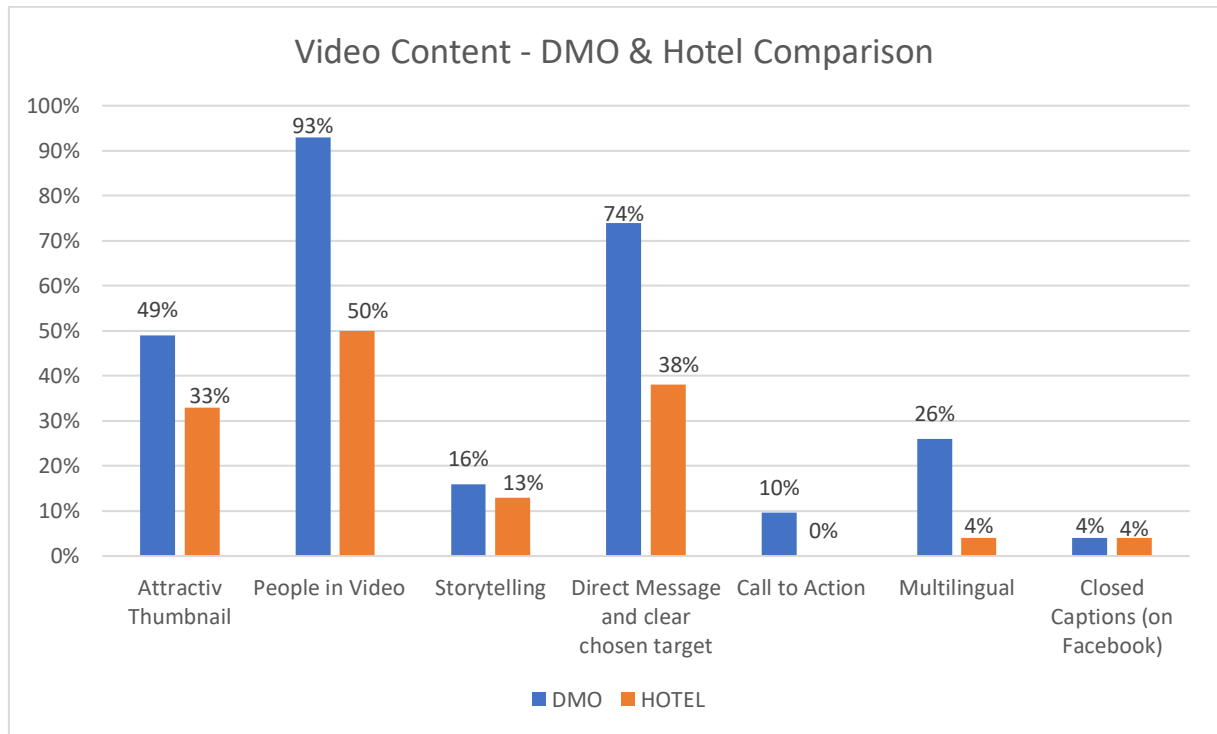
Source 20: Own source

Five of the seven criteria have less than 50 percent “yes” answers. This shows that overall there is scope for improvement. The criteria “Storytelling” and “Call to action” stand out the most. Only around 16 percent of all DMOs and hotels used a form of Storytelling in their videos. And only seven percent had an either audible or written Call to action in their video. In addition, 20 percent offered content in different languages. This criterion could be fulfilled with either subtitles or spoken words in different languages. One issue could be the amount of money translations cost and a lack of such funds. In addition, it has been tested if closed captions appear when a video is played on mute on Facebook. Only 29% of all DMOs and hotels used that function. 55% of all DMOS and hotels did not have attractive thumbnails.



This was mainly due to the reason, that the thumbnail was not chosen deliberately. The pictures were sometimes not sharp, or they did not give any idea what the video would be about. However, most DMOs and hotels chose a clear target for their video and used good visible people in their videos.

Figure 21: Graph, Video Content, DMO & Hotel comparison

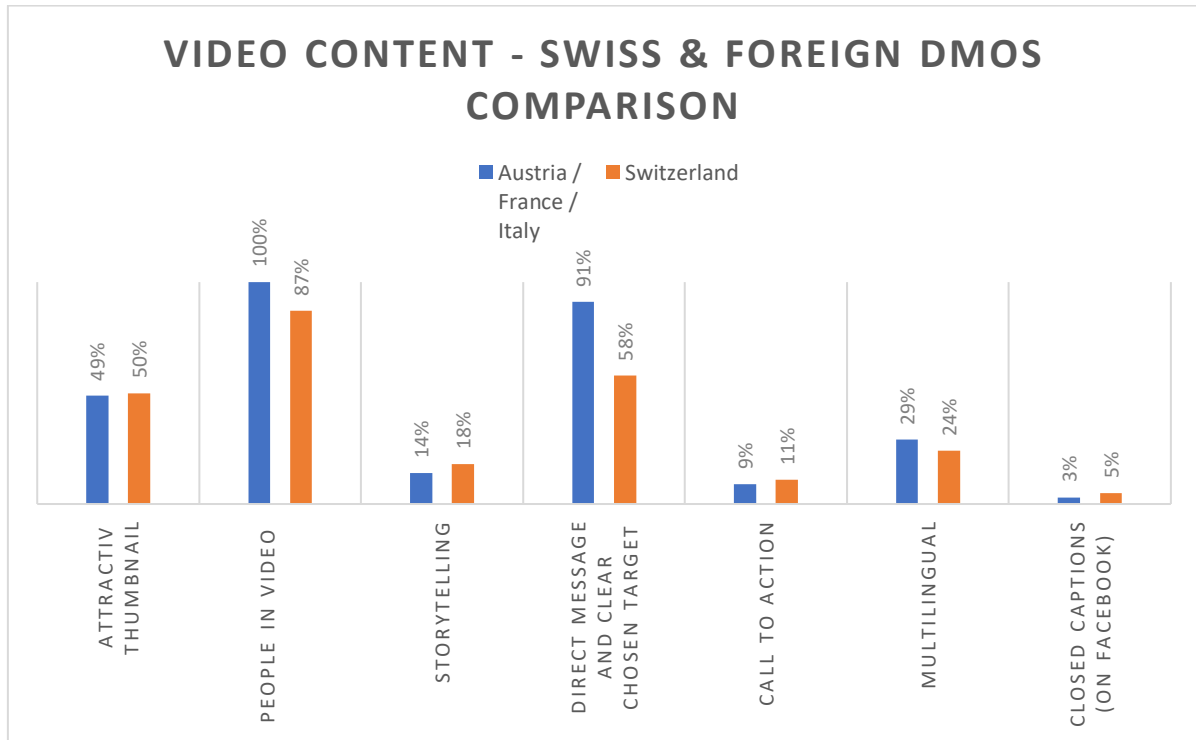


Source 21: Own source

DMOs clearly outperform hotels in the category Video Content. Only 50 percent of all hotels had people in their videos which is very low compared to the 93 percent of DMOs videos that included people. This difference is statistically very significant. A reason for that difference is that many hotels just showed videos of their facilities. DMOs tended to choose their target market in videos more clearly than hotels as well. This difference is also statistically very significant. This shows that many hotels want to speak to everyone without choosing one specific target market they want to attract. Another statistically significant criterion is “Multilingual”, one fourth of all DMOs offered videos in different languages which is a lot compared to the four percent of all hotels that have multilingual videos. There were overall not many Call to actions used. However, hotels did not use Call to action at all. Compared to the Call to actions used by ten percent of the DMOs in their videos, it is a

slightly significant difference. The difference between DMOs and hotels in the criteria “Thumbnail” and “Storytelling” is visible, however, not statistically relevant.

Figure 22: Graph, Video Content, Swiss and foreign DMOs comparison



Source 22: Own source

When DMOs in Switzerland are compared to the ones in Austria, France & Italy in the category Video Content one can spot that they are very similar. However, in the foreign countries they are very significantly better in the criterion “Direct Message and clear chosen target”. Over 90 percent of those DMOs had a clear message that served directly to the chosen target market. This is high compared to the just under 60 percent of Swiss DMOs that did the same. Another significant difference appeared in the criterion “People in Video”. That indicates that Swiss DMOs should film less nature and focus more on the humans that are doing an activity in this nature.

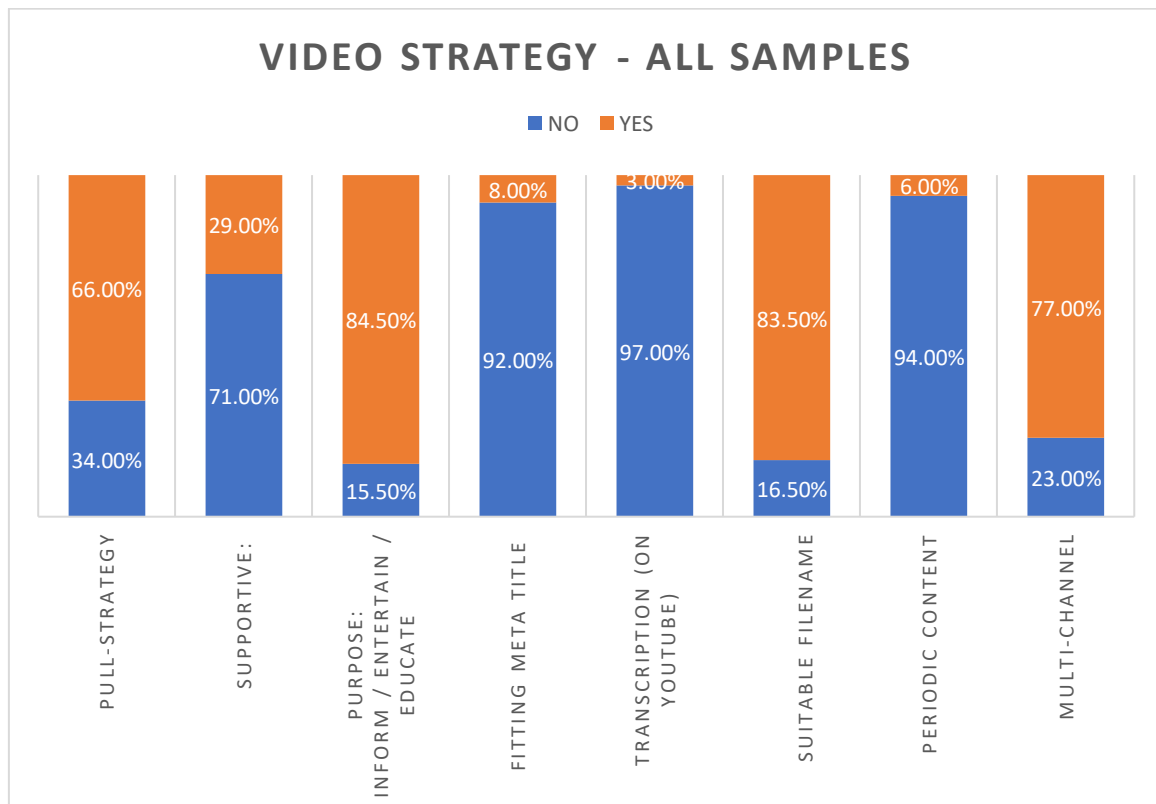
To sum up, DMOs and hotels have both room for improvement when it comes to the content of their videos. They could especially try to use a storytelling approach in the future as well as to include some form of a Call to action in their videos. However, when comparing DMOs and hotels one clearly identifies that the video content of hotels could be developed much more in the future. Hotels should especially try to include more people such as guests or employees in their videos. In addition, they should think of a specific target group before

making a video. The differences between Swiss DMOs and Austrian, Italian & French DMOs are very small. Nonetheless, there were two criteria where Swiss DMOs could still improve. They should attempt to shape their video more precisely towards a chosen target market. Furthermore, they should try to include more people in their videos as well.

### *Category Video Strategy*

The category Video Strategy has eight subordinate criteria. Those criteria closely focus on a chosen strategy a DMO or hotel has. One important part of a strategy is for example the purpose of a video. Every video should have an apparent purpose. That could be either to inform, to educate or just to be entertaining. The analysis of the video strategy took place either on Facebook, YouTube or on the website depending on the criteria. However, it was vital that every sample has been analysed in the exact same way. Therefore, transcription was for example only analysed on YouTube and the meta title was only analysed on the website.

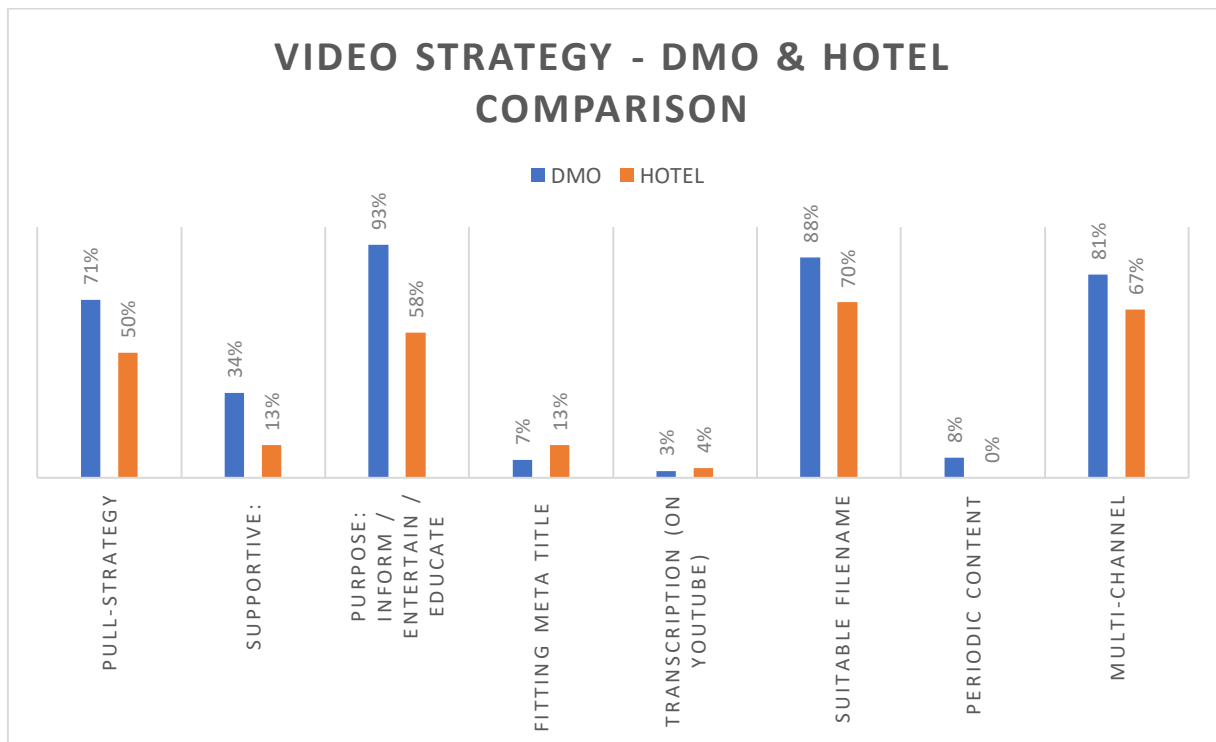
Figure 23: Graph, Video Strategy, all samples



Source 23: Own source

What is apparent in the category Video Strategy is that some criteria are fulfilled by nearly 100 percent and others are only fulfilled by a few samples. The first three criteria “Pull strategy”, “Supportive” and “Purpose” are very close to each other. However, when analysing the answers one can clearly see that they have a different outcome. Many videos had a non-advertising character as one can obtain in the criterion “Pull strategy”. Many videos also fulfilled the criterion “Purpose” because of their entertaining nature. Nonetheless, only a few samples offered videos that informed about valuable aspects of their product. This indicates that DMOs and hotels focus more on pulling new customers in through entertainment rather than through intriguing and new information about their products and services. In addition, over 90 percent of all samples neither use fitting meta titles for their videos on their website, transcribe their YouTube content nor provide content periodically. One reason for that could be a lack of time and/or money. Especially transcribing content and having enough content to post regularly costs a huge amount of money. On the other side, around 80 percent had a filename that suited the video content and posted their videos on different social media channels as well as on their website.

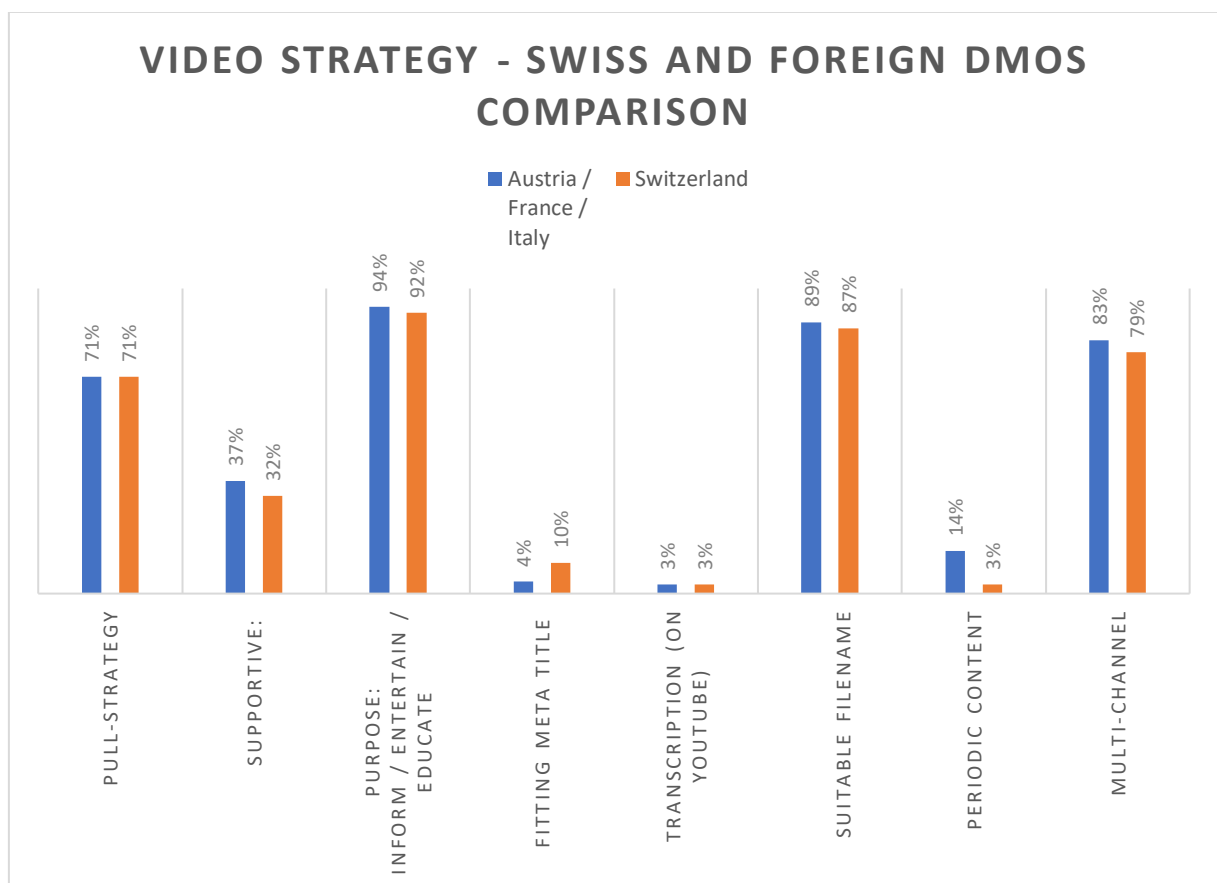
Figure 24: Graph, Video Strategy, DMO & Hotel comparison



Source 24: Own source

DMOs exceeded hotels in almost all criteria. However, not all of the differences are statistically relevant. There is a very significant difference of 35 percent between DMOs and hotels in the criterion “Purpose”. That indicates that some hotels were neither informing, entertaining nor educating with their videos. Which is why no clear purpose could be indicated in these videos. Another notable contrast can be noticed in the criterion “Supportive”. DMOs post significantly more videos that support the tourists to collect more information about a specific service or product. Furthermore, the criteria “Pull strategy”, “Suitable Filename” and “Periodic Content” have a slightly significant difference between DMOs and hotels as well. That shows that DMOs post less advertisements, have filenames that suit their videos better and 8 percent of them post video content more periodically than hotels. The contrast between DMOs and hotels in the criteria “Fitting Meta Title”, “Transcription” and “Multi-Channel” is not significant. That indicates that there is no statistically relevant difference between DMOs and hotels when it comes to those three criteria.

Figure 25: Graph, Video Strategy, Swiss and foreign DMOS comparison



Source 25: Own source

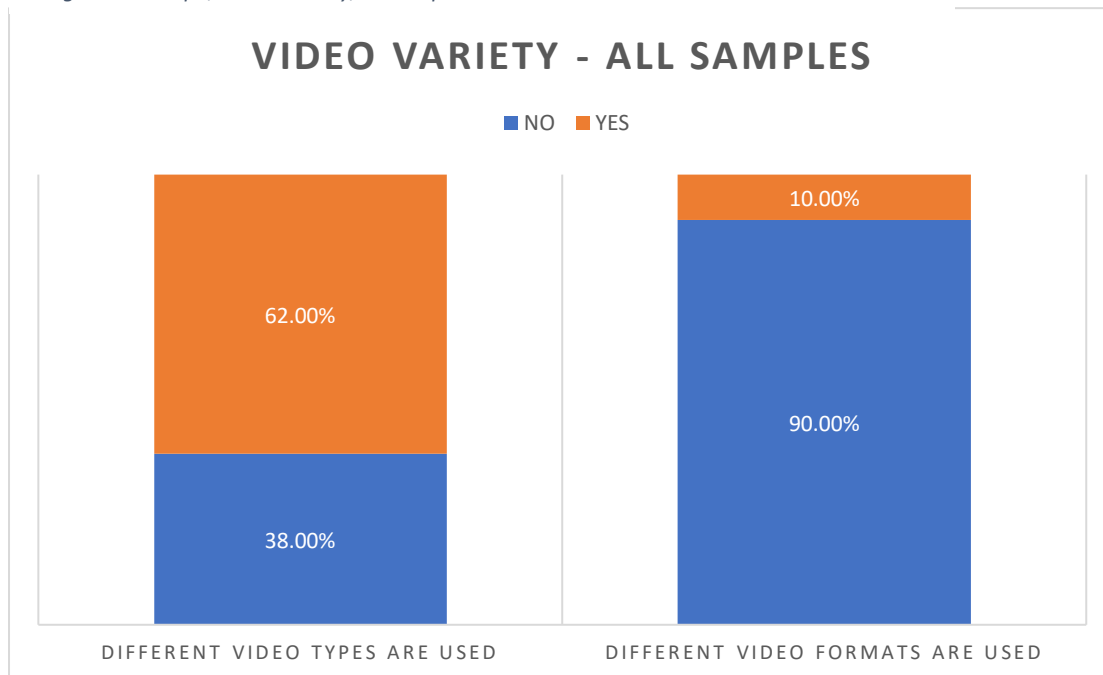
What stands out in the comparison of Swiss DMOs and the ones from Austria, France & Italy is that there is nearly no difference when it comes to the eight criteria of the category Video Strategy. There is maximum a six percent difference in all the criteria but one. The DMOS in Austria, France & Italy provide video content more periodically than the Swiss DMOS. This difference is slightly significant in this criterion. The contrast in all the other criteria is, however, not significant. This suggests that the location of a DMO has not a big influence on their strategy when it comes to videos.

To sum up, DMOs and hotels can both develop their video strategy more in the future. Both should offer more videos that give new information about a DMO or hotel itself or about their products or services. In addition, all samples should try to transcribe their videos on YouTube. Especially the Swiss tourism companies should try to do that in the future for their Swiss German videos. Since, their automatic closed captions on YouTube is just gibberish. French, Italian and German videos have an advantage, because YouTube recognizes the language more easily and is able to provide somewhat correct captions. All samples should include suitable meta titles on their website since it is an important aspect of the search engine optimisation. In addition, hotels should work on providing content that has a simple detectable purpose. Furthermore, hotels should try to offer more content that is supportive. A good example for videos that have an informative purpose as well as supportive nature is the series by the Hotel Chesa Rosatsch. The series are called “Sagenhafte Typen” which is German for fabulous types. In this image campaign, they showed guests what it takes to provide the service as they do by showing the work of their producers. The difference between Swiss DMOs and foreign ones was too small to be significant which shows that all DMOs have a similar level when it comes to video strategy.

### *Category Video Variety*

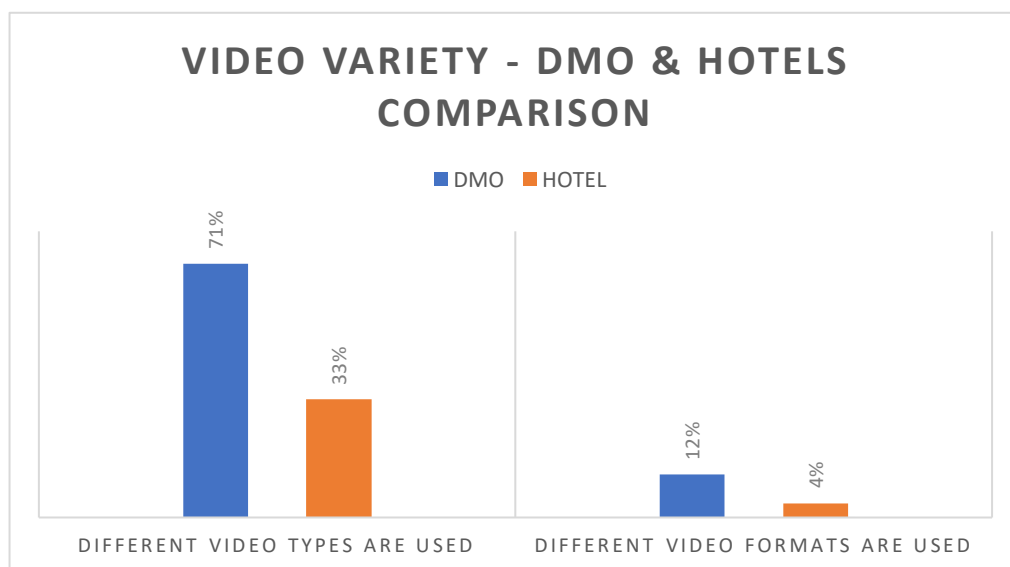
The category Video Variety has two subordinate criteria. Those criteria closely analyse if a DMO or hotel provides different types and formats of videos. The criterion “Different types of videos” is more about the diversity of the video content and the criterion “Different formats of video” is about alternative video formats that were used such as a 360-degree video or Virtual Reality (VR). These criteria have mostly been analysed by looking at the video content provided on Facebook, Instagram or YouTube.

Figure 27: Graph, Video Variety, all samples



Source 27: Own Source

Figure 26: Graph, Video Variety, DMO &amp; Hotels comparison

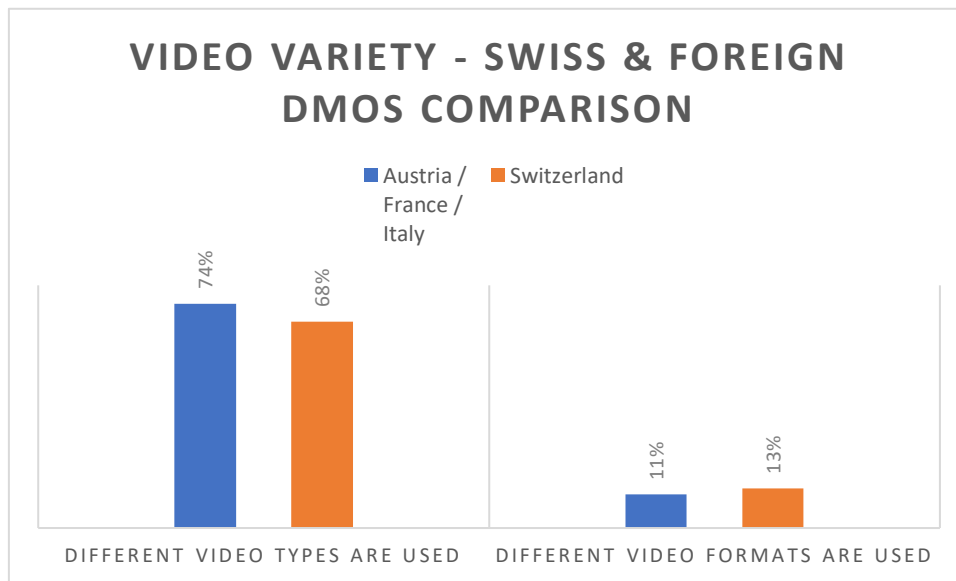


Source 26: Own source

62% of all samples offered different types of videos to their viewers. That means that they offered a variety of videos such as tutorials, informative branded content or interviews. When looking on the criterion “Different Video Formats are used” one can clearly identify that only a small number of all samples fulfilled that criteria. Generally, if it was fulfilled, it was usually due to the reason that they had a 360-degree video on either their website or on one of their social media channels.

The difference between DMOs and hotels when it comes to different video types is very apparent. 71 percent of all DMOs use different video types, which is nearly 40 percent more than the usage of hotels. This is statistically very significant and indicates that hotels have a lot of potential to improve and to show different aspects of their business with more diverse videos in their future. The difference in the criterion is not significant. That shows that the output of different video formats does not depend on the sample being a DMO or hotel.

Figure 28: Graph, Video Variety - Swiss & Foreign DMOs comparison



Source 28: Own source

In this graph, it is very obvious that both the Swiss DMOs and the ones in Austria, France & Italy have practically the same usage of different video types as well as different video formats. Therefore, this slight difference is not statistically significant. This suggests that the output of different video formats or different video types does not depend on the sample being Swiss or foreign.

To sum up, most samples provided different types of video content. However only a few provided videos in a different format. Hotels lack compared to DMOs in both criteria. They should especially try to offer more diverse video content in the future. The difference between Swiss DMOs and foreign ones was very small. That shows that all DMOs have a similar level when it comes to the variety of video types and formats used.



## 4.2. Expert Interviews- Statements

The three interviews have been very insightful for this analysis. All three interviewees have been from a different field in tourism. Madeleine Savioz, the Head of Communication at Valais/Wallis Promotion, could give the author more information about video marketing of a DMO. Guli Brentel was able to portray the challenges hotels have when it comes to video marketing. He is an employee of Gastgeber 3.0 AG and responsible for the marketing division. In addition, he has lot experience in producing videos as well. He talked mostly about the work that they do as managers of the hotel Chesa Rosatsch. Last but not least, Axel Breuer was interviewed, co-owner of Corporate Media Academy. Axel Breuer has been working in the field video production for more than 20 years. He has not only worked for companies such as BMW, SAP or Qatar Airways he is also teaching communication and advertising with video at various universities. He was able to give a lot of background information of the production of videos.

### 4.2.1. The importance of video content

#### **Madeleine Savioz (Appendix I):**

According to Madeleine Savioz, providing more Video content is important due to the reason that humans do not like to read anymore. They like to consume content as fast as possible and videos are the ideal medium to do that. Furthermore, one can convey emotions much better with a video than a picture could. She explains that one big problem is the high production costs, which is very restrictive. In addition, it also takes a lot of time to produce a decent video. One should not forget that a good video that has potential to be viral is a very big project. This has an influence on the number of videos that are published. However, if Valais/Wallis Promotion produces something, they make sure to spread it on all channels. Madeleine Savioz accentuates that the most important aspect of video marketing is bringing the video to the people. This is not only a challenge but costs a lot as well. She continues that if a video remains passive on one's website it will not reach many people organically. One has to spread and boost it on social media in order to generate more views.

**Guli Brentel (Appendix II):**

***“Marketing changes over time. In the past, you were far ahead when you had a website, later you added photos and then the next logical step is the medium video. “– Guli Brentel***

The medium video has the advantage that one can transport emotions with it. In addition, one can display a lot of information and impressions in a short amount of time. Guli Brentel mentions that a video is an “Emotionsträger”. This German word implies that a video is able to put a viewer in a real emotion and entertain them at the same time. However, one needs good moving pictures and suitable music to do that. In addition, people tend to prefer watching a short video than reading a long text. To show beautiful nature or possible activities to do in a specific area is important in the hospitality and tourism industry. Videos are able to portray that in the best possible way. What should never be forgotten is the quality of a video. A video is only able to convey a good image and can only work as a marketing tool if the quality is right.

**Axel Breuer (Appendix III):**

With the medium video one can strongly target the emotion. There is a true difference when it comes to the experience of the viewer. Watching a video is an obvious added value, especially for people who are interested in a tourism destination.

**“The person who sees a video has really understood; what does it look like there? What can you experience there? Is it loud or quiet? So it’s mainly an added value that is created communicatively. “- Axel Breuer**

4.2.2. Videos on the Website

**Madeleine Savioz:**

Valais/Wallis Promotion do not have a multimedia corner on their website. Their videos are usually integrated in the different headers as well as sometimes on the homepage as well. If the video is not in a header it should be easy to find according to the topic. Madeleine Savioz points out that video content is rather reactive and cannot be pushed

much more. This is why they rather use their videos integrated into the other content instead of having it separate in a multimedia corner.

**Guli Brentel:**

***“When I go to a website and I don’t find any videos at all, I am a little disappointed. A video on a website has a good influence on the image. “- Guli Brentel***

However, Guli Brentel indicates that they themselves still need to do a lot of work in providing more video content on the website. They have some videos; however, they tend to provide mostly links to the various social media accounts.

**Axel Breuer:**

If one has videos on a website it is vital how those videos are used. One has to push them through giving additional information and by tagging. Furthermore, it is important to update those videos. Videos that are updated frequently help to increase one’s rankings on Google and other search engines. This shows why one should always update one’s content. In addition, one has to keep in mind to keep a video short. Something between thirty and ninety seconds would be ideal.

4.2.3. Multilingual content

**Madeleine Savioz:**

To be multilingual is vital for Valais/Wallis Promotion. Often, they use subtitles in French, German and English. However, they try to have the least number of voice-overs or dialog possible. Before producing a video, they have to decide which language they want to use. French subtitles work quite well, according to the experience of Madeleine Savioz. Many viewers watch videos anyway on mute, she says that people are used to read the subtitles. For Valais/Wallis Promotion the focus market number one is the German market. The second priority is the French market and last but not least there is the English-speaking market as a third priority. Certain videos are only shown in two languages due to the reason that they are produced for the Swiss market. She points out that providing subtitles is a big cost-factor as well which makes it an additional challenge.

**Guli Brentel:**

Offering videos in different languages depends on the target group one wants to attract. Switzerland has always been the main priority for the Chesa Rosatsch, adds Guli Brentel. However, they just started a corporation and plan to advertise in China and the United States very soon. He mentions that the importance of social media is much greater in these countries compared to Switzerland. If a hotel wants to attract guest from abroad it is highly important to offer multilingual content or subtitles. In addition, China is a bit special due to the fact that they do not have Facebook. Therefore, it is always a good idea to ask for help when help is needed.

**Axel Breuer:**

To offer content in multiple languages is extremely important. However, it is always crucial to orientate everything towards one's target group. However, generally it is better to produce videos that do not have any spoken language within. This helps to easily adapt them to different speaking target groups by accompanying them with suitable texts and possible subtitles. YouTube has the function to include automatic subtitles. However, Swiss German is not recognized by YouTube. This is another reason why one should avoid having any spoken word in a video. It makes it much easier to internationalize them in that way anyway.

#### 4.2.4. User Generated Content

**Madeleine Savioz:**

Valais/Wallis Promotion uses suitable hashtags such as #meinsommerimwallis for each season. Users can participate in a contest by using that hashtag. This is their way to foster User Generated Content. They decided to focus only on photos and not on videos. The reason for that is that a high quality is very vital to Valais/Wallis Promotion. All videos should match the current communication mood. This is why they produce all videos themselves or close partners. However, they share stories of users on Instagram which is a form of vertical video as well.

**Guli Brentel:**

User Generated Content is important nowadays. The Chesa Rosatsch mainly shares UGC on Instagram. It is often content that was developed with influencers. However, they like to repost good content from “ordinary” users as well. One has to know that this is a lot of constant work. Good answers can never be planned because they depend on the situation. In addition, Guli Brentel asks partners to share new posts as well and vice versa. This is an important part of a good collaboration. Videos are a good way to foster interaction. After having posted a video there are usually numerous reactions of users, continues Guli Brentel. Those reactions are a first contact and can be expanded afterwards.

**Axel Breuer:**

Users can be motivated through special offers. Meaning, a user must be rewarded if he provides a good video. Breuer explains that one good example for that exchange is the “barter week”. There, B&B’s have the possibility to invite people that have special skills such as making great videos in exchange for a stay in the accommodation for free. Important is that there is an incentive for users.

#### 4.2.5. Call to action

**Madeleine Savioz:**

Call to action is not an easy definable topic for Madeleine Savioz. She mentions that she does not believe that a video can lead to a purchase. She says that Valais/Wallis Promotion uses videos for a different reason. They want to awake a certain desire for the Valais or for a specific activity. She continues that videos are more suitable to touch emotions of people as well as to make them aware of things and not to make them complete a specific action. For this reason, they only include the logo and the website at the end of a video.

**Guli Brentel:**

A Call to action depends on the situation and on the goal, one has with the video. If one wants to sell a specific product, a CTA is vital. On social media one can put product links over a video which is interesting if one wants to generate followers or sell a product.

***“If you want to interact you have to tell it in the video and if you want to sell something you have to give the possibility to book the offer directly. “- Guli Brentel***

**Axel Breuer:**

Call-to Actions are important and offer many different possibilities. One can, for example, add special offers to videos that are related with the video. The first importance of a CTA is that they direct viewers towards booking. But one can motivate them to like or just react to the shown content as well. However, it is important to reward viewers that act upon a CTA. In addition, it is vital to not only focus on viewers under 25. They are not the paying target group. It is often the golden agers that are informing themselves online as well and that have the means to afford specific offers.

4.2.6. Challenges

**Madeleine Savioz:**

The biggest challenges in video marketing are the cost of production and the cost of dispersion. Not only the production needs a big budget, but one has to have enough budget to bring the videos to the people. The content needs to be pushed on social media networks. Another challenge is to know the goal of a video. When the goal is defined one has to think of what people like to see. She continues that one has to think about how much budget should be sacrificed for a video. And one has to know that the higher one's goal is the more it will cost. She explains that the biggest disappointment is when good videos do not even have more views than a few thousand.

***“Many videos are simply never seen, sometimes even good ones. It is difficult to stand out in a world where every minute or second an incredible amount of video content is uploaded, and that makes one modest. “- Madeleine Savioz***

***“When you say, you need another video for something you also have to be aware that it is a fight to bring the video to the people” Madeleine Savioz***

**Guli Brentel:**

Hotels' biggest challenge in video marketing is the cost. Guli Brentel produces the videos for the Chesa Rosatsch in-house, since he has a lot of experience in the production and

direction of videos. Therefore, he can save a lot of money. For most hotels, it is simply too expensive to produce high quality videos, because they do not have any competence in the field. Thus, it is almost impossible for a stand-alone hotel to offer state-of-the-art videos due to the high costs.

Another challenge is the knowhow. One needs to have a good idea and one needs to know how to implement this idea. The lack of experience in film production is a big challenge for hotels. Technically one could produce a video with a mobile phone and a computer. However, it is always important to consider if a video is good enough to share it online. If a video is blurred it is not goal-oriented and rather embarrassing for a company.

***“It is better not to have a video than a bad video. “- Guli Brentel***

**Axel Breuer:**

One big challenge is to receive any attention at all. It is challenging to reach the target market with a good design of a video and its distribution altogether. Currently, there is too much content available. Therefore, it is important to think of something that really hooks the viewer. For that reason, it is always vital to spend some time on the development of great ideas and think on the production afterwards.

In addition, the knowledge of video marketing in the tourism industry is still very small, explains Axel Breuer. This is due to the fact that most people have a background in communication or marketing and the medium video is still rather neglected in those courses of studies.

4.2.7. Collaboration

**Madeleine Savioz:**

When Valais/Wallis Promotion is producing a video they usually work together with a destination and/or partner. Destinations help them mainly with the logistics, they for example provide the ski tickets for people involved in a video shoot. However, this collaboration does not go much further. The reason for that is the different goals they have. Valais/Wallis Promotion has always the same goal, they want to produce content that can stand for the Valais in general. It is never about showing a destination with all their sights

they have to offer. The less one can recognize which destination it is the better. Because of this conflict of interest, they try to keep the cooperation to a minimum.

***“A close collaboration between a hotel and a tourism organization would be a good possibility to split the costs and produce a video together. “- Guli Brentel***

#### 4.2.8. Experience with Clients

Guli Brentel's experience with clients is the following: Most clients just think that they need a video without first defining their goal. However, to be certain about the goal is very important. Because, only if one knows the goal one can think about how it could be reached. Sometimes, a video is not the single right medium to reach a goal. It is only one possible way.

***“To shoot a video just because you need a video is not good, you need a plan first. “- Guli Brentel***

Another aspect of video marketing is the distribution. This is something many of Brentel's clients forget. Most of his clients do not think about what is happening after the video has been produced.

#### 4.2.9. Marketing Strategy, Production & Distribution

##### **Madeleine Savioz:**

Before producing videos, one has to have a good marketing strategy. The strategy is the responsibility of the management and the directors in the case of Valais/Wallis Promotion. They write a new strategic marketing plan every four years. They do that partly because they have a framework agreement with the canton. In addition, they have a yearly operations plan for themselves. Madeleine Savioz explains that it is quite different for smaller destinations. Often times their budget is too small and the expectations of partners and the board are too high. Valais/Wallis Promotion can decide rather independently how they want to do marketing. However, the coarser aspects are determined with the canton as a part of a performance mandate.

Even though, Valais/Wallis promotion has a higher budget than smaller destinations they still cannot afford to produce channel specific. That means they post the same video content



throughout the different Social Media Networks. Additionally, they make live videos on Facebook and Instagram as well.

There is always a focus on a specific topic when Valais/Wallis Promotion produces a video. Therefore, the target group is somewhat defined depending on the activity. They also try to be as credible as possible with the models and possible gadgets used. However, the communication is usually rather broad since they want to attract tourists in different age groups.

### **Guli Brentel:**

He explains that one issue about videos on social media is how people work with the video itself. Many believe that one just needs to produce an expensive video and post it on Facebook. However, one has to know that this is not the whole job. It is about using these videos in the best possible way. One needs to know for whom they made the video and who, therefore, should watch it. When the target is known one can determine which channel should be used. Guli Brentel likes to give their example of an image campaign. Gastgeber 3.0 is currently producing an image campaign for the hotel Chesa Rosatsch, the hotel that they are managing as well. It is a series called “Sagenhafte Typen” (fabulous types), and the goal is to bring guests and producers closer together by showing the productions of certain aspects of the business. They decided to run this campaign on Facebook. They wanted to push it on social media, since it is the place where they can have the direct contact with customers. The series will be posted on their website as well once it is complete. Guli Brentel continues, that it always depends on the content of the video that defines which channel is the best one to use.

### **Axel Breuer:**

When thinking about producing a video one should always consider working with videographers that are available locally. It is usually not worth it to work with big production companies, especially not for smaller companies in tourism. Before one goes to such a videographer one has to make a thorough plan. Breuer indicates that it is more affordable planning to make several videos instead of just one.

**“That means it is important to shoot as many videos as possible with, if possible, only one single person in a small company, preferably local, and to think sustainably. “ – Axel Breuer**

The choice of a specific social media channel strongly depends on the target market and the age group one wants to attract. However, YouTube is a channel that is highly important nowadays. The reason for that is, its belonging to Google. One finds the use of YouTube very easy and it has a steady nature as well. Yet, social media in general tends not to be a very steady field. One does not know which Social Media Channel will be the most popular in the future. YouTube is, therefore, the safe answer.

When it comes to the distribution it is preferable to engage a Social Media Agency. People often do not realize that the production of a video is a completely different task compared to its distribution.

#### 4.2.10. Content Marketing vs. Traditional Marketing

##### **Madeleine Savioz:**

**“Content Marketing is important, but Content Marketing is not producing content. “- Madeleine Savioz**

Madeleine Savioz is convinced Content Marketing is a current trend. She explains that one has to have the right partners to spread the content and the cost of it. She says one of the difficulties is how many people can be reached with digital media. Numerous different channels need to be activated together. However, it is difficult to have a similar reach as a TV campaign.

***“If you do a TV campaign, you have 70-80 percent of the population who still watches a TV. You achieve that with a campaign and with a cost per thousand of viewers that is relatively low. If you want to reach the same audience with YouTube, you can’t do that.”- Madeleine Savioz***

Madeleine Savioz points out that the future of marketing will likely have a multi-channel focus. However, TV campaigns work still quite well for Valais/Wallis Promotion. They notice their effect on the brand which seems to grow continuously after having promoted the

Valais on TV. The reach is very different on other channels, only around 20 to 25 percent of respondents say that they have seen the video of Valais/Wallis Promotion. According to Madeleine Savioz, it is very difficult today to be present everywhere. Ten years ago, it was much easier because there were not as many possibilities as there are today. Today, everyone needs to market everywhere. However, it is not easy to leave a lasting impression on someone who is exposed to a huge amount of content every day. There is the question of how good the quality of that contact is. Therefore, it is very vital that the first few seconds of a video stand out in order to attract the attention of a viewer. In addition, videos should not be longer than 40 to 60 seconds. Madeleine Savioz explains that it is said that the effect of advertising comes only after the third contact with an advertising message.

***“Who watches the same video three times? Producing content with an effect is complicated.” - Madeleine Savioz***

#### **Guli Brentel:**

Guli Brentel is convinced that Content Marketing appeals to customers very differently. It is important to stand out. Especially for hotels, having a restaurant and a room to offer is not enough. Because every hotel offers that. However, Content Marketing is not an easy thing to do. One needs a good idea and a lot of time and effort to prepare and shoot the video. But if it is done right it can be a competitive advantage.

What is important to know is that one wants to avoid coverage loss at all times. With TV commercials one has a comparably bigger coverage loss. No one is addressed directly, and everyone could be watching a video commercial on TV. The advantage of Facebook is that one can track very closely who is watching the videos. The possibilities social media brings are simply very different. The best approach is to use as many channels as possible. That means, when a video is produced, it should be uploaded on the website, included in a newsletter shared on Social Media. In addition, Guli Brentel usually decides on the distribution channel depending on the video content and the target group. He explains that it is important to use the free reach available in a company as well. If a new video is posted on Facebook, everyone in a company should share it.

Gastgeber 3.0 uses YouTube a bit differently, even though it is a social media channel as well. They use YouTube as a server, a place where all their videos are uploaded. However, they do not push their YouTube channel. Yet, it is important to use YouTube. The reason for that is that videos appear in a Google search as well. Nonetheless, Facebook is easier to use as a marketing tool. Especially when it comes to linking people or working with influencers, everything is easier on Facebook compared to YouTube.

**Axel Breuer:**

Breuer believes that classic media should only be used for customers that a company already has. If it is about acquiring new customers, videos are the way to go. He explains that people should stop producing brochures and flyers since they will only be thrown away.

Another channel that he gives a big importance to is the cinema. He believes it makes sense to advertise a specific ski area in a cinema. They are not expensive and has the advantage that the experience is in the foreground and they usually stay very well in people's minds.

What he really accentuates that one should stop using the TV for any form of advertisement completely.

**“I would say, with a big exclamation mark, no TV commercials no more! It's not clear to me at all what it's good for. “– Axel Breuer**

4.2.11. Marketing-Trends, Best & Future Practices

**Madeleine Savioz:**

Since online marketing is an everchanging field one needs to keep updated continuously. For Valais/Wallis Promotion it is important to look at other players in the market. This could be either big players in Switzerland such as Switzerland Tourism (Schweiz Tourismus) or players outside of Switzerland. New Zealand, Australia and the Nordic countries have usually very interesting campaigns. In addition, they want to know what the neighbouring countries are doing and what companies in other industries focus on. Madeleine Savioz calls attention to the fact that the marketing in the tourism industry is not the most creative. The tourism industry has not the same financial resources the car and luxury industry have. Savioz also

likes to inform herself through professional articles from magazines such as “die Werbewoche” or “Marketing Kommunikation”. Their creative agency, Contexta, helps Valais/Wallis Promotion to recognize marketing trends as well.

### **Guli Brentel:**

There are two companies Guli Brentel comes to mind when he thinks of a tourism company that is good in video marketing. The first one is Laax/Galaaxy. They know how to use social media and have their own app. Another example is the Cervo Zermatt. They built a big online community which is something the hotel Chesa Rosatsch wants in the future as well.

Guli Brentel believes that virtual or augmented reality will be used more in the future. In addition, he thinks that interactive videos will play a bigger role in the future as well. He points out that interactivity is important, both in the online and offline world. Guests want to be entertained and have moments during their experience that are “instagramable”.

### **Axel Breuer:**

A good video is always one that attracts attention. According to Axel Breuer, a good example for that is the “Pokémon Go video” of Basel tourism.

When it comes to different video formats such as 360° videos or virtual reality, he explains that they are a pure waste of money. They are not easy to use and less viewed compared to generic videos. The audience of such video formats is simply too small to be attractive.

## **4.3. Conclusion of the Analysis**

The author could better identify the different ways to use videos in a marketing strategy by analysing published articles concerning video marketing. In addition, current trends in hospitality and tourism marketing have been analysed. Furthermore, it was closely looked at the meaning of Content Marketing and User Generated Content in relation to the medium video. Moreover, the current state of marketing in the alpine region was illustrated as well. This bachelor thesis has dealt extensively with the current state of video marketing of different players in the tourism industry in the alpine region. Objectively measurable criteria

have been chosen with the help of scientific sources, in order to benchmark the different players within the industry. The focus was on the DMOs and hotels of Switzerland. They have been compared with chosen ones in France, Austria and Italy by evaluating them all under the same criteria.

The benchmark analysis showed, that all DMOs and hotels have in all categories the possibility to improve. However, there were some criteria, where they performed very well. Most videos were usually responsive on a website as well as shareable. Most samples provided vertical videos on their social media channels. When it comes to the video content, it stood out that most of the videos had people in it and gave a direct message to the target market. In addition, most had a clear pull strategy and had the purpose of either inform, entertain or educate its viewers. Furthermore, videos were usually shared on multiple channels and had a filename that was suitable. Moreover, most samples used different types of videos and showed therefore some variety in their content.

However, there were a few criteria that stood out due to their room for improvement. Currently, there is a lack of videos on the starting page of websites. Most websites did not offer a multimedia feature on their website. There is still not enough encouragement of users in the industry when it comes to User Generated Content. Most samples analysed do not share enough videos on social media. Especially on Instagram, where only a few videos have been posted. In addition, hotels tend to have overall much less video content on their social media network. Even though Storytelling has been a trend for a few years there are still only a few that actually use it in their videos. Call to actions are rarely done in the tourism industry as well, most videos only include the logo and the website at the end of a video. Even though, the industry is very international there is still a lack of content that is provided in multiple languages. Furthermore, DMOs and hotels should transcribe their videos more in the future. So far only a few offer transcriptions on YouTube or videos with closed captions on Facebook. In addition, there is a big potential to improve the meta titles of videos on the website, this would certainly help the rankings of a website on Google.

DMOs have overall a better performance than hotels in all categories. What stood out is that hotels have on average far less videos on social media. DMOs have especially more content on YouTube. Another category that has to be mentioned is “Video Content”. Hotels

came of badly compared to the DMOs. They show far less people in videos, do generally not have an attractive thumbnail and do not have a direct message to their target market. Austrian, French & Italian DMOs and Swiss DMOs have a very similar approach to video marketing. However, if one of the two sample categories were slightly better it was usually the category of the foreign DMOs. What was prominent is that the Austrian, French and Italian DMOs had generally a bit more video content available on Social Media. Their message is a bit more direct and they show more people in their videos. This shows that it could be valuable for Swiss hotels and DMOs to orientate in some aspects of video marketing towards their competitors in Austria, France and Italy. However, it also shows that Swiss alpine DMOs are already performing very well compared to their neighbouring alpine competitors.

In addition, three experts in either the hospitality industry, the tourism industry or the production side of videos were interviewed, in order to receive direct industry insights. All three experts agreed that video is a highly important medium in today's tourism industry. Especially due to its nature of conveying emotions very easily. In addition, they share the opinion that video content should be included on the website. In addition, they all highlight the importance of multilingualism. However, they also point out it is important to always think of the target that should be reached first. Two out of three experts explain that having the least amount of spoken word is ideal. Furthermore, they all agree that UGC is important nowadays. However, Axel Breuer highlights that UGS can only happen if there is a reward in sight. The CTA divides the three experts. Guli Brentel and Axel Breuer both believe that they are very important, especially when it comes to selling a product. Madeleine Savioz, on the other side, does not think that a video can lead to a purchase. When the experts talk about challenges in video marketing, they mention the problem of high cost, knowhow and to attract attention in a world with too many videos published every day. Furthermore, they explain that it is vital to have a clear plan outlined. This plan should include, the goal, the target market, the production and the distribution. All experts are convinced that Content Marketing is a trend now and, in the future, as well. When talking about the trend now, all of the three experts remember the more traditional ways of video marketing – TV commercials. They do not all share the same opinion when it comes to that topic. Guli Brentel and Axel Breuer are convinced that the time of TV commercials is over and that it is

important to avoid it due to the reason that one has the biggest coverage loss with that form of marketing. On the other hand, Madeleine Savioz is convinced that TV commercials still work quite well for Valais/Wallis Promotion. She mentions that the brand is growing continuously after having promoted the Valais on TV. Guli Brentel and Axel Breuer have different opinions, concerning the use of video formats such as 360° videos or AR/VR in the future. On one side, Guli Brentel believes that they will play a bigger role in the future. On the other side, Axel Breuer thinks that the audience for such formats is too small and will not play a big role in the future due to that reason.

The answers of the benchmarking analysis and the interviews showed that video marketing is now and, in the future, a very important part of marketing for players in the tourism industry. This bachelor thesis has made a first research contribution to the current state of video marketing from different players in the tourism industry. There was a focus on the Swiss alpine stakeholders in Switzerland and how they compare to their competitors in France, Austria and Italy. Further research could deal with video marketing of tourism players in the whole country of Switzerland. In addition, there is also a potential to include more French, Austrian and Italian DMOs and more hotels in future research.



## 5. Discussion

The results from the benchmarking analyses and the findings gained from the conversations with the experts, show that video marketing is vital in today's tourism and hospitality industry.

Sojern (2019) and the experts share the same opinion when it comes to using different marketing channels. They all highlight that going for a multi-channel strategy is the key for a successful marketing strategy. 77 % of the DMOs and hotels seem to share that opinion since they posted their videos usually on different channels such as on the website or on the different social media channels.

Furthermore, Weinstein (2019) indicates, that a video can grab the attention of people and encourage them to buy a certain product. Two of the experts share this opinion. However, Savioz (Appendix I) does not believe that a video can motivate viewers to buy a specific product.

In addition, Sojern (2019) points out that videos help to inspire travellers and that they can create excitement. The experts agree with that opinion, they all mention that the medium video is special because it can convey emotion to its viewers. Grüter (2013) mentions that as well, he accentuates that videos help convey a certain feeling.

Grüter (2013) states that videos can minimize the uncertainty of a tourist. Breuer (Appendix III) has the same view, he explains that a video can answer all the questions a viewer might have. If it is about the sounds of a specific destination, or about how the destination looks, or what could be experienced there.

All experts believe that having video content on a website is important. Brentel (Appendix II) mentions that if he sees a website with no video content, he feels discontent. Breuer (Appendix III) explains that keeping the video content up to date is also highly important for the Google rankings. Therefore, they have the same views as Travel Trade Gazette (2017). They point out that video content on websites is very valuable and can increase the conversion and can attract more people to a website of a business. They point out that videos on a landing page have the most effect on the conversion. When looking at the DMOs and hotels analysed one can see that around 60 percent deem video content on a website as

necessary. However, only around 30 percent had video content on the homepage. That implies that companies in the tourism and hospitality industry do not understand or believe yet that video content on the homepage is highly important.

Cheng (2019) explains that video marketing does not have to be expensive and that it could be done with a smartphone. In addition, a video used on social media does not have to be too polished. Brentel (Appendix II) agrees with parts of that opinion. He says that it is technically possible to shoot a video with a phone and a computer. However, he says it is also important to know that having a video with a low quality is not ideal.

Cheng (2019) points out that it is important to spread the message quickly in a video. Savioz (Appendix I) shares that opinion, she indicates that most people just watch the first few seconds of a video. Which is why the first few seconds are the most important ones. One has to grab the attention of viewer quickly.

Costa-Sánchez (2017) states that it is highly important to have people in videos that show a certain emotion. Most DMOs and hotels seem to agree with that statement. Around 80 percent of all samples reviewed showed people close up in their videos.

65 percent of all samples and 74 percent of all DMOs had a very direct message that was formed for a specific target market. This shows that having a direct message is important for their video content. The samples, therefore, seem to agree with the declaration of Travel Trade Gazette (2017). They explain that a video should be shaped for a specific audience and the message of that video should speak directly to that chosen target. The experts agree with that statement. They all mentioned how important it is to target a video, especially when one wants to produce a video in multiple languages.

Travel Trade Gazette (2017) mentions the importance of an either written or spoken CTA. Only seven percent of all samples analysed had Call to action in their videos. This low percentage suggests that they do not deem CTA as that important for a sound video marketing strategy. Not all experts seem to agree fully to that statement either. However, Guli Brentel and Axel Breuer agree with it and mention that it is especially vital to use CTA to push sales. Madeleine Savioz does not believe that CTAs can lead to a sale. For her, videos

are a medium to make people aware of things and to make them emotional and not to expect an action after having watched it.

Furthermore, Costa-Sánchez expresses that a good strategy is vital when planning a video. They should either inform, entertain or educate. They should be posted periodically. In addition, they should have a supportive nature. 85% of all DMOs showed a purpose in their videos. However, it was usually because they were entertaining. 70% of the videos were not giving supportive information. And only six percent posted periodic content. These results indicate that offering videos that are entertaining is more important to DMOs and hotels than sharing videos that give valuable information to the viewer. The lack of periodic content shows that they do not consider it as very important to have periodic content. However, it was often the case that the content was not periodic due to the reason that there was not that much content available at all. This indicates that the reason could also be a lack of funds to provide more content periodically. Savioz (Appendix I) does not fully agree with the idea of posting content periodically. She believes that it is more important to push a certain subject at a certain point in time and not to post a video every four weeks.

Higgins (2019) points out that mobile friendly content is vital nowadays. Around 60 percent of all DMOs seem to agree with this statement since they offer their videos in a responsive design. Hotels offered a bit less responsive videos on their website. Around half of them consider mobile friendly videos as important.

Only 29 percent of the content on YouTube was transcribed and only three percent of the Facebook videos had closed captions. If there were transcriptions on YouTube, they were usually automatic and therefore not completely correct. Automatic transcriptions have therefore not been counted in this analysis. It shows that the industry still has a lot room of improvement when it comes to that topic. In addition, they do not share the opinion of Rich (2018). Rich points out that having closed captions is vital, in order to understand the content better, to watch the video on mute or for people that do not speak the language very well. Savioz (Appendix I) and Breuer (Appendix III) agree with Rich, they both mention that subtitles are important. Savioz, points out the same as Rich, that numerous people watch videos on mute nowadays. She therefore agrees with Rich's statement.

According to Costa-Sánchez (2017) and Pattiss (2018) it makes video content more interesting for the viewer if one offers different types of videos. Examples mentioned were tutorial, testimonials and teasers. 62% of all DMOs and hotels seem to agree with that statement since they are posting diverse content. However, the significance of different video formats such as 360° seems lower. Only one in ten of all samples provided such content. However, Adweek (2018) stresses that exploring alternative video formats could make a company stand out. The experts do not agree on this topic either. Brentel believes that they will play a bigger role in the future. Breuer explains that the audience for such formats is too small and will not play a big role in the future due to that reason. Therefore, if different video formats should be used is still an open question and would need some further research.

Content Marketing is increasing in importance. It is about distributing valuable content and to truly engage with a target audience (Hilker, 2017). All experts agree with that statement. They all believe that it is not only important today but, in the future, as well. One important aspect of Content Marketing is having a pull strategy. With 60% of all samples that offer content that is about engaging with customers, it seems that people in the tourism and hospitality industry understood that a pull strategy is better than a push strategy.

User Generated Content has an impressive impact due to its credibility (Huertas, 2018). Hays et al. (2013) accentuate that UGC can be fostered as well, this can have a huge effect on the competitiveness of tourism destinations. The experts agree to these statements. Even though UGC is vital nowadays, it is not really fostered by DMOs and hotels. Most of the samples analysed did not encourage their users to post. It is possible that they do not have a lot of content generated by users to share.

The benchmarking analyses reflected the statement of Laesser, et al. (2018) They explain that the digital infrastructure in the alpine region is not great due to a lack of funds. They continue and indicate that the tourism industry is rather hesitant to adopt new marketing trends. It is clear after analysing all the samples that there is a lot of room of improvement. It is very possible that this is either due to their low budgets or the lack of knowledge and the acceptance of new trends. Brentel (Appendix II) shares the same opinion. He mentions that many hotels have neither the knowledge nor the funds to offer valuable video content. He

believes that hotels need to collaborate with other tourism stakeholders in order to cut costs. Breuer (Appendix III) indicates that the cost and the knowledge of video marketing is a problem. He believes that costs can be lowered, by making more than one video at once and by employing local videographers. Savioz (Appendix I) mentions the challenge of cost as well. This indicates that overall DMOs and hotels need to increase their video knowledge. One can only know where and how one can cut costs by being knowledgeable about how a video is made and distributed.

## 6. Recommendation

After having received external information in the literature review and internal information from expert interviews one can see how important video marketing is today. This information showed that video marketing is still rather challenging for actors in the tourism and hospitality industry. The results of the benchmarking analysis reflected that clearly. Therefore, it is vital for a hotel or a DMO to know how to start video marketing and where they should make some adaptations in the future.

A list of recommendation has been made by the author in order to have some guideline when it comes to video marketing. The list is purposely written in the “you-form” in order to speak directly to the reader. The list of recommendation has been divided into what, how and why and the source that makes this information valuable. According to Simon Sinek (2011) most organizations know what they are doing, and some know how they should be doing it as well. However only a few know why they do what they do. It is important to know the why because it is the purpose, the very reason a company exists. This is why the author wanted to indicate in this list of recommendations why readers should do what is being recommended.

*Table 2: List of recommendations*

What	How	Why	Source
Plan / Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline a plan before producing a video. Identify your target market.</li> <li>And be sure about your goal.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only a video that was made for a specific target with a certain goal in mind can be successful. It is not good to produce a video just to have a video.</li> </ul>	All experts (Appendix I-III)
Storytelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before producing a video, plan a story that will be the red thread throughout the video.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In order to connect with your customer in the best way possible.</li> </ul>	(PhocusWire, 2019)
Vertical videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share more stories on Instagram and Facebook. Increase your usage of IGTV.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations on Social Media have a big influence on your customer and the vertical videos are on the rise.</li> </ul>	(Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013) (Taylor, 2019)

What	How	Why	Source
Post more videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Try to post more video content, this can also be shared content from users.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They are very successful among consumers because they allow them to consume content very easily and fast.</li> <li>They also help to spread your brand message.</li> <li>They will have an emotional impact on your viewers.</li> </ul>	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017)
Produce more videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with other tourism companies in your destination in order to spend less money.</li> <li>Employ one videographer preferably from your region.</li> <li>Shoot as many videos as possible at once. They tend to be cheaper that way.</li> <li>Ask employees in your company that have some knowledge in production to shoot a video for you. The content does not have to be too polished especially on social media.</li> <li>(However, do not produce a video if you are not good at it. A bad video could be bad for your reputation!)</li> </ul>		Guli Brentel (Appendix II)  Axel Breuer (Appendix III)  (Cheng, 2019)
Marketing trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform yourself about current marketing trends. You can do that either online or with professional magazine. If you have the funds you can ask professional marketing/communication agencies as well.</li> <li>A good idea would be to attend a workshop about video marketing in tourism. One example is the one offered by the Corporate Media Academy called "Tourismusmarketing mit Video".</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is vital to stay up to date with current trends. Marketing is evolving constantly also due to the advancement in technology.</li> <li>It is a competitive advantage for you to understand current trends and how to use them during your job.</li> </ul>	Madeleine Savioz (Appendix I)  (Watson IV, Worm, Palmatier, & Ganesan, 2015)  (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013)  Axel Breuer (Appendix III)
Multi-Channel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus on multiple channel in your marketing strategy.</li> <li>Think about which target you want to reach on which channel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Variety is highly effective when you want to reach your consumers. To use different channels is vital for a successful online marketing strategy.</li> </ul>	(Sojern, 2019)  (Stavrakantonakis, Toma, Fensel, & Fensel, 2013)

What	How	Why	Source
Website videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure to have video content on your website. Preferably on your home page above the fold.</li> <li>• Be aware of your meta title and update your videos frequently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having videos on your website will increase your conversion by 80% if they are on your landing page.</li> <li>• It will help you to be higher up in the rankings of Google.</li> </ul>	(Travel Trade Gazette, 2017)  Axel Breuer (Appendix III)
Thumbnail & First impression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Choose your thumbnail deliberately and make sure it attracts attention.</li> <li>• Make sure to spread your message quickly. Your viewer should know after three seconds what a video is about.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the thumbnail is not attractive people will not even start watching the video. Therefore, it is important to grab their attention.</li> <li>• You want to have a video that is especially exiting in the first few seconds. Otherwise your consumer will switch to the next video that is available very quickly.</li> </ul>	(Hoben, 2018)  (Cheng, 2019)
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure to have people in your video. They should not only be shown from a distance their emotions should be displayed as well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It helps your consumer to identify with a protagonist and the message of your video and it keeps their attention longer.</li> </ul>	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017)
CTA (Call to action)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage your viewers to a specific action during or at the end of your video. You can either do that with spoken word or buttons where they can click on or just written text in your video.</li> <li>• You can either ask them to watch another video, to like your content, to interact with other users, to share your video or to buy your special offer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In a world with many possibilities people like to hear or see what they should do next. Not every user will do what you expect them to do. However, if one is sharing or liking your video because of your CTA it is already worth it.</li> </ul>	(Hoben, 2018)
Closed captions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add captions in multiple languages in all your videos and on all your channels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You want to connect with as many viewers as possible. People that are deaf, people that like to watch videos on mute and people from other countries will appreciate that.</li> </ul>	All experts (Appendix I-III) (Hasan & Abduelrub, 2011)  (Rich, 2018)
Variety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to produce different types of videos.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It makes your video content more interesting for different viewers.</li> </ul>	(Costa-Sánchez, 2017)  (Pattiss, 2018)



What	How	Why	Source
Content Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do not give any promises to your customers on how you or your product will fulfil their needs. Satisfy their need of information and interesting content with your video.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People do not trust traditional advertisement anymore. They only want to watch videos that are actually offer valuable information.</li> </ul>	(Hilker, 2017)
User Generated Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give users an incentive to post content.</li> <li>Use specific hashtags which users can use.</li> <li>Ask users directly to post something.</li> <li>Interact actively with your users on Social Media and create opportunities for them to share their story.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UGC has a big impact on your customers.</li> <li>Your followers will trust the content posted by other users more compared to your professional content.</li> <li>Fostering UGC will give you a competitive advantage.</li> </ul>	(Huertas, 2018)  (Hays, Page, & Buhalis, 2013)  (Muñiz Jr & Schau, 2011)  Axel Breuer (Appendix III)

## 7. Concluding Remarks

I found writing this bachelor thesis very interesting and instructive. I am proud of the result and glad to be able to reflect on the time I wrote it. I was already used to write scientific papers during my studies. However, it was new to write a thesis with a much bigger scope on my own. I found it difficult to work on the thesis according to my time schedule. I believe if I would have to write it again, I would follow my schedule better and I would try to start writing earlier. I overestimated the willingness of experts to be my interview partners. It was a real challenge to find the three experts that agreed for an interview. On that note I really want to thank Madeleine Savioz, Guli Brentel and Axel Breuer for their willingness and spontaneity to be an important part of this bachelor thesis. Another challenge was the benchmarking analysis. Moreover, I underestimated the time I would need to analyse one sample. Depending on the video content available of a sample I needed more or less time. However, on average around 30 minutes were needed. In addition, as a video appreciator I did not believe that watching videos could be that tiresome. Moreover, it was quite difficult to find the scientific articles I needed. However, once I had a few articles I found other interesting and relevant articles automatically. Last but not least, I also want to thank my professor Roland Schegg for his help during the whole process. He was very helpful throughout the whole thesis. He sent me interesting articles if he saw some and guided me in order to make an analysis that is scientifically valuable.

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